

**Before the Independent Hearings Panel  
At Wellington City Council**

**Under** Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991

**In the matter of** Hearing submissions and further submissions on the Proposed Wellington City District Plan – Hearing Stream 9

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**Andrew Wharton speaking notes on behalf of Wellington City Council**

**Date: 11 June 2024**

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- Good morning Chair and Panel Members,
- My name is Andrew Wharton. I am a team leader in the District Plan team for Wellington City Council. I'm the reporting officer for the Transport Chapter. I would like to give you a brief introduction about the Plan's transport provisions and some of the main questions and changes that submitters raised on them.
- The Infrastructure Chapter you discussed yesterday covers the transport infrastructure that is in the road corridor, rail corridor and other parts of the transport network. The Transport Chapter, on the other hand, covers *on-site* transport facilities and movements. My 42A report does cover some more general transport topics and definitions as well.
- I note that Kainga Ora has asked for the transport infrastructure provisions to be moved from the Infrastructure Chapter to Transport Chapter. I've assessed this in my 42A report. I've concluded that the division of these provisions between Infrastructure and Transport Chapters are about right. Except for the Connections to Roads provisions which should be moved over, because they are discrete and match other similar Transport rules about site access.
- I've assessed the Transport submissions mainly on a topic basis. This is because each rule connects to standards, tables, sometimes figures, and then link back to a specific policy in matters of discretion. They all link together. I'll raise here some of the main topics that I've covered in my 42A report and further evidence. I won't go through all the topics as set out in

my written evidence, but of course you are welcome to question me on any them after this statement.

- I've considered the Wellington RPS directions for transport. Greater Wellington Regional Council has asked for new proposed RPS policies relating to climate change to be directive here. I've disagreed with this. The PDP was notified before the Wellington RPS Change 1 was, so it's something to give regard to for this process, but not to give effect. I note that these new RPS provisions have been challenged significantly, including by Wellington City Council. The GWRC reporting officer has also recommended significant changes to their content. Decisions are due later this month. So these directions might remain the same as notified, be rewritten, or may be removed. As such, I've given them low weight in my assessment.
- The RPS provisions were generally about reducing fossil fuel use. In principle, I consider these are more effectively done in plan provisions for urban form and enabling mode shift, not requiring every single activity to assess its own carbon reduction. Greenhouse gas emissions is a national environmental issue, and mainly managed through national methods and directions, such as the ETS, national policies. However, the district plan does have a role to play in reducing barriers to change, and enabling low carbon choices.
- A number of submitters asked for Council to do things that were out of the Plan's scope, or that are best managed through other Council processes or other parts of the PDP. For example prioritising public transport on the road, park 'n' rides, signposted accessways. I cover each of these topics in the 42A report, and recommend they be addressed in other processes or places.
- The Plan standards for cycling and micromobility are the same, and are based on the needs of a bicycle, although a few micromobility options will be wider such as mobility scooters. Rules and standards for these generally had strong support. Submitters also wanted different parking numbers, better dimensions for parks, and safer and better facilities.
- Stratum has provided evidence supporting their request to remove these standards, or alternatively to reduce the number of cycle/micromobility parks required in the City Centre Zone. In general, I consider cycle parking is a key method to enable people to use active transport modes. It facilitates choice, helps lower carbon emissions, and improves accessibility. My evidence supports Mr Lieswyn's work on cycle park numbers and dimensions which update the Plan's standards to align with the latest NZTA technical note.
- However, I have supported some lower minimum numbers of parks where it still enables mode shift and transport options over time but recognises unique situations for retirement

villages and in the City Centre. I consider these revised standards are more efficient options to meet policy goals.

- Requiring lockers and showers are a popular way to encourage cycling and micromobility in the international and national literature. But after reading surveys specific to Wellington City: by the Council and Aotearoa Bike Challenge, I was concerned about how applicable this is to our unique climate and existing availability of showers by employers. My S42A evaluates the options and does support a requirement for lockers and showers, which is also consistent with the Council's policy in the Spatial Plan, but only for new commercial, tertiary and healthcare buildings that will hit new parking thresholds (so will be large developments). I expect most of these new developments provide lockers and showers generally anyway.
- Some submissions covered electric car chargers (and chargers for cycles/micromobility devices). The point of the standards in the Plan requiring these is about removing barriers for people to choose low-carbon vehicles in the future. Developers don't have to provide on-site chargers, but have to at least provide the electrical conduit to the car park area so that users can install their own charger, cable, and meters. It's much cheaper to do this when the building is being built, than having to drill through walls and dig trenches to retrofit. This would also put the burden of cost on the first person to retrofit, that others then benefit from. Plus the cost of retrofitting is high. The Council found that installing chargers on road and in carparks of community facilities cost it around \$20K just for the civil works around the charger.
- There were various opinions on when resource consents with integrated traffic assessments for road access are needed. Evidence is tabled in favour of higher thresholds, similar to Auckland, Christchurch, Porirua, and Lower Hutt. There is no consistency of thresholds in national direction or among Councils – it's both higher and lesser than WCC although WCC is on the lower end. The lower threshold is due to the level of assessment this Council needs. Wellington City has steep roads and driveways, congested arterials, cycleways and walkways. Integrated traffic assessments for developments generating lots of car movements also help show how the other Transport standards are met as well. The assessment level of detail doesn't have to be extensive – it will depend on the degree of change, the location, and the effect on local traffic, including cyclists and pedestrians.
- Access for fire engines had different points of view from FENZ and submitters. Submitters raised the overlap with the Building Act requirements. I reviewed the Panel findings on this for the Porirua PDP, where there were similar arguments. I've generally supported standards for site access to enable fire trucks where the buildings are far away (70 m) from the road as

this is generally a district plan function for communities to provide for health and safety. The Building Act applies for the fire vehicles' park and access in the building itself. Resource consents are able to consider if alternative firefighting options will work if the development can't meet these access standards.

- The service stations have asked for specific rules enabling electric vehicle charging. I expect these may have national rules in the future. For now, I've joined Mr Anderson in recommending this activity be added to INF-R7 - structures associated with infrastructure, and to clarify that parking and manoeuvring also applies to electric vehicle charging.
- I've aligned my advice with Ms Wood's advice on changes to vehicle parking, access and manoeuvring and loading bays within sites. We can answer more questions on these as needed depending on whether it needs more of an engineer or a planner answer, or both.
- I've supported submissions to remove public notification in the few Transport rules where it was an option because Transport rules have a site-specific application, and require technical evidence. These don't have wider adverse effects on the general public.
- I am open to your questions about the Transport provisions, submissions, my recommendations for changes to the Transport Chapter, or on my analysis in the S42A report and further evidence.

**11 June 2024**

**Andrew Wharton**

**Wellington City Council**