

**BEFORE THE HEARINGS PANEL**

**IN THE MATTER** of the Resource Management Act 1991

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER** of a request by Te Kapiti Trust to change the Manawatū District Plan under Clause 21 of Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (Private Plan Change 1)

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**SECTION 42A TECHNICAL REPORT OF TIM WILLIAMS  
ON BEHALF OF MANAWATŪ DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**URBAN DESIGN**

**28 APRIL 2023**

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## **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. The key conclusions of my technical section 42A report are:
  - (a) Overall the proposed re-zoning, use of a structure plan and accompanying planning provisions will suitably provide for the expansion of Rongotea in a planned and integrated manner and establishes a framework that can ensure good urban design outcomes.

## **B. INTRODUCTION**

2. My name is Tim Williams. I am a planning and urban design consultant and Director of Williams & Co a planning and urban design consultancy. I hold the qualifications of Bachelor of Resource Studies from Lincoln University and Master of Urban Design and Development from the University of New South Wales.
3. I have 20 years experience in the area of planning and urban design and development, for both local authorities as well as in private practice. My experience prior to forming Williams & Co. includes roles in private consultancies based in Queenstown and with the Queenstown Lakes District Council in various senior planning, urban design and policy positions.
4. I have been engaged by Manawatū District Council (**the Council**) in relation to the request by Te Kapiti Trust to rezone 21.88 ha of land from Rural 2 Zone to Village Zone, with an area set aside for public open space, and an adjacent 10.48 ha to remain as Rural 2 zone (the "**Plan Change Proposal**"). The Plan Change Proposal involves the introduction of the Rongotea South Structure Plan (the "**Structure Plan**").
5. My role has included review of the plan change documents including the Urban Design Framework dated July 2022 prepared by The Property Group. Subsequently I have reviewed the updated Rongotea South Development Area Chapter provisions identified as Appendix I (updated following s92).

## **C. CODE OF CONDUCT**

6. I confirm that I have read and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2023. I confirm that I have stated the reasons for my opinions I express in this report, considered all the material

facts that I am aware of that might alter or detract from those opinions, and that the report and the issues I have addressed are within my area of expertise.

7. I have addressed the following issues in this report:
  - (a) Connectivity and Integration.
  - (b) Lot size and arrangement
  - (c) Engagement with reserves and adjoining properties
  - (d) Matters raised in submissions
8. Statements expressed in this report are made within the scope of my expertise.
9. I have all the information necessary to assess the application within the scope of my expertise and am not aware of any gaps in the information or my knowledge.
10. I am familiar with the site of the Plan Change Proposal having reviewed the site on a desktop basis but I record that I have not visited the site.

**D. SCOPE**

11. My evidence addresses matters related to urban design.
12. In preparing this report, I have reviewed the following information:
  - (a) The private plan change application, including, in particular, the Rongotea South Urban Design Framework dated July 2022 prepared by The Property Group
  - (b) The updated plan provisions titled Appendix I Rongotea South Development Area Chapter (updated following s92)
  - (c) Submissions and further submissions relating to the Plan Change Proposal.
13. I have also reviewed the summary of submissions. Of particular note when considering my field of expertise are submissions relating to local character, recreation, and roading.

**E. BACKGROUND**

14. The proposed plan change has been described in detail in the application documents, and has been summarised in the evidence of Mr. Daniel Batley. In the interests of brevity I have not reproduced this information here.

**F. EVALUATION OF PLAN CHANGE PROPOSAL**

15. Connectivity and Integration

16. When considering the expansion of urban environments it is important to analyse the context to then inform the appropriateness of such expansion, along with opportunities and constraints for the rezoning to integrate with and provide logical connections to the existing urban area. The analysis provided within the Urban Design Framework reporting prepared by The Property Group is considered comprehensive and appropriately recognises the opportunities and constraints of the site.

17. Specifically, the adoption of a structure plan to ensure logical connections to the exiting street network within Rongotea and subsequent development of the detailed subdivision layout through a Comprehensive Development Plan will ensure the rezoning successfully integrates with the existing urban environment.

18. More broadly the location of the re-zoning being directly adjoining the existing urban extent is considered to represent a logical location for Rongotea to grow where the opportunities exist for Rongotea to expand in a logical and connected manner.

19. Lot size and arrangement

20. The structure plan proposes to guide a variety of lots sizes, with more generous lots of 750-1000m<sup>2</sup> proposed around the periphery to assist with integration to the adjoining lot size and pattern within Rongotea and to also provide some transition to the lifestyle type development (circa 5000m<sup>2</sup>) lots around Florin Lane. This approach is considered appropriate and will successfully support integration of the urban expansion with the existing surrounding context.

21. An area of smaller lots sizes (500m<sup>2</sup>) is proposed more centrally within the structure plan area. This is supported and will provide a diversity and range of lots sizes and subsequent housing choice for Rongotea whilst its location centrally within the site will

manage any potential adverse character effects that might otherwise arise due to the smaller lot sizes.

22. The rule structure is considered appropriate to ensure that at the detailed subdivision stage appropriate consideration is given to the lot layout and orientation to ensure a good subdivision design and that future dwellings will be enabled to maximise solar gain and appropriately engage with the street environments
23. Engagement with reserve and adjoining properties
24. An area of reserve/open space is proposed around an existing wetland/stream environment. From an urban design perspective this is considered appropriate and provides the opportunity to add amenity to the wider environment particularly the proposed walkway illustrated through this area on the Structure Plan. This will provide amenity for residents within the plan change area but also the wider Rongotea area through the amenity/recreational opportunity it will provide. Ensuring this walkway is delivered through the development will be critical.
25. A number of future lots will directly adjoin the reserve/open space area and therefore ensuring these lots integrate with this environment will be important. In this regard managing fences and the boundary treatment of the lots that adjoin the reserve/open space is considered the most effective approach. The proposed requirement for fences adjoining reserves to follow the established approach provided via Rule 15.4.3 will ensure this outcome is suitably delivered.
26. As noted above the re-zoning will adjoin the rural lifestyle development around Florin Lane. This will introduce a change in character to what these adjoining lots currently experience. However to manage this transition (in addition to the large lots proposed) further consideration of the boundary treatment would assist to further integrate and manage this boundary. In this regard it is recommended further direction is provided in the provisions to ensure that at the detailed subdivision design stage appropriate consideration is given to planting and fencing controls to assist in softening the transition from the residential lots in this location to the adjoining lots on Florin Lane.

## G. SUBMISSIONS

27. I have considered the submissions and further submissions for the Plan Change Proposal. Of particular relevance when considering urban design are:

- (a) S01/001, S02/001, S05/001 – These submissions raise concern about the character and amenity changing particularly the change to outlook, character and amenity given the rural nature of the existing site and the submitter sites being for lifestyle type purposes. As discussed in *Connectivity and Integration* above the site is considered a logical location for the expansion of Rongotea being immediately adjoining the existing urban extent of Rongotea whilst the large lots adjoining the lifestyle properties adjacent to the site assist to manage this interface. As noted above, I recommend that further consideration can be given at subdivision stage to further manage the boundary interface and the impact that the proposed urban development will have on these submitters and the concerns raised. Overall in my opinion although the character and amenity these submitters currently experience will change the measures proposed and recommended through the re-zoning will adequately address and ensure the re-zoning integrates with these adjoining lifestyle properties.
- (b) S05/001 – This submitter has recommended that the identified walkway is constructed by the developer. As noted in above, the walkway is considered an important component of the re-zoning successfully integrating with the existing residential area and a key function of the reserve/open space. I support the provisions making it clear that this walkway must be developed.
- (c) S010/001 – This submitter has recommended a street connection is made to Witham Street. In my opinion the proposed walkway connection will provide an appropriate level of connectivity in this location. Given the presence of the Open Space/Reserve area shown in this location it is considered a better outcome for the road not to be extended or connected in this location. The walkway will ensure a better opportunity for integration with the open space and development of this area than would arise if a street was connected through.

## **H. CONCLUSIONS**

28. Overall the proposed re-zoning, use of a structure plan and accompanying planning provisions will suitably provide for the expansion of Rongotea in a planned and integrated manner and establishes a framework that can ensure good urban design outcomes.
29. Two matters are recommended to be further refined in the provisions:
- (a) Ensuring adequate provisions are in place to require the landscaping of and fencing controls to the boundary with the lifestyle lots on Florin Lane, and
  - (b) Ensuring the walkway is developed through the open space/reserve area.

**Tim Williams**

**24 April 2023**