

BEFORE THE NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT COUNCIL

INDEPENDENT HEARING COMMISSIONERS

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of a request for Private Plan Change NPDC PLC18/00048 by Oakura Farm Park Limited to rezone land at Oakura within the New Plymouth District

**STATEMENT OF FURTHER EVIDENCE OF ANDREW SKERRETT ON BEHALF OF
OAKURA FARM PARK LIMITED**

2 December 2019

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1. This supplementary traffic evidence covers matters raised in the, the council officers report s42A of 22 November 2019 and the further evidence of the other traffic experts.
2. My additional evidence indicates the impact of the traffic generated by the revised proposed structure plan on Wairau Rd is considerably less and only causes a drop in the level of service at the SH45/Wairau intersection from an A to B once all the lots are developed.
3. The initial impact assessment attempted to accommodate the flows that might occur if all the future development outlined in the district plan were completed plus the plan change area. Whilst the congestion LOS at the cross roads was still acceptable there was an increase in the likelihood for crashes to occur.
4. A roundabout was promoted as a solution following discussions both with Council and NZTA as a method of not only addressing the potential increase crash risk but also to address the existing problem of the speed of the traffic on the highway. It is acknowledged that the roundabout on its own would not be sufficient to reduce the approach speeds on the highway and additional measures would be required, such as a gateway and advanced warning signage.
5. If the proposed plan change area with the reduction of the proposed number of lots is considered, the potential crash risk increase is significantly reduced and therefore the roundabout is not required at this time.
6. Councils traffic expert indicates the predicted crash rate for the cross-roads is only marginally less than that for the roundabout (based on the original TIA flows) and based on this suggests that the roundabout treatment should therefore be triggered at 150 lots.
7. Given the original TIA was based on the maximum development of 399 lots plus the additional traffic from FUD West and other growth occurring, I believe this is an overly simplistic view of the trigger. Typically an intersection

is allowed to perform at a level lower than the ideal, until such time that the treatment returns a positive economic return, i.e. a benefit cost ratio of greater than 1.

8. The installation of a roundabout will potentially improve the safety performance of the intersection, but at the cost of efficiency of the traffic. The side road traffic is unlikely to benefit significantly, as it is currently predicted to be performing at an acceptable LOS B. However, the highway (through) traffic will be negatively impacted by the roundabout in terms of efficiency, as they will have to slow to give way. To offset this dis-benefit considerably more lots will have to be developed on Upper and Lower Wairau Rd to drive down the safety performance of cross roads, thus increasing the benefits of the roundabout. I have not had the opportunity to calculate what number of lots is required, but I believe it would have to be significantly higher than 150 lots and that is only to achieve a BCR of 1.
9. It should also be noted that in the draft district plan the FUD West remains, indicating Council has no intention of rezoning the land in the short to medium term. If the landowners wished to develop FUD West then a plan change would be required. This process is likely to take two or three years, followed by another year or two to design and consent any subdivision with another 6 -12 months of construction before any dwellings are established. It is therefore unlikely to see any significant growth within a ten year time frame.
10. I therefore believe the need to change the intersection form is further into the future and is also dependent upon other factors, about which we have little information, such as the Oakura to Pukeiti shared pathway.
11. Notwithstanding the intersection form, the issue of vehicular speeds on the highway approach remains. I recommended relocating the speed threshold further away from the intersection. Whilst I acknowledge that there is no certainty that this can be achieved, due to the consultation process required, I still believe it is a course of action the Agency should be undertaking.

12. In the meantime the installation of advanced speed limit warning signs should be installed, along with a stronger gateway at the threshold to reinforce the need for vehicles to slow down. These elements could then be located if NZTA is successful in getting the speed limit relocated further from the intersection.
13. I note the proposed district plan clearly shows a preferred route for pedestrians and cyclists to utilise the subdivision footpaths and cross the highway near the original proposed underpass to make their way down to the sea. In the interim I agreed with NZTA and Council that the kerbs near the Wairau intersection could be adjusted to provide clearer shorter paths to cross the highway. I don't believe the central refuge should be completely dismissed as an option, as it would be similar to the one at the other end of the township. But these details can be addressed at the sub-division consent stage if the plan change were granted.
14. The timing of these works has been raised and I believe it is unnecessary for them to be undertaken until at least the first of the proposed five stages has been completed. Details of the timing and financial contributions can be addressed during the sub-division consent process, should the plan change be approved.
15. Council have raised the concern of the increased traffic on intersections further to the east of Wairau Rd. During expert conferencing no agreement was reached on the extent that should be considered.
16. In the morning peak traffic I estimate the increase flows heading east from Wairau Rd from the plan change area is of the order of 64 vehicles. According to Stats NZ one third of households have children (under 18 years old) resident at the last census. If we assume 100% of the primary school aged children and 60% of the intermediate aged children were to attend the school then 40% of all the children would attend the Oakura School. We could then apply the 40% to the 30% of households with children, which means 12% households or roughly one household in eight have children at the school or 18 households in the plan change area. If we assume 100% of them drive their children to school, then an increase in 18 vehicles in the morning peak is

unlikely to have anything more than minor effects. Given the older demographic of Oakura, compared to the national average and the potential for active modes of transport to be used, this can be considered to be a conservatively high estimate of the potential traffic movements.

17. In conclusion, I believe the proposed measures are sufficient to address the effects of the private plan change and their details can be addressed at the subsequent consenting stages, should the plan change be approved.

Andrew Skerrett
2 December 2019