

**Before a Panel of Independent Hearing Commissioners
appointed by Porirua City Council**

IN THE MATTER OF the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**)

IN THE MATTER OF the hearing of submissions on Variation 1 to the Proposed Porirua
District Plan

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF SELWYN JOHN BLACKMORE FOR WAKA KOTAHI NZ
TRANSPORT AGENCY**

Dated: 24 February 2023

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 My full name is Selwyn John Blackmore. I am a Senior Principal Transport Planner at Stantec NZ, currently seconded to the New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (**Waka Kotahi**) as a System Design Transport Planner for the Wellington region.
- 1.2 Prior to joining Stantec NZ, and from December 2007 to August 2016, I held the role of the Central Region Transport Planning Manager at Waka Kotahi. Since August 2016 to present, I have provided Waka Kotahi with various regional transport planning services, including my current secondment role to the Wellington System Design transport planning team.
- 1.3 My evidence is in support of the Waka Kotahi submission on Variation 1 to the Proposed Porirua District Plan (PDP) in respect to the DEV – NG – Northern Growth Development Area Chapter (**Northern Growth Development Area chapter**). My evidence is specifically in support of the Waka Kotahi submission on the need for an overarching transport strategy to be included in the Northern Growth Development Area chapter (referred to as submission number OS81.7 and OS81.9¹).
- 1.4 To briefly recap, Waka Kotahi submitted that an overarching transport strategy for the Northern Growth Area would be highly beneficial as it could identify how development would be staged and how land use and transport will be integrated between each area.
- 1.5 National, regional and local strategic transport and climate change strategy / policy direction is very clear, that is, there is a need for improved integrated transport planning to improve multi modal choices and to reduce transport emissions. The National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 is also very clear that integrated planning is to underpin new development areas, such as, the Northern Growth Development Area.
- 1.6 In my opinion, the ‘step change’ in current district planning provisions is required to give effect to the direction sought at a strategic level. For the Northern Growth Development Area chapter, this step change could be practically achieved through the inclusion of an overarching transport strategy (in addition to the “business as usual” planning provisions for designs of active mode facilities). This strategy would need to be collaboratively scoped with key stakeholders and be fit-for-purpose, but ultimately completed before the detailed design phases for the Northern Growth Development Area’s stages begin.
- 1.7 Development of an overarching transport strategy could also consider Mr Kelly’s Integrated Transport Assessment recommendations for further transport investigations.

¹ Section 42A Report, Officer’s Report: Part B – Northern Growth Development Area, 10 February 2023, paragraph 343, Page 50

In particular, the strategy could provide further consideration to how SH59 might be accessed, and how such access might be funded.

- 1.8 Ms Kirkbride's evidence proposes planning mechanisms by which the development of the Northern Growth Area could be contingent on and then give effect to an overarching transport strategy once it has been developed. I support Ms Kirkbride's recommendations.

2. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 2.1 My full name is Selwyn John Blackmore. I am a Senior Principal Transport Planner at Stantec NZ, currently seconded to the New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (**Waka Kotahi**) as a System Design Transport Planner for the Wellington region.
- 2.2 Prior to joining Stantec NZ, and from December 2007 to August 2016, I held the role of the Central Region Transport Planning Manager at Waka Kotahi. Since August 2016 to present, I have provided Waka Kotahi with various regional transport planning services, including my current secondment role to the Wellington System Design transport planning team.
- 2.3 My qualifications and experience include:
- (a) Postgraduate diploma, Business Administration – Infrastructure; and
 - (b) Bachelor of Environmental and Resource Planning (Honors).
- 2.4 I am authorised to give evidence on behalf of Waka Kotahi.

3. CODE OF CONDUCT

- 3.1 I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses contained in section 9 of the Environment Court Practice Note 2023. This evidence has been prepared in compliance with that Code. In particular, unless I state otherwise, this evidence is within my area of expertise and I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I express.

4. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 4.1 My evidence is in support of the Waka Kotahi submission on Variation 1 to the Proposed Porirua District Plan (PDP) in respect to the DEV – NG – Northern Growth Development Area chapter (**Northern Growth Development Area chapter**). My evidence is specifically in support of the Waka Kotahi submission on the need for an overarching

transport strategy to be included in the Northern Growth Development Area chapter (referred to as submission number OS81.7 and OS81.9).

5. WAKA KOTAHI'S SUBMISSION

- 5.1 To recap, Waka Kotahi sought that an overarching transport strategy be incorporated into the Northern Growth Development Area chapter for the following reasons:
- (a) To support the integrated transport outcomes for the Northern Growth Development Area;
 - (b) As currently proposed, and as there is no transport strategy to guide the Northern Growth Development Area's development, it is therefore not clear how transport will be integrated between each stage of development and how it will achieve the national, regional and local strategy / policy goals for multi modal improvements and emission reductions [including vehicle kilometres travelled (**VKT**) reductions]. Nor is it clear how the relevant integrated transport objectives and policies² from the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (**NPS-UD**)³ will be catered for; and
 - (c) An overarching transport strategy could identify how development would be staged, and how land use and transport would be integrated.
- 5.2 For avoidance of doubt, Waka Kotahi's submission sought that the overarching transport strategy specifically applied to the Northern Growth Development Area.

6. NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL STRATEGY AND POLICY DIRECTION

- 6.1 I understand from Mr Keshaboina's evidence, the intent of key government and regional transport strategy / policy is as follows:
- (a) The Transport Outcomes Framework's Environmental Sustainability outcome is for the transport system to transition to net zero carbon emissions;
 - (b) Government Policy Statement on Land Transport (**GPS**) strategic priorities are to improve safety, better travel options, climate change and improving freight connections. The emerging GPS for 2024 proposes to include an overarching focus on emission reductions;

² For example, Objective 3 and Policy 1 of the NPS-UD

³ See: [National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 \(environment.govt.nz\)](https://www.environment.govt.nz/nps/our-work/nps-ud/)

- (c) The amendments to the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019 requires the Government to set greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, including specific transport reduction targets. The Emissions Reduction Plan (**ERP**) has set national targets for reducing light vehicle VKT (among other targets). I further understand that a regional VKT target will be set later in 2023;
- (d) One of the Wellington Regional Growth Framework's (**WRGF**) objectives is to transition to a 'low / carbon future', and one of its 'key moves' is to address the urban development challenges of climate change and transitioning to a zero-carbon economy at a regional scale; and
- (e) The Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan's 'Ten Year Headline Targets' include a 35 per cent reduction in transport carbon emissions by 2030, and a 40 per cent increase in active mode and public transport mode share by 2030.⁴

6.2 Further to the above national and regional strategies / policies, I note that at a local level, that the Porirua Growth Strategy 2048's key principle of 'A connected and active city' seeks better use of existing transport networks, to make active modes and public transport choices viable, for better integration of land use and transport and to support the reduction of carbon-based transport related activities.⁵

6.3 The need for integrated transport planning is also front and centre of the NPS-UD. One of its key underpinning principles is that people have good public and active transport links and are therefore not reliant on cars for transportation. This outcome will in turn, help to reduce transport emissions (and therefore help achieve the various national and regional reduction emission targets). For example, Objective 3(b) of the NPS-UD seeks that people have access to well serviced existing or public transport, and Policy 1(c) requires that planning decisions contribute to well-functioning urban environments with good accessibility between housing, jobs, community services, natural spaces, and open spaces, including by way of public or active transport. I also note that Objective 6 requires local authority decisions that affect urban environments to be integrated with infrastructure planning and funding decisions.

6.4 Overall, I believe the collective national, regional and local strategic transport direction, including the direction of the NPS-UD is very clear, that is, there is a need for increased multi modal choices and for transport emission reductions. For the Northern Growth Development Area chapter, this step change could be practically achieved through the inclusion of an overarching transport strategy. Or, alternatively, and as proposed by Ms

⁴ Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan 2021, 2021, page 9. See [Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan 2021 \(gwrc.govt.nz\)](https://www.gwrc.govt.nz)

⁵ Porirua Growth Strategy 2048, 2019, page 26. See [Porirua Growth Strategy 2048.pdf \(storage.googleapis.com\)](https://storage.googleapis.com)

Kirkbride, using a planning mechanism to defer development of the Northern Growth Development Area until a fully supported integrated transport strategy for the Area is in place.

7. CURRENT STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION ACTIVITY

7.1 Waka Kotahi's submission, and in particular Mr Keshibonia's evidence, identifies some strategic integrated transport planning activities that are either recently completed or are currently being undertaken by various agencies. Examples of these activities includes Kainga Ora's Porirua Northern Growth Area Specified Development Project, Access Porirua Programme Business Case, Porirua Network Operating Framework, potential for further strategic planning by Waka Kotahi on the future function and form of SH59 (following on from the direction provided in the Porirua Network Operating Framework) and pending revocation decisions by Waka Kotahi on SH58. The Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan, led by Greater Wellington Regional Council, is under review this year.

7.2 I note that most of the strategic planning work described by Mr Keshibonia has either only been recently completed or not yet completed or in some cases, has yet to even commence. Therefore, as Variation 1 has been publicly notified before this strategic planning work is fully complete, reinforces the need for an overarching integrated transport strategy for the Porirua Northern Growth Area to be put in place to help guide the Area's development to ensure robust integrated planning occurs.

8. WHAT MIGHT AN INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY LOOK LIKE?

8.1 Integrated transport plans come in many shapes and / or forms. They can take the shape of a simple strategy document or have a similar look and feel to a business case. Typically, such strategies are scoped to be fit-for-purpose and are completed prior to undertaking the detailed design phases for a development, such as the staged developments proposed for the Northern Growth Development Area.

8.2 The first key step in developing a suitable integrated transport strategy for the Porirua Northern Growth Area would be for it to be jointly scoped by the key transport stakeholders (e.g. Greater Wellington Regional Council, Porirua City Council, Waka Kotahi) as well as the developers. This step is vital to ensure the strategy is correctly scoped and fit-for-purpose from the beginning. However, in order to provide a "flavour" for what such a strategy might look like, I would broadly expect it to cover matters such as:

- (a) Integrated objectives / principles / anticipated outcomes for transport, land use and urban design for the area to be developed (development of an overarching vision might also be appropriate);
- (b) Strategic and technical information used to inform the objectives / principles;
- (c) Option development and assessment processes to identify the preferred way forward, which would include an assessment of the options against the objectives / principles. A wide range of integrated transport options would be expected to be considered (e.g. ranging from travel demand reduction measures, park and ride measures, road safety to new infrastructure etc);
- (d) Option assessment would include identification of rough order costs and benefits;
- (e) Concept plans to identify more accurate costings / benefits;
- (f) Development stages, priorities and triggers (e.g. including the timing for certain actions or improvements); and
- (g) Roles and responsibilities, including funding arrangements to support the implementation of the integrated transport strategy.

8.3 To reiterate, the above scope items are not exhaustive, rather I have provided these for explanation purposes. To this end, I would expect the strategy's scope to be fit-for-purpose and scoped collaboratively by the relevant stakeholders.

8.4 I note that Mr Kelly's Integrated Transport Assessment (**ITA**)⁶ for the Northern Growth Development Area has made several recommendations for further investigation, including the following matters (summarised):

- (a) Investigate external pedestrian / cycle connectivity across SH59;
- (b) Liaise with Waka Kotahi on access requirements for SH59;
- (c) Liaise with GWRC regarding the viability and operation of a bus feeder service between the development areas and existing rail stations (and to investigate the possibility of an additional rail station in the area);
- (d) ITAs triggered by subdivision consent requirements be informed by traffic modelling and an agreed SH59 strategy; and

⁶ Porirua Northern Growth Area Pukerua Bay South - Variation Integrated Transportation Assessment, 2022, page 36. See [porirua ngf ITA v6 jul22 \(storage.googleapis.com\)](https://storage.googleapis.com/ngf-ita-v6-jul22)

(e) Progression of future development takes place with provisions ensuring consistency with the Structure Plan, particularly in relation to the indicative points of external access and internal road network.

8.5 The above recommendations by Mr Kelly could also be considered as part of an integrated transport strategy for the Northern Growth Development Area. I note however the Section 32 Report recommended that no additional planning responses (over and above those proposed) were needed in response to Mr Kelly's ITA recommendations⁷. Rather, I believe Mr Kelly's recommendations could be used to inform an integrated transport strategy, and that such a strategy could be a provision included in the final Northern Growth Development Area chapter or put in place prior to development of the Area proceeding.

9. SECTION 42A REPORT

9.1 The Section 42A Report supports in part the need for an overarching transport strategy⁸. However, the Report advises such a strategy would need to be developed under the Local Government Act 2002 and would therefore sit outside the Porirua Proposed District Plan. Rather, in my opinion, incorporating the need for an overarching transport strategy specifically for the Area into the proposed Chapter or deferring development of the Area (while a transport strategy is developed) would lead to better medium to long term transport outcomes for the Area (and the wider region). That is, the strategy would ensure the national, regional and local transport strategy / policy direction is given effect to at a local developmental level and that the transport requirements particular to the development (e.g. as outline in Mr Kelley's ITA recommendations) are well considered before detailed design of the Northern Growth Development Area is progressed.

9.2 I understand from Ms Kirkbride's evidence that it would be possible to defer the proposed Northern Growth Development Area or amend the chapter's provisions to give effect to Waka Kotahi's request for an overarching transport strategy to help guide detailed development of the Area. It is my opinion that either option provides a practical way of ensuring robust 'transport settings' for the development of the Northern Growth Development Area are put in place in the first instance.

⁷ Section 32 Evaluation Report Part B: Northern Growth Development Area; Variation 1 to the Proposed Porirua District Plan August 2022, paragraph 8.5.5, page 84

⁸ Section 42A Report, Officer's Report: Part B – Northern Growth Development Area, 10 February 2023, paragraph 343, Page 50

10. SH59 AND FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- 10.1 As noted above, Mr Kelly's ITA has made recommendations that future connections to SH59 be investigated (in conjunction with Waka Kotahi). I note however that there has been no discussion in the ITA or other planning documents as to how such a connection might be funded. Development of an overarching transport strategy may be a useful way to enable future funding discussions.
- 10.2 For completeness, I note Part E of the Porirua City Council's Operative District Plan allows financial contributions to be taken for the purposes of access to subdivisions, although it is unclear whether these provisions would allow the Council to collect contributions for access improvements to SH59. Under the Proposed District Plan, I understand that financial contributions may be taken under its development contributions policy, which Ms Kirkbride's evidence addresses further.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 In conclusion, I support amending the Northern Growth Development Area chapter to include an overarching transport strategy. I understand this could be achieved through either amending the objectives / policies for the Northern Growth Development Area or deferral as set out in Ms Kirkbride's evidence. Such amendments in my opinion would practically ensure:
- (a) The clear direction for integrated transport planning and emission reductions set out in the relevant transport and climate change national, regional and local strategies / policies, including the strong integrated planning directives provided in the NPS-UD, is given effect to prior to detailed design commencing for each subdivision stage of the Northern Growth Development Area; and
 - (b) For SH59, an integrated transport strategy would also aid in the future planning of this important state highway.

Selwyn Blackmore

24 February 2023