# BEFORE INDEPENDENT HEARINGS COMMISSIONER APPOINTED BY CHRISCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

("the Act")

**AND** 

IN THE MATTER An application by Foodstuffs Limited for

resource consent to establish and operate a supermarket and associated fuel facility, ancillary offices, car parking, access, signage and landscaping at 171 Main North

Road (RMA/2018/2029).

EVIDENCE OF DEBORAH HEWETT ON BEHALF OF THE NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY
26 November 2019

My name is **DEBORAH ANN HEWETT** and I work for the NZ Transport Agency (the Agency). I have been requested by the Agency to assist them in the provision of evidence regarding their submission on the resource consent application lodged by Foodstuffs Property Limited (South Island) for the proposed development/establishment of a Pak n Save supermarket and ancillary activities on 171 Main North Road.

#### 1 Qualifications

- 1.1 I am employed by the Agency as Senior Planner Consents and Approvals covering the South Island. I have over ten years' experience in resource management matters having previously worked for local government in a variety of planning, consent, and policy roles, and more recently for KiwiRail, and Mahaanui Kurataiao.
- 1.2 I hold a degree in Master of Applied Science in Resource Management from Lincoln University and a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture also from Lincoln University.

#### 2 Expert Witness Practice Note

2.1 I have read, and agree to comply with, the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses as required by the Environment Court's Practice Note 2014. In providing my evidence all of the opinions provided are within my expertise and I have considered, and I have not omitted to consider any material facts known to me which might alter or qualify the opinions I express.

#### 3 Submission

- 3.1 The NZTA submitted in opposition to the proposed development for the following reasons:
  - Transport modelling/ network effects
  - Changes to the Main North Road / Northcote Road Queen Elizabeth
     Drive
  - Accessibility of Site for Public Transport, walking and cycling
  - Change of zoning in association with the Urban Development Strategy
- 3.2 Prior to the notification of the resource consent application and since that time no consultation has been undertaken by the applicant with the Transport Agency.

#### 4 Scope of Evidence

- 4.1 Resource consent has been lodged by Foodstuffs Limited to establish and operate a Pak n Save supermarket, ancillary activities, a self-service fuel station at 171 Main North Road.
- 4.2 This evidence is limited to those matters within my expertise and those matters within the scope of the submission lodged. This evidence is to be read in conjunction with the evidence of lan Clark who has also submitted evidence on behalf of the NZ Transport Agency.
- 4.3 Ian Clark has prepared evidence on traffic effects including modelling and has reviewed information submitted on the application. He has also attended caucusing and is a signatory to the CAST Modelling joint witness statement.
- 4.4 That evidence comprises matters previously agreed by traffic experts in a joint witness statement, and subsequent matters raised relating to the CAST modelling thereafter, and unresolved issues arising. It also consists of a safety audit.
- 4.5 In preparing this evidence I have relied on Mr Clark's evidence. In preparing this evidence I have also read and considered the following documents:
  - (a) the AEE accompanying the Application;
  - (b) section 42A report; particularly policy, transport and urban design related content, and addendums; and
  - (c) the statements of evidence on behalf of the applicant.
- 4.6 I have recently visited the Application Site.
- 4.7 In my evidence I provide comment on:
  - The State Highway network including the Christchurch Northern Corridor project;
  - Transport Effects;
  - Planning and policy framework; and
  - A summary of my evidence.

## 5 National context/ NZTA Objective

- 5.1 The Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding 2018 (GPS) sets out the Government's outcomes and priorities for the land transport sector and its broad transport funding allocations over the next decade.
- 5.2 The GPS identifies three themes the government intends to focus on through land transport investment:
  - · A mode-neutral approach to transport planning and investment decisions;
  - Incorporating technology and innovation into the design and delivery of land transport investment; and
  - Integrating land use and transport planning and delivery areas of economic growth and productivity, value for money.
- 5.3 The Agency's work is guided by the vision, principles and objectives in the New Zealand Transport Strategy 2002. Its objective under the Land Transport Management Act (2003) is to 'operate the state highway system in a way that contributes to an integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system'.
- As a signatory to the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol the Agency plans and designs state highways in a way that supports good urban design. This includes seeking to achieve integration between state highways, local roads, public transport, cycling and walking networks and the land uses they serve (and safe urban and rural environments) working closely with local authorities (and landowners).

## **6 STATE HIGHWAY NETWORK**

6.1 State Highway 74 includes Queen Elizabeth Drive (QEII Drive) and Main North Road north of the Northcote / QEII Drive intersection. The below image illustrates the location of the State Highway.



- 6.2 The intersection of Main North Road and QEII Drive is technically under the management of the Transport Agency, although the Agency and the Christchurch City Council work together given the connections between Council managed road and State Highway. Also, the Christchurch Transport Operations Centre (CTOC) oversee the operation of the intersection.
- An important part of the State Highway network in this area is the Christchurch Northern Corridor project (CNC) which is one of the Government Roads of National Significance projects. This project is described as follows:
- 6.4 The CNC project runs from just south of the Waimakariri Bridge down to QEII drive and then connects to Cranford Street. This includes the development of a significant interchange at the intersection of QEII Drive and the new roadway.
- 6.5 Construction of the project is well underway and is scheduled to be completed by mid-2020. The completion of works can be broken down into parts and it is anticipated that the section of QEII drive between Main North Road and the interchange will be completed sooner. A copy of plans for the local part of the corridor are attached as Appendix A to this evidence.
- As one can see QEII Drive will be a four-lane road with dedicated turn bays at the intersection with Main North Road. In addition, an off ramp from the corridor will provide a left in / left out connection to Winters Road.
- 6.7 It is anticipated that the Northern Corridor project will result in a reduction in the number of vehicle movements on Main North Road including at the intersection with QEII Drive.

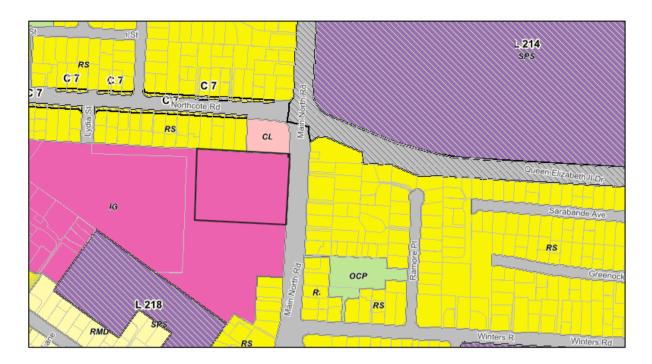
Although there is no timeframe, the existing SH74 designations are proposed to be rationalised, with the likely outcome that the designation on Main North Road will be uplifted and subsequently become Council Road. At this stage it is anticipated that QEII Drive, up to the Main North Road intersection, will remain State Highway. Typically, the uplifting of State Highway classifications, including associated designations, takes some time such that any change will not be immediate after the opening of the corridor.

## 7 Planning and Policy Framework

- 7.1 I have read the joint witness statement planning policy and agree that it identifies the relevant objectives and policies. I also agree that the proposal is provided for as a Discretionary Activity under the provisions of the Christchurch District Plan. There is no restriction on those matters which can be considered in assessing the proposed activity.
- 7.2 Within the scope of the joint witness statement, the relevant matters for the Agency are Chapter 7 Transport, Chapter 15 Commercial and Chapter 16 Industrial in respect of this resource consent application. As a result, I will restrict my assessment/comments to those chapters.
- 7.3 In the case of Chapter 7 Transport I am guided by the traffic expert for NZTA, as to the relevant effects, significance and extent of those effects, and whether or not they can be adequately managed.
- 7.4 Some objectives and policies in the Plan are dependent on the potential effects of a proposal. As such I first provide comment on the potential effects of the proposal and then comment on relevant objectives and policies.
- 7.5 Please note, in my evidence I focus on those matters of direct relevance to the Transport Agency. I provide an overview of key issues arising from the application, policy that informs and supports those matters in ensuring a safe, accessible, connected and integrated approach for the State Highway and adjacent local roads.

#### 8 Application Site

- 8.1 The application site is close to a high traffic volume intersection and major arterial roads. At present NZTA has a designation for State Highway 74 (SH74) QEII Drive and Main North Road (commencing at the intersection of Northcote Road north). CDP Map 18,19 and 24. These roads are also specified Limited Access Roads (LAR).
- 8.2 For clarity the proposed application accesses are not subject to the LAR provisions.



8.3 Beyond this the application and reports, such as the 42A report, provide detailed descriptions of the application site and, for the purposes of brevity, are relied upon for the purpose of this evidence.

## 9 Potential Effects of the Proposed Activity

- 9.1 In assessing the potential effects of the proposed activity, as relevant for the Transport Agency, the following matters have been considered:
  - Operation of Main North Road / QEII Drive Intersection
- 9.2 The reason for the Agency's concerns stem from the proposal site being within a sphere of influence to State Highway 74 and one of the largest high-volume intersections in Christchurch. Care should be taken in assessing any proposal in such a location but in this instance the proposal will generate a significant number of vehicle movements and significant changes to the roading network are proposed. The roading network in the local area and the changes proposed create a complex and challenging situation.
- 9.3 Ian Clark has provided evidence on the proposal which has assessed the proposal including associated modelling. It is apparent that traffic effects may have the potential to be minor but there is a dependency on a number of requirements being met. We accept that potential effects could be minor when considering the proposal in a more detailed manner, but concerns remain when considering the bigger picture of the proposal.
- 9.4 These concerns begin with the introduction of an additional intersection in close proximity to the Main North Road / QEII Drive intersection. The proposed

intersection will be 150 metres from the Main North Road / QEII intersection and 200 metres from the Cranford Street intersection. All of these intersections will interact with one another including the potential for queueing. The proposal increases a potentially complex and challenging situation.

- 9.5 These changes need to be considered in terms of one solution may create other issues for the roading network. For example, the introduction of a pedestrian refuge could reduce the width available for a bus lane, as discussed later in my evidence.
- 9.6 We accept that traffic volume will reduce once the new Northern Arterial Corridor opens but, as per Ian Clark's evidence, this is likely to be temporary with traffic flows increasing over time and the operation of intersections changing to become more safety orientated. For these reasons we again suggest care is required in considering the effects of the proposed activity.
- 9.7 An outstanding matter and concern expressed the Agency in its submission is the potential that consent could be granted to changes of the intersection without any agreement or approval by the Agency. This remains a live issue.
- 9.8 The agreed joint witness statement on traffic flow proposes management of the intersection comprising two right hand turning lanes from Main North) Road into QEII Drive and a single northbound lane through the intersection.
- 9.9 In principle, the Agency is not opposed to the two right turns into QEII Drive., However, there will be a need for further assessment and resolution around the operation of the intersection and State Highway for all modalities. In particular, but not limited to, pedestrian desire lines, space for cycle lanes and bus priority lanes. This would be undertaken with local authority partners. subject to appropriate and integrated upgres for safe, accessible and efficient vehicular, pedestrian, cycle and bus transport (yet to be determined).
- 9.10 Given the CNC project staging any changes to the intersection would need to be undertaken separately to and after the completion of the Northern QEII Drive Arterial works (but before the application proposal is operational).
- 9.11 There has been suggestion, through the Traffic Joint Witness Statement, that the Agency should undertake the formation of a double right turn lane regardless of the proposal. Such an arrangement is not proposed as part of the arterial project. In the future, when it is being determined if the State Highway should be lifted from Main North Road there may be the opportunity to review the intersection arrangement, but this would be part of a wider review process.

#### **Bus Lanes**

- 9.12 The Agency shares concerns that the application plans do not currently show high levels of integration with the public transport network, quality provision for pedestrian movements, or clear routes for cyclists.
- 9.13 Matters relating to priority lighting for public transport at the proposed intersection and the relocation of bus stop throughout the consenting process, which Mr Gregory considers should be integrated within the proposal.
- 9.14 The proposal includes the narrowing of the public transport corridor along Main North Road, which is a particular concern given its context as a core public transport route.
- 9.15 The interest of the Agency in the impacts of the proposal on bus lanes is two-fold. Firstly, to ensure the safe operation of the intersection as part of the State Highway network. Secondly, the Agency is a significant funding agency for the operation of public transport (approximately one third is funded by the Agency). In partly funding the transport network the Agency seeks to ensure that the network remains functional and an activity / proposal will not limit or impede its operation. For example, if an activity could result in the slowing down of buses within a section of network then that may negatively affect the attractiveness for the public to use such a service.
- 9.16 A key enabler of improving the level of service of the public transport network is the use of effective bus lanes to improve journey time reliability to make the service more attractive to customers. The Agency has recently invested \$1.7m with the Christchurch City Council to improve bus priority past Northland Mall to improve the journey time by approx. 30 seconds in the AM and PM peak. The Agency has concerns that the proposal for additional set of traffic signals will negate the level of service improvement.
- 9.17 The reduction of the width of the bus lane along Main North Road from 4.2 metres to 3.2 metres will further exacerbate lost time as the reduced width restricts the ability of the bus to pass cyclists safely. This will result in the buses being held back by cyclists'.
- 9.18 Agency best practise guidance suggests where possible the preferable width for a bus lane is 4.2m or wider. This is wide enough for cyclists to ride adjacent to buses (e.g. when a bus is stopped to collect or drop off a passenger, the cyclists can ride adjacent to the bus and not cross into the traffic lane to pass the bus).
- 9.19 Bus lanes of 3.2m or narrower, mean that cyclists and buses must travel in single file. This can slow the journey time of the bus and introduce travel time reliability

issues for the bus as they have to stay behind the cyclist (who will be generally going slower than the bus). Frustration creeps in here between bus drivers and cyclists, as well as bus drivers and motorists (e.g. if the bus moves out to the traffic lane to avoid the cyclist ahead), and increases the risk of an un intended death or serious injury.

- 9.20 The above is Agency guidance via the cycle network guidance, which is adopted by the Christchurch City Council in the design of bus lanes.
- 9.21 From a transport perspective a strong public transport network is key in achieving these outcomes which strongly align the with Government Policy Statement on Land Transport.

## 10 Objectives and Policies

10.1 As per above the relevant objectives and policies of the Christchurch District Plan are considered to be in chapters 7, 15 and 16. These are discussed as follows:

Chapter 7 - Transport

10.2 Relevant Objectives and Policies in Chapter 7 include the following:

#### 7.2.1 Objective - Integrated transport system for Christchurch District

- a) An integrated transport system for Christchurch District:
  - i. that is safe and efficient for all transport modes;
  - ii. that is responsive to the current recovery needs, future needs, and enables economic development, in particular an accessible Central City able to accommodate projected population growth;
  - iii. that supports safe, healthy and liveable communities by maximising integration with land use;
  - iv. that reduces dependency on private motor vehicles and promotesthe use of public and active transport;
  - v. that is managed using the one network approach.

# 7.2.1.2 Policy - High trip generating activities

- a) Manage the adverse effects of high trip generating activities, except for permitted activities within the Central City, on the transport system by assessing their location and design with regard to the extent that they:
  - i. are permitted1 by the zone in which they are located;
  - ii. are located in urban areas and generate additional vehicle trips beyond what is already established or consented, unless the

- already established or consented vehicle trips are specifically included in rule thresholds:
- iii. are accessible by a range of transport modes and encourage public and active transport use;
- iv. do not compromise the safe, efficient and effective use of the transport system;
- v. provide patterns of development that optimise use of the existing transport system;
- vi. maximise positive transport effects;
- vii. avoid significant adverse transport effects of activities where they are not permitted by the zone in which they are located;
- viii. mitigate other adverse transport effects, such as effects on communities, and the amenity values of the surrounding environment, including through travel demand management measures;
- ix. provide for the transport needs of people whose mobility is restricted; and
- x. integrate and coordinate with the transport system, including proposed transport infrastructure and service improvements.

#### 7.2.1.6 Policy - Promote public transport and active transport

- a) Promote public and active transport by:
  - i. ensuring new, and upgrades to existing, road corridors provide sufficient space and facilities to promote safe walking, cycling and public transport, in accordance with the road classification where they contribute to the delivery of an integrated transport system;
  - ii. ensuring activities provide an adequate amount of safe, secure, and convenient cycle parking and, outside the Central City, associated end of trip facilities;
  - iii. encouraging the use of travel demand management options that help facilitate the use of public transport, cycling, walking and options to minimise the need to travel; and
  - iv. requiring new District Centres to provide opportunities for a public transport interchange.
  - encouraging the formation of new Central City lanes and upgrading
    of existing lanes in the Central City, where appropriate, to provide
    for walking and cycling linkages and public spaces.
  - vi. developing a core pedestrian area within the Central City which is compact, convenient and safe, with a wider comprehensive network of pedestrians and cycle linkages that are appropriately

sized, direct, legible, prioritized, safe, have high amenity, ensure access for the mobility impaired and are free from encroachment.

- 10.3 The above Objectives and Policies highlight the importance that safety and accessibility is integrated for all modes of transport. Positive transport effects should be maximised, and active and public transport options should be promoted.
- 10.4 It has been highlighted that potential traffic effects can potentially be reduced but there remain concerns about the wider impacts of the proposal on the traffic network, including intersection. In addition, it is considered the proposal is not supportive of active and public transport including that bus and cycle opportunities (including associated safety) will be reduced as a consequence of the proposal.
  - Chapters 15 & 16 Commercial and Industrial
- 10.5 Relevant Objectives and Policies in Chapters 15 and 16 include the following:

#### 15.2.2 Objective - Centres-based framework for commercial activities

- a) Commercial activity is focussed within a network of centres (comprising the Central City, District Centres, Neighbourhood Centres, Local Centres and Large Format centres) to meet the wider community's and businesses' needs in a way and at a rate that:
  - i. supports intensification within centres;
  - ii. enables the efficient use and continued viability of the physical resources of commercial centres and promotes their success and vitality, reflecting their critical importance to the local economy;
  - iii. supports the function of District Centres as major focal points for commercial activities, employment, transport and community activities, and Neighbourhood Centres as a focal point for convenience shopping and community activities;
  - iv. gives primacy to the Central City, followed by District Centres and Neighbourhood Centres identified as Key Activity Centres;
  - v. is consistent with the role of each centre as defined in 15.2.2.1 Policy
     Role of centres Table 15.1;
  - vi. supports a compact and sustainable urban form that provides for the integration of commercial activity with community activity, residential activity and recreation activity in locations accessible by a range of modes of transport;
  - vii. supports the recovery of centres that sustained significant damage or significant population loss from their catchment, including the Central City, Linwood, and Neighbourhood Centres subject to 15.2.4.3 Policy Suburban centre master plans;

- viii. enhances their vitality and amenity and provides for a range of activities and community facilities;
- ix. manages adverse effects on the transport network and public and private infrastructure;
- is efficiently serviced by infrastructure and is integrated with the delivery of infrastructure; and
- xi. recognises the values of, and manages adverse effects on, sites of Ngāi Tahu cultural significance identified in Appendix 9.5.6 and natural waterways (including waipuna).

## 15.2.2.1 Policy - Role of centres

- a) Maintain and strengthen the Central City and commercial centres as the focal points for the community and business through intensification within centres that reflects their functions and catchment sizes, and in accordance with a framework that:
  - i. gives primacy to, and supports, the recovery of the Central City;
  - ii. supports and enhances the role of District Centres; and
  - iii. maintains the role of Neighbourhood Centres, Local Centres and Large Format Centres as set out in Policy 15.2.2.1, Table 15.1 - Centre's role.

#### 16.2.1 Objective - Recovery and growth

 The recovery and economic growth of the district's industry is supported and strengthened in existing and new greenfield industrial zones.

## 16.2.1.4 Policy - Activities in industrial zones

- a) Maintain and support the function of industrial zones while, subject to Clauses (b) and (c), providing for limited non-industrial activities that:
  - i. are ancillary in scale (subject to Clause (d)) and on the same site as a permitted or consented activity;
  - are not appropriate in more sensitive environments due to their potential noise, odour or other environmental effects;
  - iii. comprise yard based supplier or trade suppliers in the Industrial General Zone:
  - iv. provide an emergency service and/or provide for community activities;
  - v. support the needs of workers and businesses in the zone including food and beverage outlets, commercial services, and the care of children;
  - vi. meet the convenience needs of residents, workers and businesses in the Industrial General Zone (Waterloo Park) in a Local Centre;

- vii. are rural activities associated with the irrigation of food processing wastewater in the identified area of the Industrial Heavy Zone (South West Hornby) (Appendix 16.8.8) that is integral to the ongoing operation of an established industrial activity.
- b) Avoid any activity in industrial zones with the potential to hinder or constrain the establishment or ongoing operation or development of industrial activities and strategic infrastructure, or with the potential to be exposed to unacceptable risk. This includes but is not limited to avoiding:
  - i. sensitive activities located within the 50 dB L<sub>dn</sub> Air Noise Contour, the Lyttelton Port Influences Overlay Area, the Woolston Risk Management Area and in proximity to the National Grid;
  - ii. non-sensitive discretionary or non-complying activities specified by Rule 16.4.1.4 D1, Rule 16.5.1.4, and Rule 16.5.1.5 NC1 in the Woolston Risk Management Area close proximity to bulk fuel storage facilities unless a quantitative risk assessment establishes that the proposed activity in its location meets risk acceptability criteria appropriate to the applicable land use. (Plan Change 1 Decision)
- c) Avoid the use of industrial zones for non-industrial activities that could adversely affect the strategic role of the Central City, District Centres and Neighbourhood Centres as focal points for commercial activities, community activities, residential activities, and other activities.
- d) Provide for ancillary activities, recognising their role in supporting industry, while being incidental in scale and function to a principal activity on the same site, and not inconsistent with Clauses b. and c..
- In considering context for the above, the Agency is a signatory to the Greater Canterbury Urban Development Strategy which provided guidance to the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement. A theme through these documents was the identification of different areas for different land uses including key activity centres. The direction through these documents has influenced the Christchurch District Plan and also influences the development and investment in the State Highway network as well as active and public transport. Examples include the bus hub at Northlands Mall and bus lanes which the Agency continues to invest in.
- 10.7 On this basis the above objectives and policies direct the importance of activities locating in appropriately zoned areas. Which has been established through an agreed framework. Policy 16.2.1.4(c) is strong in its wording to avoid the use of industrial zones for non-industrial activities that could adversely affect the strategic role of the District Centres as focal points for commercial activities, community activities, residential activities, and other activities.

- 10.8 The Agency engages in statutory planning processes from the outset to ensure the transport consequences of growth and development are understood, managed and provided for. In particular, the Agency seeks consistency with integrated planning and sustainable management objectives in statutory planning documents.
- 10.9 The Agency supports the preparation of regional growth strategies and structure plans as mechanisms for identifying integrated and sustainable patterns of land use change and infrastructure funding mechanisms. The Agency advocates that these strategies and plans are recognised in, and given effect to through the regional policy statement, regional land transport strategy, district plan(s) and long-term council community plan(s) at the earliest opportunity.
- 10.10 Integrating transport and urban development is a key principle the Agency applies to planning and investment decisions. The Agency is part the way through updating its Good practice guide for transport land use planning (recently prepared).

## 11 Summary

- 11.1 The Agency has submitted in opposition to a proposal to establish a supermarket, plus other activities, at 171 Main North Road. Concerns for the proposal are due to the impacts on the surrounding transport network including impacts on the Main North Road / QEII Drive intersection, the operation of roads connecting to State Highway 74 and impacts on active and public transport systems. It could be that specific potential effects of the proposal are controlled and reduced but concern remains as to the wider impacts and the appropriateness of allowing such changes to the transport network including the impacts it may have.
- 11.2 It is also considered the principles through the objectives and policies of the Christchurch District Plan do not support the proposed out of zone activity.
- 11.3 The proposal is a discretionary activity and the Agency is of the opinion that the purpose of the Resource Management Act 1991 would be better given effect to through the declining of resource consent.

#### **Deborah Hewett**

