

**Before Independent Hearing Commissioners
In Te Awamutu**

Under the Resource Management Act 1991 (the Act)

In the matter of Proposed Private Plan Change 20: Airport Northern Precinct
Extension to the Waipā District Plan

and NZ Transport Agency (Waka Kotahi)
(Submitter)

**Statement of evidence of Sarah Loynes for Waka Kotahi – Transport
Planning**

7th March 2023

1 Qualifications and experience

- 1.1 My full name is Sarah Loynes. I am a Principal Planner at Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency (Waka Kotahi); a role I have held since November 2019.
- 1.2 I hold a Bachelor's degree in Engineering and Transportation from Napier University, Edinburgh, UK. I am also a Chartered Member of the Institute of Logistics and Transport.
- 1.3 I am a Transport Planner with 23 years of experience in the area of transport planning. In addition to my current role at Waka Kotahi, over my career I have held roles in the United Kingdom and New Zealand as a transport planning consultant providing advice and technical analysis to clients in both the private and public sector. I have been involved in the development of strategic transportation policies, implementation of transportation strategies and responding to individual developments in terms of transportation effects.
- 1.4 My relevant experience includes:
- a Te Awa Lakes Plan Change: as an expert witness for Perrys;
 - b Meridian 37 Plan Change: as an expert witness for Meridian;
 - c Drafting the Waka Kotahi submission on the Waikato 2070 Draft Growth and Economic Development Strategy (Waikato 2070); and
 - d Part of the technical working group on the Hamilton-Waikato Metro Spatial Plan.
- 1.5 My evidence is given on behalf of Waka Kotahi in relation to the submission seeking a Plan Change by Titanium Park Ltd and Rukuhia Properties Ltd.

2 Involvement with the proposal

- 3 I have reviewed the summary statements prepared by Mr Inder, Mr Tindall and Mr Grala. I have also reviewed the s42A report and the Transport Assessment lodged by the applicant. I have visited the site on numerous occasions.

4 Code of conduct

- 4.1 I have read and am familiar with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses in the current Environment Court Practice Note (2023). I have complied with it in the preparation of this summary statement. I also confirm that the matters addressed in this statement are within my area of expertise, except where I rely on the opinion

or evidence of other witnesses. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I express.

5 Scope of evidence

5.1 My evidence addresses the following:

- a The current status of the proposed mitigation in relation to reducing the effects of the development on the transport network, in relation to the wider role of Waka Kotahi.

5.2 I have read the evidence prepared by the other witnesses presenting evidence on behalf of Waka Kotahi.

6 Summary of evidence

Issue 1 – The role of Waka Kotahi in land use planning

6.1 Waka Kotahi is a Crown entity with the sole powers of control and management for all purposes of all State highways.¹ Waka Kotahi statutory objectives require it to undertake its functions in a way that contributes to “*an effective, efficient and safe land transport system in the public interest*”.² In performing its functions, Waka Kotahi must give effect to the strategic priorities and transport outcomes set by the Government through the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2021/22 – 2031/32 (GPS).

6.2 The GPS outlines four strategic priorities – safety, better travel options, climate change and improving freight connections. This GPS also highlighted the requirement to develop schemes in line with the ‘intervention hierarchy’ this means ensuring that land use and existing transport infrastructure is being optimised before constructing new infrastructure.

6.3 In order to fulfil these obligations Waka Kotahi has provided input to and/or participated in:

- The Waikato Regional Policy Statement (2018);
- The Future Proof Strategy (2022); and

¹ Section 93(2) LTMA.

² Section 94 LTMA

- The Auckland to Hamilton Corridor Spatial Planning (2020-21) and subsequent Hamilton-Waikato Metro Spatial Plan Transport Programme Business Case (2022).
- 6.4 The original Waka Kotahi submission outlined the key elements of these documents, which related to the need to deliver integrated land use and transport investment and to see a step change in the provision of alternatives to driving by car. This is to ultimately achieve a “radical mode shift”.
- 6.5 The submission also highlighted specific actions required under the Emission Reduction Plan and how this has been part of our approach to reviewing our network plans in this location, specifically that it had informed the need to undertake a review of the form and function of the Waka Kotahi elements of the Hamilton Southern Links project.
- 6.6 This review is ongoing with preliminary analysis indicating that further work will be required by Waka Kotahi, local councils and developers to ensure that the growth to the south of Hamilton (much of which is already zoned) is well served by a range of travel options including walking, cycling and public transport. It is acknowledged that the mechanisms for these improvements do not lie solely within the scope of the private sector.
- 6.7 With regard to PPC20 we can confirm:
- 6.8 The applicant has undertaken sufficient analysis to give Waka Kotahi comfort that the additional development will be able to be mitigated appropriately to reduce adverse network effects. This does not mean that no change in Levels of Service will occur, but that on balance those changes are not considered to be so significant as to require that development cease in this location. This is subject to mitigation as set out by Mr Inder.
- 6.9 The evidence of Mr Tindall has confirmed that acceptable mitigation has been determined with the applicant as laid out Mr Tindall’s evidence at Sections 8, 9 and 10.
- 6.10 That with regard to the need to cater for other modes and reduce effects by delivering alternative transport options, the applicant has made sufficient provision, given the ability they have to lead in this. In particular, the provision of a new walking and cycling route that provides a connection to areas already zoned for housing to the north of the site are strongly supported by Waka Kotahi.

- 6.11 Waka Kotahi also supported changes made to cross sections for roads within the site to add walking and cycling infrastructure and ensure roads are wide enough for future public transport access potentially via the Faiping Road route.
- 6.12 It is noted that there remains a modelled effect at the Tamahere Interchange that affects queueing on Tauwhare Road. In relation to this interchange the primary concern of Waka Kotahi is safe operation of the interchange and there is no indication that the effects of the proposal would change this. The primary concern from a safety perspective would always be ensuring that the off slip from SH1 is operating without queues back to the main Expressway as unequal lane queueing in high speed environments is more likely to result in deaths and serious injury. In this regard, the queues at Tauwhare Road are unlikely to be resolved through adding capacity to that arm in this location, as this would potentially impact on flows exiting from the Expressway. However, more recent plans at the interchange will provide a raised platform crossing on the state highway off slip and it is likely that the addition of this feature will slow vehicles entering from the off slip onto the roundabout and will potentially create more viable gaps for traffic on Tauwhare Road. Ultimately there are also options for traffic to re-route (as noted by Mr Inder) and significant investment is made in improving pedestrian and cycle access across Tauwhare Road and the Tamahere Interchange to the local centre which it would be hoped will reduce local short distance trips.

It is also noted that due to the long-term planning in this location that has led to designation of Hamilton Southern Links, there are possibilities to enhance alternative options in this area (including the replacement of the above Tamhere Interchange) and to mitigate the effects of growth. This safeguards the operation of state highways in this area and provides comfort that should additional adverse effects occur the relevant roading and public transport authorities have multiple options for further mitigation.

Sarah Loynes

7 March 2023