

**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

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**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF KATHRYN ANNE DREW**

**(PLANNING) ON BEHALF OF WAIKATO REGIONAL AIRPORT LTD**

**17 MARCH 2023**

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1. My name is Kathryn Anne Drew.
2. I am the Land Development Manager and Principal Planner at BBO, based in Hamilton. My qualifications and experience are set out in the Primary Statement of Evidence.
3. In relation to this hearing, I am authorised to give evidence on behalf of WRAL in relation to Proposed Plan Change 20 (PC20).

#### ***Evidence Purpose***

4. The purpose of my evidence has been to support that of Mr Langley in relation to aeronautical operational and safety matters that could arise for the Airport in relation to the protection and/or creation of bat corridors or habitat areas within and beyond the PC20 site. More specifically, my evidence identifies the significance the Airport is given in existing planning documents, being the Waikato Regional Policy Statement (WRPS) and Waipa District Plan (WDP), and the relevance that documentation has in the consideration of the built environment near the Airport, such as the rezoning proposed in PC20.

#### ***Waikato Regional Policy Statement***

5. The Airport is defined as ‘Regionally Significant Infrastructure’<sup>1</sup> in the WRPS and similarly the same in the Waipa District Plan WDP.
6. District Plans are required to “give effect” to the WRPS<sup>2</sup>. In relation to giving effect to the WRPS, there are two specific sections of the WRPS that address regionally significant infrastructure. They are EIT – Energy, infrastructure and transport and UFD – Urban form and development. The relevant policies under these sections are set out in my Primary Statement of Evidence, paragraphs 15-17. Key terms in those policies include the ‘recognition’ and ‘protection’ of regionally significant infrastructure.
7. To give effect to this policy framework, development of the built environment, including the rezoning of land for urban development adjacent to the Airport and any resulting rule framework needs to protect the Airport’s effectiveness and efficiency, which in my opinion means not constraining or adversely affecting its day-to-day operations.

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<sup>1</sup> Regionally significant infrastructure, as defined in section 1.6 of the WRPS, includes at clause (l) the Hamilton International Airport.

<sup>2</sup> Section 75(3)(a) Resource Management Act 1991.

## **Waipa District Plan**

8. The WDP identifies that one of the resource management issues<sup>3</sup> for the future settlement pattern of the district is *“the continued operation and development of ... regionally and nationally significant infrastructure....* This issue informs objective 1.3.1 below.

*“(b) supports the continued operation, maintenance, upgrading and development of regionally important sites and regionally significant infrastructure and nationally significant infrastructure, and provides for on-going to access to mineral resources. ”*

9. The supporting policy is 1.3.1.8 – Regionally significant and nationally significant infrastructure, which reads:

*“To ensure that new development does not adversely affect the ongoing operation, maintenance, upgrading and development of existing and planned regionally significant infrastructure and nationally significant infrastructure.”*

10. No changes to these objectives and policies are proposed by PC20.

11. The importance of the Airport is also acknowledged in the Airport Business Zone. Specifically, section 10.1.1 and 10.2.1 recognised the Airport as a *“facility of economic and social importance”* and *“regionally significant physical resource.”* PC20 proposes to strengthen this statement by adding that the Airport is also *“a regionally significant transport hub”*.

12. The supporting objectives and policies are 10.3.1 – Strategic physical resource and 10.3.1.4 – Managing effects on Airport operations, are set out my Primary Statement of Evidence at paragraph 25. No changes are proposed to these objectives or policies by PC20.

13. It is my opinion that the issues, objectives and policies in the WDP, as currently provided for, give effect to the WRPS objectives and policies relating to regionally significant infrastructure.

## **Reason for Further Submission**

14. As set out in the evidence of Mr Langley the protection and/or creation of bat corridors or habitat areas, as sought by submitters, may indirectly create additional habitat for birds near the Airport and increases the potential and probably of bird strike risks for the Airport, which in turn effects their aeronautical operations. The consequences of such whilst low probability could have high consequences. As such, the appropriateness, location, size and scale of any

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<sup>3</sup> Section 75(2)(a) requires District Plans to state the significant resource management issues for the district.

habitat areas or corridors needs to be considered in the context of the wider Airport operations and the importance of those to the region.

15. For these reasons, and in order to meet the objectives of the WRPS and the WDP around protecting the ongoing effectiveness and efficiency of regionally significant infrastructure, the design of bat habitat corridor or habitat areas needs to ensure that they are minimising additional habitat opportunities for birds and/or moving both birds and bats away from the Airport environs.

#### ***Applicants and Submitters evidence***

16. The Applicant is proposing a bat habitat area BHA within the PC20 footprint and a compensation area to the north of the PC20 footprint.
17. For the reasons, set out in Mr Langley's evidence, it is my opinion that the BHA and compensation area, proposed by the Applicant, have been establishing having due regard to the relevant WRPS and WDP objectives that recognise and protect the long-term benefits of regionally significant infrastructure and ensures that it can continue to operate efficiently and effectively functioning.
18. It is also my opinion that the PC20 provisions must be limited to the PC20 footprint only. Any expansion of these areas could exacerbate these operational issues for the airport and be in conflict with the WRPS policy framework.

#### ***Conclusion***

19. Recognising the importance placed on the Airport under the WRPS and supported by the WDP and having due regard to the operational evidence of Mr Langley, it is my opinion that the extent of the BHA proposed within the PC20 footprint will not give rise to adverse effects on aeronautical operations at the Airport. PC20 is therefore, in my opinion, not in conflict with the WRPS provisions and supporting WDP framework that seek to protect the effectiveness and efficiency of regionally significant infrastructure.

**Kathryn Drew**  
Principal Planner  
Bloxam Burnett & Olliver

16 March 2023