

**Before Independent Hearing Commissioners  
In Ngāruawāhia**

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Under the Resource Management Act 1991 (the Act)

In the matter of of a submission by Ambury Properties Limited in respect of the proposed Waikato District Plan pursuant to Clause 6 of Schedule 1 of the Act seeking the rezoning of land at Ohinewai

and Ambury Properties Limited (Ambury)  
(Submitter)

and Waikato Regional Council  
(Further Submitter)

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**Summary of evidence of Melissa Ann Hackell for the Waikato Regional  
Council – Social Science**

8 September 2020

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## **1 Introduction**

1.1 My full name is Melissa Ann Hackell. I am employed as a Social Scientist at the Waikato Regional Council (WRC), a role I have been in for the last 18 months. I have the qualifications and experience as set out in my evidence in chief. I also confirm that in preparing this summary statement I have complied with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses in the current Environment Court Practice Note (2014).

## **2 Summary of evidence**

2.1 Mr Quigley's decision to assess the social effects of the Masterplan is based on his view that the Masterplan is the most likely outcome of the proposed rezoning. However, there is no reason to believe that the most likely outcome of the proposed rezoning will be the implementation of the Masterplan, and certainly not in its entirety. There is a range of possible outcomes, of which the full implementation of the Masterplan is only one. The exclusion of reasonably foreseeable alternate scenarios is unjustified and increases the likelihood that adverse effects have not been adequately identified and assessed. Accordingly, the assessment is not balanced because it highlights benefits without including the possibility of failure.

2.2 Reasonably foreseeable outcomes in this case include, but are not limited to:

- A The partial completion of the Masterplan which could include limited development of local amenities and/or important social infrastructure (e.g. walkways, sports fields, community buildings). This could amplify negative social effects such as social exclusion.
- B Ohinewai becomes a 'dormitory town', similar to Te Kauwhata.
- C The portion of housing offered to employees is small and the unspecified 'rent to own scheme' is not affordable leading to an increase in the portion of properties being sold on the open market.
- D The positive social effects associated with local employment are not realised as locals do not benefit from the employment opportunities to the extent estimated and/or much of the employment is low waged and precarious.
- E The extent and quality of new jobs do not eventuate - a proportion of the employment is transferred from other locations, new employees travel from other locations and/or job opportunities are mixed with

only a relatively small portion being permanent positions above the minimum wage.

- 2.3 The SIA does not represent the perspectives of current and potential future residents of Ohinewai appropriately. The exclusion of key stakeholders, both current and potential new residents of Ohinewai, is unjustified and removes an important source of information about social effects from consideration. This exclusion restricts the capacity of the SIA to establish social license for the development.
- 2.4 The assessment focuses narrowly on the employment benefits and does not adequately assess the current social values existing in the area and the impact of the development on those values:
- A The approximately 300 current employees of Sleepyhead (and their families) expected to relocate to Ohinewai were not included in the assessment. The exclusion of the perspective of this affected group from the assessment leaves the likely uptake of the live, work and play community concept a matter of conjecture.
  - B Mr Quigley states that Ohinewai currently has a population of 159. The SIA includes the results of interviews with 13 adult members of the community out of 107 interviews in total. The proportion of residents to non-residents interviewed for the assessment is unbalanced.
  - C Parents of children currently attending the Ohinewai Primary School are not represented.
- 2.5 The proposal seeks to establish a community that does not yet exist, populated by households who mostly have no previous association with each other. Despite this, the SIA does not provide an account of both potential (Sleepyhead workers expected to relocate at Ohinewai) and existing resident's perspectives on their community values and aspirations. Relatedly, the SIA does not consider how the proposal can support social connections through provision and staging of social infrastructure necessary for the development of the community and associated social capital needed for the well-being of the population.

### **3 Response to rebuttal evidence of APL**

- 3.1 I have read the rebuttal evidence of Mr Quigley, Mr Gaze, Mr Heath and Mr Olliver. I do not consider there to be anything in those statements of evidence that materially changes my opinions as expressed in my evidence in chief.

#### **4 Revised s42A report recommendation**

- 4.1 I agree with Ms Trenouth’s conclusion, “A number of significant adverse effects have not been adequately addressed...including...poor integration of land use and transport resulting in car centric development and a dormitory town...Social impacts on countryside living and rural outlook of existing residents, from uncertainty that affordable housing will be provided, and creating a community in a rural area without existing services and amenities”<sup>1</sup>.
- 4.2 I agree with Ms Healy that, “consideration of other scenarios (compared to full implementation) and what the plan change allows is required to fully understand the potential social costs and benefits of the proposed plan changes”<sup>2</sup>.
- 4.3 I agree with Ms Healy that, “as this is a plan change it is appropriate to consider the intended and unintended social impacts for both the surrounding community and the potential community that the plan change allows or provides for”<sup>3</sup>.
- 4.4 I agree with Dr Fairgray’s assessment, “There has not been clear evidence offered in subsequent statements that shows the proposed development would contribute materially to housing affordability”<sup>4</sup>.
- 4.5 I agree with Dr Fairgray’s position that “While employment opportunity is certainly one influence on housing and location choice, and attracts some people to re locate themselves and their families, there are many other determinants, including access to shops and services, entertainment, schooling, community size and diversity. Absent significant price competitiveness – which seems unlikely given the APL material – the rationale for a substantial number of households to relocate to a small new town with few services, remains, unclear”<sup>5</sup>.

Melissa Hackell

8 September 2020

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<sup>1</sup> Trenouth, C, 2020, Section 42A Report, Rebuttal evidence, Hearing 19: Ohinewai Rezoning and Development, p.28.

<sup>2</sup> Healy, Jo, 2020, Key Issues for Reply – Social impact, p.1.

<sup>3</sup> Healy, Jo, 2020, Key Issues for Reply – Social impact, p.2.

<sup>4</sup> Fairgray, D. ‘Ohinewai rezoning proposal-Economic and residential matters’, Section 3.5, p.19.

<sup>5</sup> Fairgray, D. ‘Ohinewai rezoning proposal-Economic and residential matters’, Section 4.1, p.21.