

**IN THE MATTER**

of the Resource Management Act 1991 (the  
Act)

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER**

of the proposed Waikato District Plan (Stage  
1) – Hearing 18 – Rural Zone

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**SUMMARY OF STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JOHN ANDREW RIDDELL FOR THE  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF CONSERVATION**

**18 SEPTEMBER 2020**

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**Counsel for Director-General of  
Conservation**

Troy Ulrich

Private Bag 3072

Hamilton 3240

Phone: 027 324 8991

*Introduction*

1. My name is John Andrew Riddell. I have over 20 years experience as a planner.
2. This is a summary of the evidence in chief I prepared assessing the submissions and further submissions by the Director-General of Conservation on the Rural zone provisions of the proposed Waikato District Plan (**proposed Plan**).
3. The evidence cover four matters:
  - (a) amending a policy and a rule to provide for earthworks for ecosystem protection and similar purposes;
  - (b) whether waste management facilities should be provided for in special areas;
  - (c) removing standards and matters of discretion from earthworks rules where these relate to functions of the Waikato Regional Council; and
  - (d) amending a policy and rule relating to Conservation Lot subdivision.

*Earthworks for ecosystem protection, rehabilitation or restoration works – section 3 of my evidence*

4. The Director-General of Conservation (**Director-General**) lodged further submissions in support of the submissions by Auckland Waikato Fish and Game Council on this matter .
5. Amendments are sought to policy 5.3.5 on earthworks in the Rural area and to permitted activity Rural Zone earthworks rule 22.2.3.1 to provide for earthworks for ecosystem protection, rehabilitation or restoration works. The submission does not extend to the earthworks rule applying within Significant Natural Areas.
6. Policy 11.1 of the Waikato Regional Policy Statement encourages ecosystem restoration and enhancement. This is further supported by objective 3.1.1 and policies 3.1.2 and 3.2.7 of the proposed Waikato District Plan (**proposed Plan**).

7. The Hearing 18 report recommends the introduction of a new category of activity – conservation activities – along with a definition of this activity, adding 'conservation activities' to earthworks policy 5.3.5, and adding 'earthworks ancillary to conservation activities' to permitted activity rule 22.2.3.1 P1.
8. Generally I agree with these recommended additions to the proposed Plan.
9. I do have concerns about the proposed definition of 'conservation activities'. In my opinion, it is not focused on protection, restoration and rehabilitation of indigenous habitats; the definition inappropriately includes accessory buildings; and the definition extends beyond conservation to include tourism.
10. I recommend amendments to the proposed definition of 'conservation activities' at paragraph 3.19 of my evidence.
11. My support for the amendments to permitted activity earthworks rule 22.2.3.1 P1 depend on the restricted discretionary activity earthworks rule for earthworks within Significant Natural Areas applying to conservation activities that occur within Significant Natural Areas.<sup>1</sup>

*Policy 5.3.13 – waste management activities – section 4 of my evidence*

12. Policy 5.3.13 of the proposed Plan is on waste management facilities in the Rural environment.
13. This policy includes a clause on locating waste management facilities in mapped special areas. The Director-General is seeking the deletion of this clause.
14. The underlying issue is ensuring that general 'avoid adverse effects' applies to these mapped outstanding value special areas.
15. I agree with the Hearing 18 report recommendation that this clause be amended to make it clear the waste management facilities should avoid locating in mapped special areas.

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<sup>1</sup>See paragraphs 3.23 to 3.27 of my evidence in chief.

*Earthworks and Regional Council functions – section 5 of my evidence*

16. The Director-General supported submissions seeking deletion of standards relating to sediment control and natural water flows from Rural Zone earthworks rules.
17. The concern is the overlap with Regional Council functions.
18. I agree with the recommendations given at paragraph 291 in the Hearing 18 report to delete the natural water flows standard from the rules.

*Policy 5.2.3 – protection of indigenous biodiversity – section 6 of my evidence*

19. Policy 5.2.3 has two parts. Part (b) is about directing lifestyle subdivision away from areas where indigenous biodiversity is being protected. A submission supported by the Director-General is seeking that this be this includes areas of indigenous biodiversity being enhanced or restored.
20. I agree with the recommendation to delete this clause from policy 5.2.3, in favour of addressing the issue in a recommended replacement policy 5.3.8.<sup>2</sup>

*Conservation Lot subdivision – section 7 of my evidence*

21. The Director-General supports a submission by The Surveying Company to extend Conservation Lot subdivision rule 22.4.1.6 RD 1 to provide for conservation lots where areas are having indigenous biodiversity enhanced or restored.
22. I agree with the recommendation to, instead, include a new discretionary activity rule providing for subdivision where revegetation or enhancement planting of a mapped Significant Natural Area is proposed.



Andrew Riddell

18 September 2020

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<sup>2</sup>Recommended at paragraph 84 of the K Overwater Hearing 18 report.