

BEFORE INDEPENDENT HEARINGS COMMISSIONERS AT SELWYN

IN THE MATTER OF

Clause 21 of the First Schedule of
the Resource Management Act 1991
(Plan Change 67)

IN THE MATTER OF

GW WILFIELD LIMITED
(Applicant)

**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ANDREW ALAN
METHERELL ON BEHALF OF GW WILFIELD LIMITED**

TRANSPORT

Dated: 14 September 2021

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INTRODUCTION

- 1 My full name is Andrew Alan Metherell. I am a Chartered Professional Engineer with more than 20 years experience specialising in traffic engineering and transportation planning. I am currently employed as the Christchurch Traffic Engineering Team Leader at Stantec New Zealand. My full qualifications and experience are set out in my evidence in chief.

EVIDENCE SUMMARY

- 2 I have assessed the transportation matters associated with the PC67 proposal. I consider residential development of the site can be integrated with the West Melton transport network and urban area in a manner that supports consolidation and transport mode choice at a level that could be expected for a small township near a major city.

Site Access

- 3 Weedons Ross Road will provide the primary road for vehicle access through a new safely located intersection into the site. Having considered the Council's approach to speed management, I would expect that a review of safe and appropriate speed limits would be considered around the time of subdivision. I consider that a reasonable expectation at this time is that the new intersection would be located within a future extension of the urban speed environment.
- 4 Local road connections are provided to the adjoining Wilfield subdivision in a way that provides local connectivity that does not adversely affect the form and function of existing local residential roads.

Walking and Cycling Connections

- 5 Rule provisions are proposed that will restrict development until further enhancements to the external walking and cycling network are provided. Those enhancements include a direct off-road pedestrian / cycle path along Weedons Ross Road from the site to SH73, and traffic signalisation of SH73/Weedons Ross Road which is currently funded by Waka Kotahi and is in the detailed design stage. Aspects of the pedestrian and cycle enhancements will most likely require funding from the developer, and will provide a wider community benefit.

- 6 The notified Plan Change ODP transport provisions have been further refined, as set out in the evidence of Kim Seaton. I consider this will provide additional certainty that subdivision will result in an internal transport network for pedestrians and cyclists that connects efficiently to the external network along Weedons Ross Road and through Wilfield, supporting walking, cycling and other micro-mobility modes as feasible and attractive local means of transport.
- 7 The distances involved are comparable to existing extents of zoned land in West Melton. As set out in my evidence in chief, I disagree with Mr Nicholson, and for the same reasons also the submitter evidence of Mr Tallentire, and their assertions that the site is unable to support walking, cycling or other alternative modes of transport.
- 8 The site location will also enable the opportunity for residents to utilise cycles, particularly e-bike for travel to local employment destinations and activity centres at Rolleston. The safety of that trip will be improved when the West Melton to Rolleston cycleway is completed.

Serviceability by Public Transport

- 9 West Melton is a township that is serviced by public transport, albeit at a limited level of both route frequency and network provision. Public transport servicing West Melton is currently limited to a commuter service between Darfield and Christchurch through West Melton. High frequency routes are at Rolleston. Those using public transport will generally rely on Park n Ride, or a cycle or micro-mobility connection from the site to the existing service.
- 10 Public transport planning is focussing on better service of growth areas and increasing frequency and reliability of service, but to my knowledge has not yet planned substantial change to West Melton's service. With expansion of Darfield and increased demand from West Melton, some future changes can in my opinion be contemplated. This could be in the form of an additional route connecting West Melton to Rolleston, and/or increased frequency of the existing service. In my experience services evolve over time. West Melton as a growth township can already be considered to be under-provided when considered against current objectives, and would be suitable for additional frequency and ultimately network expansion consideration.

- 11 The Plan Change would add to existing public transport demand, and contrary to Mr Tallentire's assertions at Paragraph 101, I do not consider it would inhibit the efficient and effective provision of public transport, or force CRC to be reactive to unanticipated service demands. West Melton is already serviced by public transport, and has had recent and ongoing growth, so it is simply a function of frequency and network coverage which ECan would need to consider a response to.
- 12 To reflect future potential, the ODP provisions have been refined to include additional recognition that public transport services could better serve the southern part of West Melton, either internal or external to the site. When public transport services are improved for West Melton, either through increased frequency or additional routes, this will support encouragement of public transport as a feasible mode of travel to and from the Plan Change site. Whilst public transport generally has a low utilisation throughout greater Christchurch, I consider this increases the opportunity for public transport and further improves the consistency with various planning policies.

Wider Transport Network Effects

- 13 The rural section of Weedons Ross Road is soon to be widened to better reflect its arterial status, with the project at the contractor tendering stage. This will improve its safe traffic carrying function, and provide a convenient access route from the site to the Christchurch Southern Motorway and Rolleston. Weedons Ross Road carries a level of traffic that is low for its arterial status , and I consider generated traffic will safely and efficiently be accommodated.
- 14 Traffic signalisation of SH73/Weedons Ross Road is currently funded by Waka Kotahi and is in the detailed design stage. With the integrated pedestrian and cycle infrastructure included, and safe control of crossing and turning traffic, Waka Kotahi are planning for the intersection to enhance community connectivity to key facilities, like the community and recreation centre, the Domain, local shops, West Melton School and early childcare facilities. The signals are also proposed to help reduce delays and make travel times at the intersection more reliable. The traffic signals enable safe and efficient vehicle travel locally, and for connection to both the east and west.

- 15 SH73 provides a state highway route into Christchurch, while other state highway and arterial routes disperse traffic. Combined with the good access to the arterial Weedons Ross Road, the traffic generated by the development will be well dispersed, with a range of alternative routes available to key destinations.
- 16 In the absence of the zoning, I consider it likely that many of the trips would still be made on the surrounding or wider Selwyn District transport network with comparable or longer travel distances. This is because I understand the supply of dwellings of the type and location proposed would only be available in other towns that are also separated from Christchurch, including Darfield well to the west.
- 17 With the comparatively low increase in traffic generated by 130 households, I consider the wider strategic network change in performance will barely be perceptible. As noted by Mr Tallentire at Paragraph 62, the growth from this Plan Change represents only 0.04% of the previously forecast greater Christchurch planned residential growth. In my opinion, this in itself answers Mr Tallentire's concerns about the potential cumulative effect on the Christchurch City network. I emphasise that trips for a range of purposes can be made locally and to and from Rolleston.
- 18 I expect that over time, emissions generated by private vehicle travel to / from West Melton will reduce in response to the changing vehicle fleet (i.e. increasing use of electric vehicles), increased accessibility to safe routes and services for active and public transport, increased self-sufficiency, and increased prevalence of work from home.

CONCLUSION

- 19 For the reasons I have set out, I consider that the proposed Plan Change, with the amendments to transport provisions as proposed by Ms Seaton, can be supported from a transportation perspective.

Andrew Metherell

14 September 2021