

Introduction

My name is Andrew JW (Andy) Foster. I am appearing supporting ORCA. From October 1992 until October 2022, I was a Council elected member including being Mayor for the last three years.

Over that period, I chaired many committees, generally responsible for Transport, Urban Planning, Infrastructure and overall City Strategy. I was intimately involved in the current ODP including being a member of or chairing many subject area hearings and the special sub-committee tasked with resolving appeals. I was equally heavily involved in most of 94 Plan Changes and Variations to the ODP. I have also been involved in the Spatial Plan and the PDP until its notification.

If I can make an overall characterisation of the two Plans; the ODP is carefully considered, finer-grained, focused on urban design quality and the protection of important character, with densification in targeted areas. The PDP is more generic and its development was far more political.

Phasing Growth. The NPSUD requires Councils to show provision for growth in short, medium and long terms. Council originally intended to do this but the PDP doesn't really address phasing. New city-wide capacity investment all at once would be astronomically expensive, poor resource use. Some areas are cheap to develop, others very expensive. We recommend Commissioners obtain details on these costings and consider as a strategic issue how best to address phasing in the DP.

Growth Expectations and Capacity. Predicted growth has fallen because of COVID, lower migration, regional displacement, and possibly working from home. Wellington was the fastest growing part of the region and is now almost the slowest. Infometrics says Wellington City's population grew every year between 1996 and 2020 at an average of 1.17% per annum, but in the last two years population has fallen from 216,500 in 2020 to 215,400 (-0.5%) in 2021 and 213,100 (-1.1%) in 2022. Meanwhile national population rose by 0.4% and 0.2% respectively in those 2 years.

<https://ecoprofile.infometrics.co.nz/Wellington%20City/Population/Growth>

Theoretical capacity is based on many constantly changing dynamics, and is far greater than what is required because only some DP enabled capacity will be realised. We encourage Commissioners to obtain updated forecasts of population and test the assumptions behind those forecasts.

Johnsonville Line and Rapid Transit Definition

There will be very significant intensification along the Johnsonville Line as a result of the RMA (Enabling Housing Supply) Act, and in town and neighbourhood centres and in and within walking catchment distance of Johnsonville Town Centre. However, the decision on whether Johnsonville Line meets the definition of Rapid Transit is critical for all the communities along the Line.

We submit that you do not actually have an option here. The NPSUD is the sole reason for this discussion. It defines Rapid Transit as *'rapid transit service means any existing or planned frequent, quick, reliable and high-capacity public transport service that operates on a permanent route (road or rail) that is largely separated from other traffic.'* It does not say all rail services are automatically Rapid Transit. It also has no foundation in metrics.

The NPSUD rightly links transport and intensification. The implicit requirement is that Rapid Transit allows intensification by fulfilling a very high proportion of the catchment population's travel needs.

WCC officials relied on the adopted RLTP 2021 (Appendix 6) which says:

<https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/2021/10/Wellington-Regional-Land-Transport-Plan-2021web.pdf> *'The NPS-UD introduces a new requirement for Wellington's regional policy statement and the district plans of Wellington City, Hutt City, Upper Hutt City, Porirua City and Kāpiti Coast*

District to enable building heights of at least six storeys within at least a walkable catchment of current and planned rapid transit stops. This means that rapid transit identified in the RLTP has a connection to the land-use controls in these Resource Management Act (RMA) documents. However, whether or not intensification is appropriate around rapid transit stops will be considered as part of each council's district plan processes.'

Helpfully the RLTP also says *'This corresponds with the classification of Class PT1 in Waka Kotahi's One Network Framework. The One Network Framework provides a common language for the transport system, land use and urban planning.'*

That is now wrong. The ONF at that stage was only a draft. The ONF indeed provides a common language, but that common language now explicitly says the Johnsonville Line is not Rapid Transit.

WCC and Wellington Region have not developed any metrics to provide substance to the words 'Rapid Transit'. However Auckland Transport, Auckland Council and Waka Kotahi NZTA have undertaken comprehensive work on Rapid Transport Standards <https://fyi.org.nz/request/17720/response/68301/attach/5/Auckland%20Rapid%20Transit%20Baseline%20Working%20Doc.pdf>. These have been adopted by Waka Kotahi and brought into a final ONF.

The Auckland work distinguishes between 'Rapid Transit', 'Frequent Transit', and 'Wider Public Transport' services. The document specifically integrates transport services and urban intensification, and clearly understands the link between public transport service levels and land use.

It describes in detail the metrics for 'fast', 'frequent' and 'high capacity'. Fast is defined as - *'rapid transit services offer time-competitive travel with private vehicles, particularly at peak times. This does not require rapid transit to always be faster than travel by private vehicle. It does mean travel times must be close enough that other advantages of rapid transit (such as its reliability) make it a highly attractive option. To achieve this characteristic, rapid transit is generally faster than other PT services, through provision of a dedicated corridor and wider spacing between stops.'*

Frequent includes *'rapid transit services form part of the frequent public transport network, and therefore operate at frequencies that enable users to 'turn up and go' at most times of day, seven days a week. It says 'A true 'turn up and go' frequency would be a minimum of every 10 minutes. Currently, some rapid transit services only achieve this during the peak. The RPTP aspires for the entire rapid transit network to achieve this minimum frequency by 2028. The current definition in the RPTP is at least every 15 minutes, between 7am and 7pm, 7 days a week.'*

High Capacity says – *'the combination of high frequency and large vehicles able to carry many people means that rapid transit corridors can move significant numbers of people per hour in a relatively small amount of space.'*

It even provides examples of what is and is not 'Rapid Transit' including the example of *'a heavy rail service operating a dedicated rail corridor mainly at peak times with limited off-peak and weekend services,'* and says *'No (not Rapid Transit) - For rapid transit to fulfil its role as the backbone of the public transport network, it needs to operate frequently at all times of day, not just during the peak.'*

In short not all railway lines are Rapid Transit. Just like Auckland's Onehunga Line, the Johnsonville Line does not meet the metrics of 'fast', 'frequent', or probably 'high capacity'.

Fast - The train timetable Johnsonville to City is scheduled for 23 minutes while homeward it is 28 minutes at peak and 23 off peak. The line is slow, tight and steep for a railway line. The bus service Johnsonville to City is scheduled for 15 – 16 minutes off peak up to a maximum of 23 minutes at

peak citybound, and as little as 14 minutes off peak and no more than 19 at peak homeward bound. It is also worth noting there are active plans to speed up the Johnsonville bus service, but no such plans for the Johnsonville Rail Line. It does not meet the ONF test in this regard.

Frequent – is defined as at least (minimum) 15 minute frequency for 12 hours a day 7 days a week. The Johnsonville Line runs 15 minute frequency only from 6.30 to 9.00AM and 4.00 to 7.00PM, 5 days a week. It is undoubtedly uneconomic to meet the ONF minimum frequency test.

High Capacity – The Johnsonville Line usually runs 2 car Matangi trains, extended to 4 car trains at peak. This is clearly far lower capacity than the Hutt and Kapiti lines. Without significant additional investment the Johnsonville Line will not increase capacity and no such investment is planned. In that it fails the NPSUD test that Development Capacity is infrastructure ready if: *'there is adequate existing development infrastructure; identified funding; or is identified in the local authority's infrastructure strategy (as required as part of its LTP).'* None of these are true of Johnsonville Line.

Undoubtedly because the Johnsonville Line does not achieve any of these metrics, and there is no plan for it to do so, the ONF concludes it is NOT Rapid Transit and is not Rapid Transit specifically in relation to the NPSUD.

These principles are now adopted into the final One Network Framework

<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/Roads-and-Rail/onf/docs/ONF-classification-guidance-november-2022.pdf>

The ONF Public Transport section (page 20) provides a detailed step by step approach and says:

2. b. If services operate throughout the day (i.e., 7am-7pm, seven days a week) but with less than 4 services an hour on average along the road, then it is class PT 4.

c. If services operate throughout the day with at least 4 services per hour on average, then undertake a second filter to sort corridors carrying higher PT vehicle volumes between classes 1-3, as follows:

a. If services operate on a dedicated corridor and meet the standards of a rapid transit service (as outlined in the National Policy Statement on Urban Development) then it is class PT1.

• Hutt, Kapiti, Western, Eastern and Southern railway lines in Wellington and Auckland are PT1, Dedicated, because they generally provide a frequent service (averaging around 4 trains per hour across the day) on a dedicated rail corridor and have been classified as such in the NPS-UD.

• Johnsonville Line & Onehunga Branch Line are PT4, Secondary, because they have less than four services per hour on the corridor.

So there is a clear, logical, metric based framework that the Johnsonville Line explicitly is NOT Rapid Transit as it is PT4, providing a lower level of service than required to meet the standards for PT1 Rapid Transit, which is the standard necessary for the NPSUD intensification requirements.

There are no plans or funding to upgrade the Johnsonville Line to meet those PT1 standards. It would be uneconomic to do so. That underpins the point made about the relative infrastructure cost per prospective dwelling enabled by that infrastructure. Upgrading the Johnsonville Line (and other infrastructure) to enable 6 storey style development would be very expensive per dwelling.

It is my submission that Commissioners can not conclude that the Johnsonville Line is Rapid Transit. The only assessment tool in New Zealand for this purpose explicitly says it is not Rapid Transit.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard on these important matters. I wish you well in your work.