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Enquiries to: Katrina Andrews



19 July 2023

Variation 3 – Enabling Housing Supply Hearings Panel
Waikato District Council

Attn: Steve Rice, Hearing Administrator
Email: steve@riceres.co.nz

Private Bag 3038
Waikato Mail Centre
Hamilton 3240, NZ

waikatoregion.govt.nz
0800 800 401

Dear David Hill (Chairperson),

Waikato Regional Council Response to Direction 19 for Waikato District Council's Variation 3 – Enabling Housing Supply

1. This letter responds to Direction 19 on Waikato District Council's (WDC) Proposed Variation 3 – Enabling Housing Supply (Variation 3) which seeks comments on how the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity 2023 (NPS-IB) should be managed in the variation hearing process.
2. Waikato Regional Council (WRC) agrees that Variation 3 must give effect to the NPS-IB.
3. As the NPS-IB is newly released, we do not yet fully understand the implications for plan changes/variations or how it fits within the scope of Variation 3.
4. Given that Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) are recognised as a qualifying matter in Variation 3, it seems there may be a relationship between Variation 3 and the NPS-IB. Whether the NPS-IB has implications for Variation 3 should be canvassed through the hearing process.
5. We note that the preparation of the section 42A report and exchange of evidence on Variation 3 has already occurred prior to the release of the NPS-IB.
6. Given the relatively short timeframe between the NPS-IB's gazettal and the scheduled commencement date of the hearing, WRC would not be opposed to a separate timetable being considered to address the NPS-IB.
7. We note that the hearing process for Variation 3 is occurring concurrently with the ongoing process of resolving appeals on the Proposed Waikato District Plan Decisions Version (PDP). WRC has an appeal against the PDP relating to identification of SNAs. The NPS-IB will be a relevant consideration for this process also.
8. Should you have any queries regarding the content of this letter please contact me directly on (07) 859 0929 or by email katrina.andrews@waikatoregion.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Katrina Andrews', written in a cursive style.

Katrina Andrews

Policy Advisor, Strategic and Spatial Planning, Waikato Regional Council