Notes for Hearing 1 – Strategic Directions – Lynette Wharfe for Horticulture NZ

Rural Strategic Direction

My evidence sets out the reasons why I support the inclusion of a specific rural strategic direction, particularly to implement Selwyn 2031, District Development Strategy.

I support the evidence of Mr Vance Hodgson for NZ Pork and Mr Colin Glass for Dairy Holdings Ltd in respect to the rural strategic objective.

The Commissioners have asked a question as to whether inclusion of such an objective would enhance the Plan's certainty and clarity.

The s42A Report writer's response considers that inclusion of a strategic objective may provide clarity and certainty of the Plan's expectation for the rural area but it would set a precedent that each individual zone may need its own strategic direction.

In my opinion the need for a rural strategic objective is due to the pressure that the rural area is under and comprises a significant area of the district and it is important for integrated management. If other zone activities had considered it important to be reflected in the strategic objectives they could have equally sought such an inclusion.

I do not consider that the inclusion of a rural strategic objective is duplication – in fact I have specifically recommended a strategic objective that does not duplicate GRUZO1.
Such an objective will enable integrated management rather than duplication.

The s32 Report criteria for strategic objectives is that they are best in a single place in the Plan rather than located throughout the plan. Relying on the GRUZ-O1 does not meet this criteria.

A number of statements of evidence have suggested that the recommended addition of highly productive land to SD-UFD-O1 means that the need for a rural strategic direction is addressed.

I do not agree with that assessment. SD-UFD-O1 is about urban growth which is located around existing townships. It does not address the subdivision, use and development in the rural area where there is a need for direction as to how the rural area will be managed.

A rural objective is about much more than highly productive land. So while it is part of the issue it does not address the whole.

Locating a rural objective only within GRUZ means that such an objective would not apply across the plan in an overarching way. There are other chapters which are relevant to rural production activities – eg earthworks, noise, hazards, subdivision – where the rural direction informs the provisions of the topic specific chapters.

Strategic objectives for Infrastructure

My Evidence addressed submissions and further submissions on SD-IR O1 Community needs and SD-IR-O2 Effects of important infrastructure where I have sought changes to the objectives to better reflect higher order documents and identified concerns about the use of words such as 'protect' and 'avoid effects on' important infrastructure.

I note the evidence for a number of infrastructure providers who seeks significant amendments to the objectives for infrastructure, including the addition of policies within the SD chapter. Orion is now seeking different relief from that in their submission – which HNZ supported in part. I do not support Orion's revised relief as it goes beyond that sought.

I do not support the addition of policies within the strategic directions, particularly the proposed SD-IR-P1 Reverse sensitivity and incompatible activities. The implementation of the objectives should flow through to the specific chapters – such as Energy and Infrastructure. Equally a rural strategic objective would be implemented through the General Rural Zone chapter.

Strategic objectives for Urban Development

I support the inclusion of highly productive land in SD-UFD-O1 and suggested that there may be a need for a definition of highly productive land. I note that the s42A Report for Hearing 3 Urban growth is recommending that the definition of versatile soils is amended to highly productive land, so this matter will be addressed in Hearing 3.