

BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT HEARINGS PANEL

UNDER the Resource Management Act 1991
and the Canterbury Earthquake
(Christchurch Replacement District
Plan) Order 2014

IN THE MATTER OF **THE PROPOSED CHRISTCHURCH
REPLACEMENT DISTRICT PLAN –
CHAPTERS 15 AND 16 –
COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL**

SUBMITTER **880 MAIN NORTH ROAD
LIMITED (SUBMITTER #1081)**

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF RHYS ANDREW CHESTERMAN ON
BEHALF OF 880 MAIN NORTH ROAD LIMITED**

24 April 2015

INTRODUCTION

- 5 My name is Rhys Andrew Chesterman. I am a Director and Transport Engineer/Planner at Novo Group Limited. Novo Group is a specialist traffic engineering and planning consultancy that provides resource management related advice to local authorities and private clients. I have worked on resource management traffic planning and engineering projects for more than 15 years. This work has included a role as a traffic planner at the Christchurch City Council and direct involvement in over 2,500 resource consent applications.
- 6 My qualifications include a Bachelor of Resource Studies (BRS) from Lincoln University (1996), a Master of Resource Planning (MRP) from Massey University (1999) and a Master of Engineering in Transportation (MET) from the University of Canterbury (2010). I am a full member of the New Zealand Planning Institute and an affiliate member of the Institute of Professional Engineers of New Zealand (IPENZ) – Transport Group.
- 7 I have read the current Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses as contained in the Environment Court Consolidated Practice Note (2014), and I agree to comply with it. My qualifications as an expert are set out above. I confirm that the issues addressed in this brief of evidence are within my area of expertise. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed.

SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 8 In my evidence I set out the traffic related effects as they relate to road access to and from the ODP area and Main North Road (State Highway 1). I have considered the potential traffic effects specifically associated with the practicality of Rule 16.2.7.1.2 RD2 which refers to road access.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 5 Rule 16.2.7.1.2 RD2 (and its supporting assessment matter 16.2.7.3.2) enables appropriate consideration for a new road access directly from Main North Road (State Highway 1) to the North Belfast ODP. The rule enables consideration of:
- the potential effects with or without the Northern Arterial (and/or the Western Belfast Bypass);
 - the potential effects if the SH1 designation was uplifted;
 - the potential effects with or without intersection improvements at the Main North Road/SH1/Dickeys Road intersection;
 - the potential effects on Main North Road as a Core Public Transport Route (including consideration of mitigation measures);
 - the potential effects of the design and the location of a new road connection; and
 - the orientation and route of the road and its intended function – including the connections to other ODP roads (either existing or proposed).
- 6 I can support Rule 16.2.7.1.2 RD2 (and its supporting assessment matter 16.2.7.3.2) as promoted by Mr Stevenson, which includes a minor variation to the wording of the rule to make it clearer. As I understand, the Rule is also supported by NZTA. The specific and targeted assessment matter in particular enables detailed consideration of the potential transport issues listed above and those which have been highlighted by Mr Milne (Council’s Transport Planning Expert).
- 7 The suggested and revised wording for Rule 16.2.7.1.2 RD2 would be:

*Any proposed road access into the Outline Development Plan area (defined in Appendix 16.6.5 by 'ODP boundary') from Main North Road (State Highway 1), excluding the section **of road** north east of State Highway 1. **[my emphasis added]***

BACKGROUND

- 8 880 Main North Road Limited, in their original submission sought an amendment to the proposed ODP¹ specifically identifying a road connection from Main North Road into the ODP area – and connecting with the (collector) spine road that runs in a north-south direction. This ultimately came about through various discussions with Council and 880 Main North Road Limited in 2012 and 2013 when they were pursuing a private plan change to rezone the land for Business 4 purposes. That Plan Change was not pursued further because of Council's indication at the time that the subject land would be rezoned through the Christchurch Replacement District Plan process.
- 9 Aurecon (Council's consulting traffic engineers) at that time provided a memorandum to Council (dated 13 August 2013) which identified various access options. This included a signalised access and a left-in, left-out (LILO) access from Main North Road. It also went to the extent of identifying a preferred access location and included intersection layout plans. Aurecon ultimately recommended that a signalised 'T' intersection be provided to Main North Road².
- 10 On that basis 880 Main North Road Limited sought a road connection on the ODP at the same point recommended by Aurecon. This was on the premise that it would provide greater certainty to all parties with an interest in the development of the area and to avoid the uncertainty that could result if multiple and/or competing applications for road connections were to be submitted to Council.
- 11 That road connection (as sought in the submission) was rejected, however in the Council's Amended Position 8 April 2015 (and supported by Mr Stevenson in his evidence³) the ability to apply for a road access along Main North Road as a restricted discretionary activity has been retained through Rule 16.2.7.1.2 RD2. Subject to a minor variation to the wording I can support this rule as it still provides an appropriate

¹ As set out in revised Proposal – 8 April 2015 (Chapter 16 – Industrial), Appendix 16.5 - General Industrial Zone (North Belfast) – Outline Development Plan

² See Aurecon Memorandum to Andrew Milne – Christchurch City Council, dated 13 August 2013, Paragraph 5.3.

³ See evidence of Mark Stevenson (Planning), 13 April 2015, Paragraph 39.8-39.9 (page 172)

mechanism to apply for access, subject to dedicated and targeted assessment criteria which are spelled out in Matters of Discretion 16.2.7.3.2⁴.

- 12 Mr Milne in his evidence⁵ recognises the scope to apply for access to Main North Road, however he goes on to highlight the strategic transport issues that are likely to arise should access be established. It is not clear whether he supports the proposed Rule 16.2.7.1.2 RD2 and its supporting assessment matter 16.2.7.3.2.

ROAD ACCESS TO ODP AREA

- 13 As I understand, the intention of Rule 16.2.7.1.2 RD2 enables a resource consent application to be made to construct a road access from Main North Road (State Highway 1). In my opinion, the wording of the rule is slightly ambiguous as it implies that the section of land to the north-east is excluded. This could potentially be construed as excluding all of 880 Main North Road Limited's land that fronts the State Highway. I have discussed this with Mr Stevenson who has confirmed that this was not the intention of the Rule and has indicated that this could be remedied by including the words '**of road**' to the rule.

- 14 The suggested and revised wording for Rule 16.2.7.1.2 RD2 would be:

*Any proposed road access into the Outline Development Plan area (defined in Appendix 16.6.5 by 'ODP boundary') from Main North Road (State Highway 1), excluding the section **of road** north east of State Highway 1. [my emphasis added]*

- 15 In my opinion, this makes it clearer that an application for a road access could be made to and from Main North Road (State Highway 1). It would however exclude that section of Main North Road that branches off on a north-east direction from the Main North Road/SH1/Dickeys Road intersection which is not State Highway 1.

⁴ See revised Proposal – 8 April 2015 (Chapter 16 – Industrial) Matters of discretion 16.2.7.3.2

⁵ See evidence of Andrew Milne (Transport Planning), 13 April 2015, paragraph 6.6 (page 10) to 6.41 (page 18)

- 16 I also support the specific and targeted assessment matter for this Rule in 16.2.7.3.2 which states and refers to:

The effect of any additional access points on the safety and efficiency of the adjoining road network, having regard to the level and type of traffic using the proposed access point, the location and design of the proposed access point and the adequacy of existing or alternative access points.

- 17 The above assessment matter enables a detailed consideration of a potential road access that encompasses safety, efficiency, the type of traffic using it, the location, design etc.
- 18 Given that subdivision or development plans and likely tenants within the ODP block are not yet known, I accept that detailed design and actual location of a new road connection cannot definitively be made at this time. I therefore take the view that so long as there is a rule in place that enables access consideration through a resource consent process, then a separate road access does not need to be specifically identified on the ODP (as per the original submission). In my opinion, Rule 16.2.7.1.2 RD2 enables detailed consideration to be made via a resource consent application – and therefore provides an acceptable balance between enabling development, while at the same time ensuring that potential effects are appropriately considered and managed. This concept is also endorsed by Mr Stevenson⁶.
- 19 I have also discussed this specific issue with Mr Jon Richards (Principal Planning Advisor, NZTA), who is also supportive of this Rule.
- 20 Mr Milne, in his Transport Planning evidence for Council, goes on to highlight the strategic issues that are likely to arise should an access be established along the State Highway frontage.
- 21 I maintain the view that Rule 16.2.7.1.2 RD2 would enable detailed consideration of a road access at the time of resource consent.
- 22 Mr Milne specifically refers to Main North Road as a core public transport route and refers to a desire to improve the speed and reliability of bus services. I support the thrust of this comment. I would also go so far

⁶ See evidence of Mark Stevenson (Planning), 13 April 2015, Paragraph 39.9 (page 172)

as also suggesting that Main North Road should remain as a route that is ideally safe and efficient and as free from congestion as possible for public transport users. In my opinion, there are a multitude of potential initiatives that could be considered to help achieve this goal if a new road connection application were to be applied for. This, for example, could include consideration of appropriate tapers (i.e. slip lanes on any intersection approach so minimise the effects of following vehicles, namely buses), or advance green phases for buses (i.e. traffic signals automatically turn green when a bus is approaching). Other initiatives could include the installation of bus lanes which are already established on Main North Road in Redwood (4km south of the site). In my opinion, these types of issues could be factored into or considered through assessment matter 16.2.7.3.2.

- 23 Mr Milne also refers to the Northern Arterial Route as a "Road of National Significance" (yet to be approved or constructed) and suggests that until such a time that this is operational there is a need to protect the strategically important role that Main North Road currently provides. I also agree. In my opinion, the **current** classification and function of Main North Road as State Highway 1 and gateway to Christchurch from the north is one that should not be understated. This however would not be so critical if (or when) the Northern Arterial (and the Western Belfast Bypass – which is currently under construction) is completed. These projects would redistribute a large portion of traffic off the existing Main North Road, particularly those wanting to access the east, west, south, or central parts of the city. Presumably the State Highway 1 classification would also be uplifted as traffic would be detoured via the new Western Belfast Bypass. I therefore accept that the construction of these "Roads of National Significance" would most likely be a key part of any consideration if a new road to the ODP area were to be proposed from Main North Road. This point was also reinforced in the Aurecon report⁷. I contend that proposed assessment matter 16.2.7.3.2 also enables these types of considerations.
- 24 Mr Milne also refers to a new road access directly to Main North Road as potentially undermining road efficiency, especially if it were to

⁷ See Aurecon Memorandum to Andrew Milne – Christchurch City Council, dated 4 November 2013, Section 5.3, third last paragraph.

establish ahead of the main north-south collector road through the wider ODP site. Again, I contend that assessment matter 16.2.7.3.2 enables these types of issues to be considered. For example, if a road connection were to be approved from Main North Road, it could be constructed in a manner that does not allow connection with the north-south road until a nominated trigger is activated. This could be achieved through appropriate resource consent conditions.

- 25 Similarly, a new access road could, for example, be either designed to directly connect with the proposed north-south road, or it could be designed as a longer loop road so as to not encourage it being used as a main entry for the wider ODP area. That being said, I emphasise that I am not aware of any detailed plans to develop the site, nor have I turned my mind to the detail of exactly where a road might go to, or how wide or how long it might be. My point is that that this could all be considered at the time of (or before) a resource consent application is made. Again, I contend that assessment matter 16.2.7.3.2 enables these types of issues to be considered and resolved.
- 26 I also note that Aurecon have modelled and tested a signalised intersection arrangement and this has shown to offer reasonable levels of service. In fact, they go so far as recommending that traffic signals are the preferred option⁸. These comments are also acknowledged by Mr Milne. That said, I also accept and acknowledge that such modelling does not account for the strategic effects that Mr Milne refers to in his evidence. Traffic signals on Main North Road could however provide a safe crossing point for pedestrians, and a road connection and footpaths would also enable pedestrian permeability to the wider ODP area from Main North Road. This, for example could allow bus users to get on or off along the core public transport route (Main North Road) and access the ODP area by foot. Again, my point is that such issues could be considered at the time of a resource consent application.
- 27 I also note that the Main North Road/SH1/Dickeys Road intersection is earmarked for intersection improvements. It is not clear what form this

⁸ See Aurecon Memorandum to Andrew Milne – Christchurch City Council, dated 13 August 2013, Paragraph 5.3; and Aurecon Memorandum to Andrew Milne – Christchurch City Council, dated 4 November 2013, Paragraph 5.3.

will take, however it is presumed to be a roundabout or traffic signals. These improvements (whatever they might be) would inevitably need to be factored in when considering any new road access as well. For example, a roundabout might enable safe U-turns for a LILO arrangement, however traffic signals might not afford the same luxury. Again I emphasise the point that a new road access is dependent on a number of aspects – many of which are simply not yet known in sufficient detail. A resource consent application with targeted assessment matters would however help tease out this detail.

CONCLUSION

28 In my opinion Rule 16.2.7.1.2 RD2 (and its supporting assessment matter 16.2.7.3.2) enables appropriate consideration for a new road access directly from Main North Road (State Highway 1) to the North Belfast ODP. The rule enables consideration of:

- the potential effects with or without the Northern Arterial (and/or the Western Belfast Bypass);
- the potential effects if the SH1 designation was uplifted;
- the potential effects with or without intersection improvements at the Main North Road/SH1/Dickeys Road intersection;
- the potential effects on Main North Road as a Core Public Transport Route (including consideration of mitigation measures);
- the potential effects of the design and the location of a new road connection; and
- the orientation and route of the road and its intended function – including the connections to other ODP roads (either existing or proposed).

29 I can support Rule 16.2.7.1.2 RD2 (and its supporting assessment matter 16.2.7.3.2) as promoted by Mr Stevenson, which includes a minor variation to the wording of the rule to make it clearer. As I understand, the Rule is also supported by NZTA. The specific and targeted assessment matter in particular enables detailed consideration of the potential transport issues listed above and those which have been highlighted by Mr Milne.

30 Although I am still not clear whether Mr Milne supports the proposed Rule, I am continuing to work with him on this matter with the aim of resolving his concerns.

Rhys Chesterman

24 April 2015