



**Speaking Notes – 6 November 2023**  
**Hearing 2 - Archaeological Sites and Built Heritage**

1. My full name is Graeme Ian McCarrison. I am the Environment & Planning Manager at Spark New Zealand Trading Limited, a position I have held since February 2015.
2. PC9 proposes to list the Hamilton Exchange Facility in Schedule 8A Built Heritage (buildings and structures) and as a Category B building. The Hamilton Exchange Facility is a critical component of telecommunications infrastructure for both Hamilton City and the wider Waikato region. The facility provides data centre services for several Waikato businesses and telecommunication network operators Spark, One NZ, 2degrees and Tuatahi. The Tuatahi fibre network connects into the Spark backbone national cable network, to the rest of the world via the underwater international cables of Southern Cross and Southern Cross Next cables.
3. The Hamilton Exchange Facility exterior is highly modified from the original building, refer to para 5.16 of my evidence.
4. The implications of the heritage scheduling of the Hamilton Exchange Facility means any future alteration to the exterior of the building will require resource consent. The Hamilton Exchange Facility is not in a good state and substantial works (including to the exterior of the building) will be required in the near future to ensure that it can be safely used. A resource consent process will delay these critical works, and if not granted, potentially mean that the Hamilton Exchange Facility can no longer be used. This has significant implications for the telecommunication services provided in the region by both Spark and other providers.
5. Spark endorses the recommendations from the Reporting Officers to remove the heritage classification of the Hamilton Exchange Facility. The scheduling of Hamilton Exchange Facility is inappropriate for various reasons, including:
  - a. the lack of evidence of its significance. The building only rated one "high" significance value, being that the building was designed by the Government Architect F.G.F. Sheppard. However, there is no evidence that Mr Sheppard designed the building among the more than 100 architects working for the Ministry of Works at that time;

- b. the exterior of the building has already been substantially modified to address seismic and weathertightness issues which undermines any heritage value;
  - c. objectives and policies of the Hamilton Operative District Plan which, as I discuss in my evidence, focus on protecting infrastructure and the associated social, economic and cultural benefits of infrastructure; and
  - d. designated status of the building.
6. For these reasons, Spark seeks the Hamilton Exchange Facility be removed from Built Heritage item H172 Category B as recommended by the Council Officers Planning Report and in Council's Heritage Expert evidence.
7. I am happy to answer any questions the Panel may have.