

Witness Statement Opposing Industrial Designation of the Tuakau Proteins Ltd (TPL) site at Tuakau

Kia ora, my name is Heather McGuire. My evidence supports the submission of Sarah Whyte and sets out the reasons why the community is opposed to the proposed Industrial zoning of the Tuakau Proteins Ltd (TPL) property.

I live in Tuakau, approximately 1.3 km from the Tuakau Proteins Ltd (TPL) plant on its sensitive Waikato River site at Tuakau, which is the subject of this hearing. I speak on behalf of family. The McGuires arrived in Tuakau from Ireland in 1865 and we live in the homestead they started building on the 20 acres they purchased at that time and are kaitiaki of the whenua for future McGuire generations. I also speak for our local community in my capacity as Chairperson for Environment Action Tuakau (EAT). Many of the homes of EAT members are very close to the TPL plant and the prevailing westerly wind in our area brings unbearable smell and noise to these residents, when the plant is operating.

I speak to you today to firmly oppose the creation of an Industrial zone on the TPL site at Tuakau. An Industrial zone there would be a seriously retrograde step on the path to the intelligently sustainable future planned by our Government for us as a people who understand how important safeguarding the toanga our environment is. Nowhere on the longest and most iconic river in Aotearoa New Zealand should be zoned Industrial. It is unimaginable that any responsible Environmental Planner might allow this to happen. In Australia they have already realised that industrialisation on rivers is a mistake which must be rectified. Legislation relating to the Murray River highlights this. The Waikato River at Tuakau must not be zoned Industrial

Chloe Trenouth, Planner and author of the S42A report for this hearing concludes that an Industrial zone makes sense of the existing use of the TPL site. I presume that is because until recently, the facility operated under various resource consents. However, there has been a long history of community complaints about noise, odour and traffic which were vindicated by the recent criminal prosecution undertaken by the Waikato Regional Council (WRC). This facility is now well out of place in this community.

To have this small area, next to the Waikato River zoned Industrial is not only wrong in principal as I have just stated, it is wrong in cohesive design and planning. To have a small piece of land, isolated and unrelated to its surroundings will be a cross to bear for all time. To make sense of a factory by sanctifying its inappropriate existence in law is a very short sighted. Sensitive and appropriate business, considering the Waikato River at all times, will not be 'too enabling of a wide range of commercial activities that would not be appropriate in this location' as Ms Trenouth states. (15.2.1, 416) In fact, a Business zone fits with surrounding established business activity including the Motorhome and Campground Park, the Garden Centre and it's Cafe and the Barge Tour Company. It also fits with the existing Les Batkin Recreational Park and wide variety of river users near the Tuakau Bridge, including the Waka Ama Club. Furthermore, it fits with the rapidly expanding residential population in Tuakau and it's close neighbours, Pukekohe and Pokeno. Odour is experienced at the Tuakau Pony Club, the largest in the district and at the Tuakau Domain, both of which are 1.2 - 1.3km away from the TPL site.

Ms Trenouth speaks of the technical assessments she has used in her decision making and recommendations including the Marshall Day, Acoustic Assessment Report (2015) This report is

out of date as production at TPL increased substantially after 2015. EAT commissioned Nevil Hegley to conduct our own acoustic report in 2020 which found that TPL breached their acoustic protocols regularly causing extreme disturbance, particularly at night, to local residents. This unacceptable noise underscores the need for heavy industry to relocate from the Waikato River shores at Tuakau.

Similarly, the Tonkin and Taylor, Assessment of Air Quality Effects and Separation Distances (2015) report Ms Trenouth speaks of, is also out of date. TPL were sentenced in the Environment Court in December last year (2020) for serious Odour and Waste Water Treatment breaches. They were fined heavily and the Enforcement Order given, stultifying. This year (2021) TPL's application for a Replacement Resource Consent for Odour was heard. The Company asked for a 10 year consent. After hearing submissions from the Community, the Commissioners awarded TPL 2 years only, with further restrictive conditions.

Ms Trenouth says in her S42A report 2.2.3 Constraints to Growth, Item numbers 38 and 39 that 'To the South of the township beyond the Residential Zone land, associated with the Waikato River, is a Significant Amenity Landscape'. Her statement in item 38 is perfectly correct. It is hard to imagine anything more significant in a landscape than The Waikato River and its shores and banks. Her statement in item 39 is completely incorrect as the highly significant and much visited heritage item known as Alexandra Redoubt is very affected by the TPL plant and its activity. The usually fuming factory is clearly visible when approaching the Redoubt (one of the best examples of its kind in Aotearoa New Zealand) and odour from the factory spoils the experience at the Redoubt and on the walkway created around the bluff there for the 150th jubilee of the arrival of settlers in the area. Next to the Redoubt is a historically significant cemetery. Nearby is the main Tuakau Cemetery which is regularly in use by grieving people who shouldn't have to inter their loved ones while enduring objectionable odour.

The appropriate business use of the Waikato River shores does fit with and has relevance to the overarching Government Policies of conservation and sustainable use. Prime Minister Jacinda Adern has declared a Climate Emergency which each of us must take very seriously, looking everywhere for ways to slow Climate Change. EAT wishes, in the spirit of the Prime Minister's urgent call to action, to help TPL move from its sensitive Waikato River site to a more appropriate place, ideally next to an existing abattoir. EAT wishes to join in a powerful consortium with Government, Councils, Iwi, Community and TPL to plan and fund the move of TPL to a much better place where they can flourish in their essential Primary Industry role thus enabling the TPL site to be developed into Tuakau Garden and Wetlands, much like Hamilton Gardens, which was a tip not long ago and is now a World class treasure. This opportunity for a World leading initiative has arrived and we must accept it with energy and enthusiasm. I'm sure you're aware of the serious fire at the TPL site a few weeks ago which will necessitate an almost complete rebuild of the plant. Lets rebuild TPL in a much more efficient and sustainably conscious place providing for regeneration of the Waikato River and greenspace for a rapidly growing population. Sir David Attenborough says in his new book that all we need is the will to make the changes demanded of our time, in order to save our planet for our children and theirs.

Thank you for your time given to hear how we must obviously progress in this matter. I'm sure I have left you in no doubt that an Industrial designation for the site occupied by TPL at present is certainly not the right thing to do.

