

Before the Independent Hearings Panel  
Waikato District Council

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*under:* the Resource Management Act 1991

*in the matter of:* Submissions and further submissions in relation to  
Variation 3 to the Proposed Waikato District Plan

*and:* **Ryman Healthcare Limited**  
*Submitter 108*

Summary Statement of **Matthew Brown** on behalf of Ryman  
Healthcare Limited

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Dated: 31 July 2023

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**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF MATTHEW BROWN ON BEHALF OF RYMAN HEALTHCARE LIMITED**

- 1 My full name is Matthew Glen Brown.
- 2 As you will recall, I am the General Manager Development NZ for Ryman Healthcare Limited (*Ryman*).
- 3 I have already appeared before this Panel for both the Waipa PC26 hearing and Waikato IPI joint opening hearing, so I do not propose to repeat matters I covered at those hearings. I will instead focus on matters of particular relevance to Variation 3 to the Proposed Waikato District Plan (*Variation 3*).
- 4 Before I do that, I wish to reiterate that there is a major need for retirement villages in the Waikato District. Ryman's existing and expected villages in the Waikato Region will provide homes for over 1,720 ageing residents. That said, development of new villages, beyond Ryman's current pipeline, will be needed to meet the longer-term shortfall.
- 5 Ryman recently completed the consenting process for a new comprehensive care village in Cambridge. That village will eventually be home to 381 residents when completed, and already has a waiting list of 126 people without any official marketing. This strong interest shows the desperate need for comprehensive care retirement villages in this District. Our village will also release hundreds of existing homes to families in need of housing and will help contribute to affordability.
- 6 I acknowledge that the Officer's recommendations in Council's Rebuttal have gone some way to supporting improved provisions for retirement villages.
- 7 That said, I consider that a more comprehensive suite of provisions for retirement villages, as proposed by Ms Nicki Williams, is required. Our team have developed these planning provisions based on many years of experience with consenting retirement villages. Planning provisions that are better suited to retirement villages will allow us to invest with greater confidence, and assist in meeting the housing and care needs of the growing ageing population.
- 8 It is important that Variation 3 addresses some of the key consenting challenges that Ryman currently faces, including:
  - 8.1 **The lack of provision for the day-to-day needs of older residents and the positive effects of our villages:** retirement villages have unique functional and operational requirements due to the day-to-day needs of residents that council officers processing consent applications often do not appreciate. For example, a large format building is generally required to accommodate care rooms and communal facilities. Ryman is best placed to design villages that

provide for these needs, and has a long and positive track record of doing so;

- 8.2 Further, our villages generate substantial social and economic benefits. This is both through housing and caring for older people, and generating jobs and economic activity in local communities during construction and operational phases;
- 8.3 **The need to enable efficient use of suitable sites:** sites that are appropriate for retirement villages are rare due to size and locational requirements. In order to respond to the ageing population housing crisis, retirement villages must be provided for in all areas that anticipate residential activity, and efficient use of available sites should be enabled. We can build villages in both greenfield and brownfield sites in residential and appropriate commercial areas where they are available, and the planning context enables their use; and
- 8.4 **Notification issues with village consent applications:** notification processes create significant consent hurdles as they lead to delays, costs and uncertainties - often as a result of immaterial or irrelevant arguments being raised. If retirement villages are given the same treatment as other multi-unit residential activities in relation to notification, we will have much greater confidence when designing our villages and in terms of the timeframes to complete the consent process and commence building.
- 9 Ultimately, Ryman and the RVA seek changes to Variation 3 to improve and streamline consent processes to ensure the efficient delivery of housing for older people. However, we are not seeking to move away from an effects management approach. The regime we are putting forward focusses on the key effects that potentially arise, including positive effects. Ryman agrees with and supports the key outcomes sought by the RVA, as previously set out by Mr Collyns and to soon be expanded on by Mr Luke Hinchey, Professor Ngaire Kerse and Ms Williams.

**Matthew Brown**  
**31 July 2023**