

Before the Independent Hearings Panel

Under: the Resource Management Act 1991 (*RMA*)

in the matter of: Strategic matters (joint opening hearing) in relation to Plan Change 12 to the Hamilton City Plan, Plan Change 26 to the Waipā District Plan and Variation 3 to the Waikato District Plan

and: **Retirement Villages Association of New Zealand Incorporated**

Overview representation of **John Collyns** on behalf of the Retirement Villages Association of New Zealand Incorporated

Dated: 17 February 2023

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JOHN COLLYNS ON BEHALF OF THE RETIREMENT VILLAGES ASSOCIATION

INTRODUCTION

- 1 My full name is John Nicholas Charles Collyns.
- 2 I am the Executive Director of the Retirement Villages Association of New Zealand Incorporated (*RVA*). I was appointed Executive Director of the RVA in October 2007, and have now been in the industry for almost 15 years. I have considerable knowledge and understanding of the aged population, and the retirement sector and its challenges. I have presented evidence for the RVA in a number planning processes, including the Christchurch Replacement District Plan and Auckland Unitary Plan processes. We sought and successfully obtained bespoke planning provisions for retirement villages in those areas.
- 3 This representation briefly sets the scene to our submissions, including the background to the RVA, the aged care and accommodation crisis and what we need for the retirement village industry in the present process.
- 4 The RVA is a voluntary industry organisation that represents the interests of the owners, developers and managers of registered retirement villages throughout New Zealand. Today, the RVA has 407 member villages throughout New Zealand, with approximately 38,520 units that are home to around 50,000 older New Zealanders. The RVA's members include all five publicly-listed companies (Ryman Healthcare, Summerset Group, Arvida Group, Oceania Healthcare, and Radius Residential Care Ltd), other corporate groups (such as Metlifecare and Bupa Healthcare) independent operators, and not-for profit operators (such as community trusts, and religious and welfare organisations).
- 5 The proportion of older people in our communities compared to the rest of the population is increasing rapidly. This is no exception for the Waikato, Waipā and Hamilton Districts. Across these Districts, the 75+ population is expected to increase from 16,270 in 2018 to 47,140 in 2048.¹ This is a 150% increase compared to the general population increase of 46% in these Districts during this time period.
- 6 As a result, the Hamilton, Waikato and Waipā Districts are some of the fastest growing districts for retirement villages in the country.² We expect the demand in the region to continue to grow, as more people seek out the high quality care and amenities that retirement villages provide. The RVA's experience and data shows that demand for retirement villages is outstripping supply, and that this trend will continue to worsen.
- 7 RVA members are currently heavy users of RMA processes. Members rely on resource consents to authorise much needed retirement villages and their ongoing operational needs. However, as the RVA submission outlines, the RMA has caused a number of major challenges.³

¹ Statistics New Zealand, Subnational Population Estimates at 30 June 2021 (provisional).

² Statistics New Zealand, Subnational Population Estimates at 30 June 2021 (provisional).

³ RVA Submission, see pages 11-19.

- 8 Accordingly, the RVA and its members were greatly encouraged by the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2021. We see the present process as a significant enabler of accelerating housing intensification for the ageing population.
- 9 I note that the RVA is heavily engaged in Intensification Streamlined Planning Processes across the country. We are seeking consistent provisions in all the 'Tier 1' cities, which we consider appropriately respond to the relevant statutory directions. Consistency is very important for certainty and efficiency. I also note that the RVA has consulted heavily with its members to ensure the provisions we seek have unified support.
- 10 In the Waikato region, the key outcome we seek is to accelerate housing intensification for the ageing population in a consistent and enabling regulatory framework which clearly responds to the needs of an ageing population and the unique features of retirement village activities. We also seek to remove undue planning restrictions, which are needed to better reflect the government's housing intensification requirements.
- 11 These outcomes will be expanded on by Mr Luke Hinchey and Mr John Kyle.