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Tēnā koe

Waikato Regional Council Submission to Proposed Private Plan Change 58 (PPPC58) to the Matamata-Piako District Plan

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the Proposed Private Plan Change 58 (PPPC58) to the Matamata-Piako District Plan. Please find attached the Waikato Regional Council's submission. The attached submission has been signed under delegation by the Director of Science, Policy, and Information and will be retrospectively shared with members at the next available opportunity.

Should you have any queries regarding the content of this document please contact Joao Paulo Silva, Senior Policy Advisor, Policy Implementation directly on (07) 9497179 or by email joaopaulo.silva@waikatoregion.govt.nz.

Nāku iti noa, nā,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tracey May". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "M".

Tracey May
Director of Science, Policy, and Information

Submission from Waikato Regional Council on Proposed Private Plan Change 58 (PPPC58) to the Matamata-Piako District Plan

17 July 2023

Introduction

1. Waikato Regional Council (WRC) appreciates the opportunity to make a submission to Proposed Private Plan Change 58 (PPPC58). In this case WRC's interests are in relation to the Waikato Regional Policy Statement (WRPS)¹ and the National Policy Statement of Highly Productive Land (NPS-HPL)². District Plans, including Plan Changes such as this one, are required to give effect to the relevant regional policy statement (RMA s75(3)(c)) and must give full effect to the NPS-HPL (Clause 4.1(1) of the NPS-HPL).

Summary

2. WRC commends the engagement approach taken by the applicant during the pre-application phase and for assessing the application against the WRPS and relevant national direction. However, there are some points needing further consideration.
3. Further clarification should be provided in terms of the NERA Economic Consulting (NERA) assessment assumption that sites already sold by developers should not be considered as available land supply for industrial development.
4. WRC commends the carrying out an assessment under Proposed Change 1 to the WRPS. The assessment should be updated to include an assessment against APP14(B)(ii). Matamata-Piako District Council (MPDC) should assess the significance of the proposal as per proposed policy UFD-P19 and in connection to the criteria under APP14 of the WRPS.
5. Lastly, we highlight further opportunities to effect real change in relation to integrated land use and transport planning in association with climate change.

Inconsistencies between economic assessments in connection to Clause 3.6 of the NPS-HPL

6. We understand that there are conflicting assessments regarding the capacity of industrial land supply available for development in Morrinsville. The Business Development Capacity and Demand Assessment (BDCA) finds there is sufficient supply of industrial land in Morrinsville to meet short-term demand (between 2021-2024) but insufficient supply in the medium-term and long-term. The BDCA shows a potential shortfall of up to 4.9ha in the medium-term (between 2021-2031) and a potential shortfall of up to 26.7ha in the long-term (between 2021-2054). However, the Economic Assessment by Nera Consulting concludes the potential shortfall of industrial land in Morrinsville may be up to 16.5ha in the medium-term (between 2021-2031) and up to 38.3ha in the long-term (2021-2054). It also concludes there may even be a small shortfall of up to 1ha in the short-term (between 2021-2024) in a 'high employee ratio' scenario.
7. The NERA assessment considers that the difference from 4.9ha in the medium-term (BDCA assessments) and 16.5ha in the medium-term (NERA assessment) is because much of the industrial land that the BDCA assumes is available has already been sold by developers, and therefore these areas should not be considered part of the available land supply for industrial development.

¹ [Home - Waikato Regional Plans](#)

² [National Policy Statement For Highly Productive Land 2022 \(environment.govt.nz\)](#)

8. The current development capacity (land supply) of industrial land will be key to understanding the extent to which the application meets the criteria for rezoning under the NPS-HPL. Under the NPS-HPL, urban zoning of HPL may only occur if the urban zoning is required to provide sufficient development capacity to meet expected demand for housing or business land (Clause 3.6 (4)(a)). It is our understanding that Clause 3.6 (4)(a) as well as Clause 3.6 (1)(a) have the intention to test if the proposed rezoning of HPL to an urban zone is needed to provide sufficient development capacity for short term (within next 3 years) and/or medium term (3–10 years) and not for the long-term (over 10 years). This aligns with the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land – Guide to implementation³. Further, Section 3.6(5) of the NPS-HPL directs territorial authorities to ensure that the spatial extent of any urban zone covering highly productive land is the minimum necessary to provide the required development capacity.
9. The NERA assessment assumes that sites already sold, including sites yet to be developed, should no longer be considered as part of the industrial land supply. This conclusion is not supported. A change in ownership does not necessarily mean that the land is no longer available for future industrial uses. We consider that sites that are yet to be developed should be considered as land supply as per the BDCA assessment.
10. The proposal mentions the completed sale of 14 lots within the Avenue Business Park development (approximately 6.2ha), the completed sale of 5 lots within the Keith Camp Place development (approximately 2.5ha) and the recent development of the Bowers Concrete site (approximately 2.8ha). It is agreed that a site already developed such as the Bowers Concrete site should no longer be considered as land available for development. However, the other sites (approximately 7.7ha) should be considered as part of the land supply. Therefore, we seek clarification about why these sites are excluded from being considered as land available for future industrial use.

Proposed Change 1 to the Waikato Regional Policy Statement in response to the NPS-UD

11. It is noted that the application provides an assessment of Proposed Change 1 to the WRPS, and we commend this approach. However, the responsive planning criteria for out-of-sequence and unanticipated developments under APP14(B)(ii) was not assessed. This relates to whether the proposal supports, and limits as much as possible adverse impacts on, the competitive operation of land and development markets. An assessment of the proposed rezoning against APP14(B)(ii) should be undertaken.
12. Further, under proposed policy UFD-P19, it is up to the local authority to determine whether the proposal is significant before particular regard is had to the proposed development capacity. Therefore, we consider that MPDC, as the local authority processing this plan change, should confirm that the request is significant and consistent with APP14 of the WRPS.

Transport

13. Proposed Plan Change 58 is generally consistent with regional priorities, objectives and policies articulated in the operative WRPS as it pertains to transport matters. We generally support this location for new industrial land as it is well placed in relation to the existing urban area. However, there are further opportunities to effect real change in relation to integrated land use and transport planning, and the required reduction of transport emissions which are a major contributor to climate change. Embedding climate change provisions into this plan change is critical to supporting the transformational change that is necessary to address the effects of climate change that is included in national and regional policy.

³ [National-Policy-Statement-Highly-Productive-Land-Guide-to-implementation-March-2023.pdf \(environment.govt.nz\)](#) (at page 44).

14. Section 74(2)(d) of the RMA requires that, when preparing or changing a district plan, territorial authorities have regard to the Emissions Reduction Plan and the National Adaptation Plan.
15. It is important that actions identified in these national priority policy documents are reflected in the provisions in this plan change. In relation to transport there are three focus areas of relevance in the Emissions Reduction Plan:
 - reduce reliance on cars and support people to walk, cycle and use public transport
 - rapidly adopt low-emissions vehicles
 - begin work now to decarbonise heavy transport and freight
16. In the WRPS, Objective UFD-01 and Policy UFD-P1 refer specifically to transport and require regard to be had to the General Development Principles in APP11. These include:
 - 'a. promote compact urban form, design and location to:*
 - i. minimise energy and carbon use;*
 - ii. minimise the need for private motor vehicle use;*
 - iii. maximise opportunities to support and take advantage of public transport in particular by encouraging employment activities in locations that are or can in the future be served efficiently by public transport;*
 - iv. encourage walking, cycling and multi-modal transport connections; and*
 - v. maximise opportunities for people to live, work and play within their local area.'*
17. These factors need to be considered in the proposed plan change. Every opportunity to avoid short car trips and encourage walking or cycling to activities and services within a local area should be prioritised. WRC acknowledges that due to the functional need of the surrounding industrial area, continued reliance on cars and trucks is anticipated. However, we consider there is scope to strengthen provisions around transport emissions reduction and how this might be achieved.
18. We support the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure as identified in the Integrated Transport Assessment of October 2022
19. We suggest identifying this infrastructure in the plan change to provide clarity around its location. We make no comment on technical specifications for such infrastructure (and the transport network in general), but support these where they meet best practice standards for walking and cycling infrastructure.
20. We suggest minor changes to the rules to require end of journey facilities and to enable EV charging facilities. Such facilities encourage change in travel behaviour towards low carbon modes. End of journey facilities encourage people to walk and cycle to places of employment. EV charging facilities enable charging of EVs at employment sites (beyond those that might serve business fleets). We also suggest enabling charging facilities for EV freight vehicles.
21. We consider the minor changes sought to the plan change will contribute to transport emissions reduction and respond to the focus areas identified in the Emissions Reduction Plan and the requirements of the Regional Policy Statement.

Further information and hearings

22. WRC **wishes to be heard** at the hearings for Proposed Private Plan Change 58 (PPPC58) in support of this submission and is prepared to consider a joint submission with others making a similar submission.
23. WRC **could not** gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission.

Submitter details

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I could not gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission

I am not directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission that:

(a) does not adversely affect the environment; and

(b) does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition.