

BEFORE THE WAIPĀ DISTRICT COUNCIL

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of Proposed Plan Change 20 – Airport Northern
Precinct Extension to the Operative Waipā
District Plan

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JEREMY HUNT
(NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT - HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE LAND)

14 March 2023

Counsel acting:
JR Welsh
ChanceryGreen
223 Ponsonby Road
Ponsonby, Auckland 1011



1. My name is Jeremy Bryce Hunt. I am an Environmental Agribusiness Consultant at AgFirst Waikato (2016) Limited in Hamilton. My qualification and experience are set out in my Primary Statement of Evidence.
2. I have assessed PC20 which consists in part of highly productive land (HPL) against the provisions of the National Policy Statement-Highly Productive Land (NPS-HPL). Of the PC 20 site, approximately 62.9ha of HPL is within the Titanium Park Limited (TPL) block and approximately 28.5ha within Rukuhia Properties Limited (RPL) block.
3. I engaged Hanmore Land Management to map the PC20 Site using an appropriate scale and methodology to provide a breakdown of the soils. Most of the PC20 Site has been classified as LUC 1 and LUC 2 with a small proportion of LUC 3 soils. This indicates that the soils are in the of high-quality category and highly versatile, with this classification being suitable for most productive agricultural systems.
4. While the land and soils within the PC20 Site are categorised as high-quality under the NPS-HPL, the practical likelihood of any sustained existing or intensive agricultural operation would be restricted due to:
 - a) Surrounding land uses not being in land-based primary production namely the Airport, motorway, the adjacent business zoned land, and the Southern Links designation.
 - b) Soil conditions which in summer are dry causing reduced yields, and the requirement for freshwater irrigation for any intensification or land use change into horticulture or commercial vegetable operations.
 - c) Lack of expansion or improvement options due to national regulations restricting intensification into various land uses and physical boundaries and amalgamation opportunities.
 - d) The productive capacity of the RPL site as a result of the R&D facility leaving less than 10ha of HPL for cropping and compromised yields due to R&D trials.
5. To address the NPS-HPL requirements, I have reviewed and assessed the productive capacity of the PC20 and comparing this with additional localities surrounding the Waipā District growth cells that would be deemed to be 'other reasonably practicable and feasible options'. I also assessed an additional area located within Hamilton City.

6. Of the alternative growth cell options, the PC20 site has overall greater limitations and constraints with regard to the HPL and the productive capacity. The alternative growth cells typically had larger areas of contiguous land-based primary production with less fragmentation.
7. It is my opinion that allowing the PC20 to proceed from rezoning from Rural to Airport Business Zone will have a less material impact of the district's productive capacity than developing alternative greenfield sites that have fewer productive constraints.
8. I do not consider that the loss of the well below average yields from the PC20 Site will have a significant loss on the district's production, and proceeding with the PC20 would not cause any fragmentation or further disruption of additional highly productive land.

Jeremy Hunt
14 March 2023