



BEFORE Upper Hutt City Council

Under the Resource Management Act 1991

and

In the matter of Proposed Plan Change 42: Mangaroa and Pinehaven Flood Hazard Extents

Date 29 September 2017

STATEMENT BY LUCY HARPER ON BEHALF OF THE SUBMISSION MADE BY GREATER WELLINGTON REGIONAL COUNCIL

Introduction

My name is Lucy Harper. I am a Team Leader in the Environmental Policy Department of Greater Wellington Regional Council. I have been employed by Greater Wellington Regional Council in this capacity since 2008 and previously as a Resource Management Advisor for two years. I have had extensive experience in resource management policy development and implementation in this time and have worked closely with the operational departments of GWRC.

I have a Bachelor of Science and Masters Papers from Auckland University and a Post Graduate Diploma in Pollution Control from London Polytechnic. Previously I worked for thirteen years as a freshwater Advisory Officer for the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, as an Environmental Advisor for Electricorp and as a Senior Investigating Officer for the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment.

1. Scope of statement and Greater Wellington Regional Council's submission

- 1.1 The following statement relates to a submission made by Matthew Hickman under delegation for Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) on 8 May 2017 on Proposed Plan Change 42: Mangaroa and Pinehaven Flood Hazard Extents.
- 1.2 GWRC's submission assessed the Proposed Plan change for consistency with the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region (2013) (the RPS) and against the operational responsibilities of the GWRC Flood Protection Department.

- 1.3 GWRC's Flood Protection department works with communities to manage flood risk from the region's streams and rivers and is responsible for maintaining and building flood protection works such as stop banks.
- 1.4 The purpose of this statement is to provide responses to the recommendations in the S42A Officer's Report (the Officer's Report). Sharyn Westlake from GWRC Flood Protection Department will present a statement on matters regarding flood inundation extents and mapping and the Pinehaven Floodplain Management Plan process.
- 1.5 My statement today will:
- (a) outline the policy and strategic context, and
 - (b) summarise GWRC's submission, and
 - (c) assess any changes to the provisions supported in the submission
 - (d) request decisions on Plan Change 42.

2. Policy and strategic context

- 2.1 In assessing proposed Plan Change 42 for consistency with the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington region 2013 (RPS), GWRC is particularly interested in how the plan change will support and contribute to achieving the sustainable management of natural and physical resources in the Wellington region.
- 2.2 I note that on the 19th April 2017, S6 of the Resource Management Act 1991 was amended to add

(h) the management of significant risks from natural hazards

as a matter of national importance. Though the notification of the plan change preceded this amendment and therefore the plan change does not have to give effect to it, this does indicate the importance of the issue of managing flood hazard risk.

Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region

- 2.3 The RPS gives guidance on the future direction for the sustainable management of natural and physical resources in the Wellington region. The RPS sets out objectives and policies to address regionally significant issues.
- 2.4 The first group of RPS policies are directive to local authorities and require provisions to be included in district or regional plans. The second set of RPS policies need to be given particular regard to when assessing and determining a resource consent, notices of requirements, or when changing, varying or replacing city, district or regional plans. Many of the regulatory policies will cease to have effect once the directive policies are given effect to through district or regional plans.

- 2.5 The provisions from the RPS which are relevant to this plan change are:
- Policy 29 is directive to regional and district plans to identify areas at high risk from natural hazards and to avoid inappropriate subdivision and development in those high hazard areas.
 - Policy 51 is a consideration policy which requires the minimisation of the risks and consequences of natural hazards.
 - Policy 15 is directive to regional and district plans to minimise the effects of earthwork and vegetation clearance.
 - Policy 41 is a consideration policy which requires the minimisation of the effects of earthwork and vegetation clearance.

3. Summary of submission

3.1 The Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) made a supportive submission on proposed Plan Change 42 subject to Schedule 1 Section 6 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).

3.2 The primary reasons for supporting proposed Plan Change 42 are:

- The identification of areas of flood and erosion hazard, and provisions to avoid inappropriate development in areas of high hazard risk; and
- The inclusion of provisions to manage the flood risk.

3.3 The submission noted the following:

- (a) support for identification of areas of high hazard risk and areas at lower levels risk from inundation in the district plan maps
- (b) support for the objectives, policies and rules to avoid high hazard area and manage flood risk in other areas
- (c) the support that the plan change provides for the outcomes of the Pinehaven Floodplain Management Plan
- (d) the intent to minimise effects of earthworks on the values of streams and rivers by minimising erosion and sediment loss.

3.4 GWRC asked that the support for the plan change is noted and the change is approved as notified.

4. Officer's recommendations and Greater Wellington's responses to those recommendations

4.1 I note that the wording and intent of the policies for hazard management in the RPS is consistently carried through in the wording of the plan change from the issues to the rules. Residential activity is to be avoided in high hazard area and non-residential subdivision and development is limited in areas of lower

hazard. The Pinehaven provisions connect the extent of development while ensuring the effects downstream from flooding are not exacerbated.

- 4.2 There has been a lot of discussion I understand about the Pinehaven Floodplain Management Plan process. I would add that this plan change is an important element in implementing that Plan and providing for flood hazard reduction in the catchment to the level agreed by the community.
- 4.3 There have been amendments recommended in the Officer's Report in response to submissions to the provisions. In some instances the wording changes are added to clarify the intent of the provisions.
- 4.4 However the policy framework and resulting objectives, policies and rules remain essentially unaltered in intent, and therefore the recommended changes are supported.
- 4.5 The Officer's Report has recommended a change in the extent of the flood hazard maps. The analysis in the Officer's Report is that the hazard risk in areas with flood water less than 0.1m deep can be met by non-regulatory and Building Act provisions. My colleague will address this further but we consider this still gives effect to the policy direction of the RPS and therefore have no issue with that recommendation in this circumstance.

5. Decisions requested

- 5.1 Request that the Hearing Commissioner notes GWRC's support for the proposed Plan Change and the recommended amendments in the Officer's report and that Plan Change 42: Mangaroa and Pinehaven Flood Hazard Extents be accepted.

Lucy Harper

September 2017