

**Before the Hearings Panel
At Porirua City Council**

Under Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991

In the matter of the Proposed Porirua District Plan

Between **Various**

Submitters

And **Porirua City Council**

Respondent

**Statement of supplementary planning evidence of Rory Smeaton on behalf of
Porirua City Council
Initial response to questions from the Panel**

Date: 23 March 2023

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 My full name is Rory Smeaton. I am employed as a Senior Policy Planner by the Porirua City Council.
- 2 I have prepared this statement of evidence on behalf of the Porirua City Council (**Council**) in respect of technical related matters arising from questions from the Panel relating to the submissions and further submissions on the Proposed Porirua District Plan (**PDP**) and Variation 1.
- 3 Specifically, this statement of evidence relates to the matters in the DEV – NG – Northern Growth Development Area, District-Wide, FUZ, HOSZ and OSZ chapters.
- 4 I am authorised to provide this evidence on behalf of the Council.

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND CODE OF CONDUCT

- 5 Appendix D of my section 42A report 'Officer's Report: Part B – Northern Growth Development Area' sets out my qualifications and experience.
- 6 I confirm that I am continuing to abide by the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses set out in the Environment Court's Practice Note 2023.

SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 7 My statement of evidence addresses the following matters raised by the Panel during the hearing:

Can Mr Smeaton please advise on appropriate wording to capture the exemption proposed for lightning rods as discussed with the Telco witnesses?

Please advise the population and the number of households in Pukerua Bay?

Please comment on the hand-drawn plan provided by Mr Barber and his verbal comment that the land on the eastern margin of the Muri Road Block is not suitable for development as RLZ?

Please advise any comments on the presentation for the Gray Street Residents Group as regards the yellow island discussed by Ms Davis?

Can Mr Smeaton please advise his views on Ms Williams' revised EMF standard wording?

INITIAL RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM THE PANEL

Can Mr Smeaton please advise on appropriate wording to capture the exemption proposed for lightning rods as discussed with the Telco witnesses?

8 Mr Grant Wright provided technical evidence at the hearing on behalf of Spark and Vodafone. Mr Wright noted that, at a general level, a lightning rod would likely be something like 10 millimetres in diameter and 0.5 to one metre in length.

9 Based on my further consideration of this discussion, I recommend that the exemption should be worded as below (revised text in blue):

This standard does not apply to a lightning rods fixed to the structure provided any rod must not exceed 15mm in diameter or 1m in length.

10 This revised wording takes into consideration the wording for exemptions to standards used in other parts of the PDP. The additional wording provides greater clarity as to the dimensions of the lightning rod that would be allowed under the exemption, with the limits set at a threshold under which I consider that adverse effects would be negligible. I also note that the changes also include referring to a single lightning rod rather than referring to lightning rods in plural as well as being specific to lightning rods fixed to the structure.

11 This revised wording also provides greater clarity in relation to the Panel's question relating to what standard would be applied to a lightning rod, if not INF-S3. On this, I note that INF-S3 is specific to

'[m]asts, antennas, lines and single pole support structures, anemometers and extreme weather devices'. As such, INF-R26 of the PDP would apply, which refers to INF-S8 and INF-S9 which set relevant height limits for any other infrastructure structure or building not otherwise listed.

Please advise the population and the number of households in Pukerua Bay?

- 12 The population and number of households in Pukerua Bay is set out in section 1.6.1.1 'Existing Pukerua Bay Urban Area' in the Section 32 Evaluation Report: Part B – Northern Growth Development Area. This states that:

The existing Pukerua Bay urban area is located directly to the northwest of the site. The urban area is generally low-density residential development in nature. The 2018 Census data identify that approximately 1,962 people live in Pukerua Bay.¹ The population is relatively stable but growing, increasing from 1,725 in 2006 and 1,896 in 2013. There are approximately 700 properties in the residential area of Pukerua Bay.

- 13 The quoted numbers are generally consistent with those estimated by the Pukerua Bay Residents' Association at the hearing.

Please comment on the hand-drawn plan provided by Mr Barber and his verbal comment that the land on the eastern margin of the Muri Road Block is not suitable for development as RLZ?

- 14 The hand-drawn plan provided by Mr Barber in his speaking notes is reproduced in Figure 1 below. I have also identified the relevant land in Figure 2 below, with the western extent being the proposed 'ridgeline' road, the southern and western extent being the allotment boundary, and the northern extent defined by SNA008. I note that the land identified by Mr Barber as 'Native/SNA/QEII' extends into the land

¹ This data includes all meshblocks within the Pukerua bay statistical area, which include the land on the western side of State Highway 59 north of Hongoeka.

identified in Figure 2 over SNA224. Due to the complexity of the extent of SNA224 I have not attempted to delineate that area.

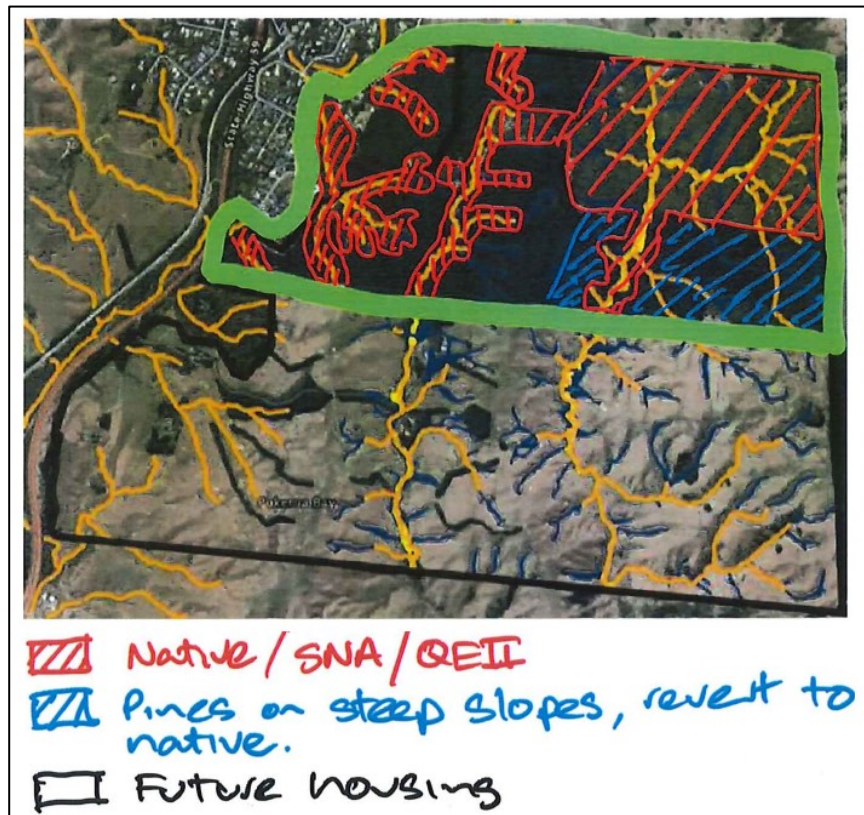


Figure 1: Hand-drawn plan provided by Mr Barber

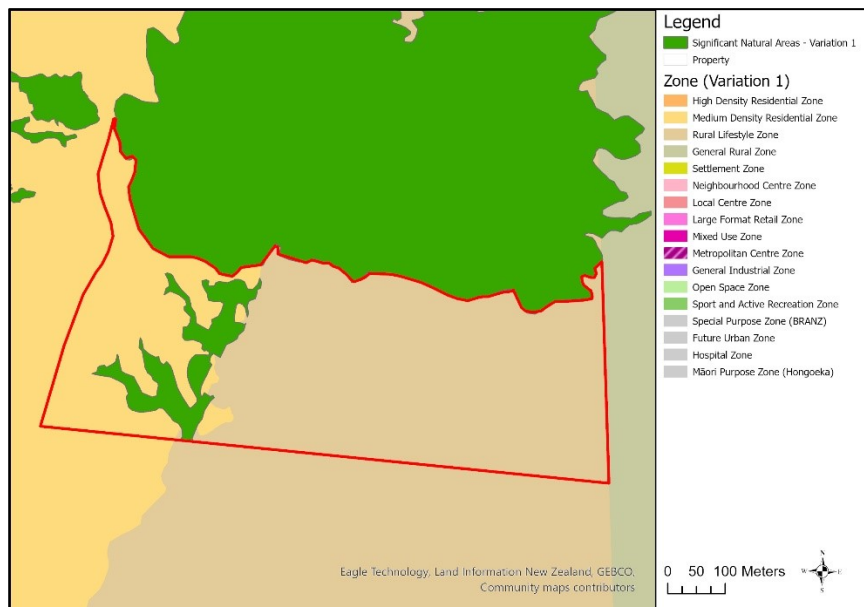


Figure 2: Land on the eastern margin of the Muri Road Block

15 The total area of the land identified in Figure 2 above is roughly 30 hectares. Of that, roughly 10 hectares are proposed to be zoned MRZ

(with about two hectares of that within SNA224) and 20 hectares are zoned RLZ. I note that the area to the east of the identified land is zoned GRUZ under the PDP.

16 Mr Barber noted that the land is steep, and therefore would be unlikely to be suitable for development. The steepness of the land is shown by the large area identified as being greater than 20 degrees in gradient on the Environmental Framework map included in the Landscape Statement.² I also note that the location of SNA224 may make roading connection to this part of the site difficult to achieve.

17 However, while acknowledging that, I note that the area of RLZ proposed in the PDP were considered in Hearing Stream 5. Additionally, the Urban Design Assessment³ states that:

The technical assessments prepared as part of the structure planning process have determined that the steeper parts of the site at the eastern edge are not suitable for residential zoning. Development of residential scale development (in particular medium density residential) would necessitate significant earthworks across the steeper, more visible higher landform.

Allocation of areas of larger lot development anticipated in a Rural Lifestyle Zone (RLZ) would be a better fit in the context of this landform and also enable better management of the interface between residential development across the site and the rural landscape to the east.

RLZ areas also anticipate building development settled into regenerating native vegetation patterns, contributing to ecological values, visual amenity, stormwater management and privacy. This can add to the mix of development character across the site and could more sensitively incorporate the large areas of significant vegetation on the site.

[...]

A large area of Rural Lifestyle Zone is to be retained on the eastern part of the site. This zone enables housing development at a significantly lower residential density. Lower density development will mitigate potential effects on landscape and landform across the higher, steeper parts of the site. The RLZ will also manage the

² Boffa Miskell, 2022, Porirua Northern Growth Area Landscape Statement

³ Boffa Miskell, 2022, Urban Design Assessment Northern Growth Area Plan Variation

interface between residential development of the site and the rural landscape further to the east.

18 As such, even if it were in scope to do so, I would not recommend a different zoning be applied to this area of land. While the current landowner may determine that it is better to allow this area to revert to native vegetation, I do not, at this point, consider that that necessitates any change in the underlying planning framework.

Please advise any comments on the presentation for the Gray Street Residents Group as regards the yellow island discussed by Ms Davis?

19 The 'yellow island' as referred to in the question is identified in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3: Reproduction of 'Figure 4' from the speaking notes of Ms Rebecca Davis on behalf of the Gray Street Pukerua Bay Residents' Group

20 I note that I assessed the inclusion of the ecological connection sought by the submitter to the north of SNA225 in paragraph 329 of my Section 42A Report: Part B – Northern Growth Development Area. That identifies that the area of the land identified as the 'yellow island' is approximately 875 square metres.

21 The submitter expressed a view that the ecological corridors should not be severed by roads, and as such the area of land to the north of SNA225 could not be provided sufficient access. While I acknowledge the clear reasoning behind that position, I note that the Ecological Assessment states in relation to Ecological Connections that:

Roading and walkways, however, can cross through these corridors but (in the case of roads) with under pass culverts for invertebrates and lizards and where the vegetation is at the edge of the roading (or walking tracks) and the canopy is allowed to, or nearly to, close over the access.

22 To address this matter, the DEV – NG – Northern Growth Development Area chapter includes at DEV-NG-P2-5.b:

5. Recognises and enhances ecological values of the Development Area, including by:

[...]

*b. Creating ecological corridors in the locations identified on the Structure Plan which will, over time, become dominated by indigenous vegetation, with a sufficient width, scale, and **appropriate mitigation of any severance caused by roads**, to connect and enhance Significant Natural Areas; (emphasis added)*

23 I also note that the area between SNA225 and the site boundary is largely less than 20 degrees in slope, and as identified in my Section 42A Report is approximately 6,400 square metres in area. Additionally, a road may not be required to provide access to this land, as access may be able to be provided via a private way.

24 As such, while understanding and acknowledging the submitter's position, I have not changed my position as expressed in my section 42A report. Specifically, I do not consider that the requested additional ecological connection (including the revegetation of the 'yellow island' as sought by the submitter in the hearing) would be an efficient use of land, while also not providing any substantial value as an ecological connection.


Can Mr Smeaton please advise his views on Ms Williams' revised EMF standard wording?

25 I would like to undertake further assessment of the proposed provisions as put forward in the Joint Memorandum before recommending any amendments.

26 However, I do note that on a plan structure basis I am not comfortable with the proposed inclusion of the tabulated height limits within the rule itself. There are no other similar provisions within the PDP.

27 As such, I intend to provide a fuller response to this question in the Council's right of reply, which will likely include at least some recommendations for the redrafting of the provisions.

Date: 23 March 2023



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Rory Smeaton
Senior Policy Planner