

BEFORE THE INVERCARGILL CITY COUNCIL

Independent Hearing Commissioner

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER a Resource Consent Application RMA/2018/111, by the Invercargill Licencing Trust, to demolish buildings, including a Class 2 heritage building, and construct and operate a new, eight level hotel incorporating 80 hotel suites, a restaurant, café, bars, function spaces, car parking and other guest facilities at the corner of Dee and Don Street.

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ANDREW LECKIE
Traffic Evidence
13 November 2018

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1 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERTISE

- 1.1 My name is Andrew Francis Leckie.
- 1.2 I am a Member of Engineering New Zealand. I hold Bachelor of Engineering (Civil) with Honours and Master of Engineering in Transportation degrees from the University of Canterbury.
- 1.3 For the last four years I have practised as a traffic engineering consultant based in Christchurch, primarily working on projects throughout the South Island. I currently hold the position of Project Transportation Engineer at Stantec.
- 1.4 My colleague Chris Rossiter prepared the Integrated Transport Assessment (ITA) for the proposed hotel, which I was not involved with. Due to his unavailability, I have prepared this evidence. I have been briefed on all aspects of his transport assessment, have read the ITA, the Resource Consent application and the Section 42a report. I provide this evidence based on my own expert opinion.
- 1.5 I am familiar with the Invercargill CBD area having resided in Invercargill until I finished high school.
- 1.6 I have previous experience with hotel projects both investigating transport effects and forecasting traffic generation and car parking demand.

2 CODE OF CONDUCT

- 2.1 I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses issued as part of the Environment Court Practice Notes. I agree to comply with the code and am satisfied the matters I address in my evidence are within my expertise. I am not aware of any material facts that I have omitted that might alter or detract from the opinions I express in my evidence.

3 SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

3.1 In this statement of evidence, I will:

- a. adopt and summarise the findings of the ITA;
- b. briefly describe the site of the proposed hotel in the wider transport planning context as well as the basic layout and access arrangements;
- c. summarise the nature of the existing transport environment in the immediate vicinity of the site;
- d. summarise my assessment of effects of the hotel on the transport environment, and identify any mitigation measures that may be required;
- e. comment on the proposal in terms of the relevant objectives, policies, rules and assessment criteria of the regional and district planning instruments;
- f. comment on the transport related matters raised in the submissions to the application; and
- g. comment on the Council Officer's report, associated transport assessments and draft conditions of consent.

4 TRANSPORTATION ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Existing Transport Environment

- 4.1 The hotel site is located on the south-eastern corner of the Dee Street / Don Street intersection in the Invercargill city-centre.
- 4.2 Dee Street is part of State Highway 6 and is a four lane, divided road in the vicinity of the site. There are angled parking spaces along the eastern side of Dee Street and there is an approximately 5m wide footpath along the site frontage.
- 4.3 Don Street is a westbound, one-way street between Kelvin Street and Dee Street. There is angled parking on the northern side of

the street and parallel parking on the southern side. The footpath on the southern side is approximately 3m wide.

- 4.4 The Dee Street / Don Street intersection is a traffic signalised intersection. All movements are controlled by the signals except the U-turn from the south on Dee Street. A turn lane is provided for this movement, which operates under priority rules, just south of the intersection.
- 4.5 Dee Street has carried reasonably constant traffic volumes of approximately 16,000 vehicles per day since 2010. Weekday hourly two-way traffic volumes peak at approximately 1,500 vehicles per hour during the 4:00pm-5:00pm hour.
- 4.6 There are 12 angled parking spaces on the eastern side of Dee Street between Don and Esk Streets, nine of which are on the site frontage. There are 44 parking spaces on Don Street between Kelvin and Dee Streets, two of which are on the site frontage along with an approximately 28m long taxi stand.
- 4.7 The Invercargill Inner City Revitalisation Master Plan Report reported that there is high parking pressure on Dee Street and there is low / medium parking pressure on Don Street. There are several off-street parking facilities within walking distance of the site. These include the Park Zone building on Leven Street, and the Don Street car park which are within approximately 200m and 300m walking distance of the site respectively.
- 4.8 The ITA concluded that the types of crashes being reported in the area are typical for a town centre environment and do not raise any particular concerns with the surrounding road network. I have used NZTA's Crash Analysis System to review crashes within 100m of the Dee Street / Don Street intersection. As at 25 October 2018, there has been one additional crash reported in the search area since the ITA was prepared. This crash, which occurred south of the site on Dee Street, was a rear-end collision which happened when the front vehicle stopped suddenly, and the trailing driver's attention was diverted.

- 4.9 This additional crash, in my opinion, does not change the conclusion in the ITA that the crash types occurring in the area in the last five years are typical for a town centre environment and I do not consider there are any particular road safety concerns with the area.

Proposed Development

- 4.10 The proposed hotel development is as set out in the application.
- 4.11 From a transport perspective, separate entry and exit driveways and a porte-cochere are proposed along the Dee Street frontage. The entry and exit driveways will be approximately 29m and 47m south of Don Street respectively.
- 4.12 Nine on-street angled parking spaces will be removed along the site frontage to accommodate the proposed driveways and coach parking space.
- 4.13 A kerbside coach parking space for pick-up and drop-off have been proposed between the two driveways where the historic kerb will remain where it currently sits or a there will be a 1.5m kerb build out. The resulting extra footpath width from the build out will reduce the effects of coach loading / unloading on passing pedestrians. It is proposed that Dee Street ramps up at the two driveways to the existing footpath level over that 1.5m length. That means that the existing footpath level can be maintained to help highlight that pedestrians have priority.
- 4.14 Other changes to the kerb alignment are proposed next to the two driveways to ensure that vehicles enter and exit at right angles to the footpath, to optimise visibility between drivers and pedestrians on the footpath, and at slow speeds. Judder bars are proposed within the site at the exit driveway and at the exit of the car park to keep vehicle speeds to a minimum. A separation distance of approximately 7 metres between the edge of the Dee Street southbound traffic lane and the footpath along the site frontage is proposed for inwards and outwards vehicles to queue in.

- 4.15 I am aware that Warren and Mahoney have made minor changes to the loading dock area since the ITA was prepared. Specifically, a gas store has been included in the design and resulted in the loss of two car parking spaces.
- 4.16 As such, 32 car parking spaces, including two accessible spaces, are now proposed at ground level for guests/visitors. These will be accessed through the porte-cochere. A further two spaces will be marked in the porte-cochere for drop-offs and pick-ups, and there will be additional space for informal use not obstructing vehicle passage. In my opinion, the removal of two car parking spaces is not significant.
- 4.17 A separate service vehicle access will be provided off Don Street for service vehicles. An internal loading area will provide enough space for a small or medium sized truck to turnaround and exit in a forward direction back onto Don Street. The minor changes made to the loading area since the ITA was prepared have not affected this. Two parking spaces on Don Street will need to be removed for the service vehicle access.

Traffic Generation and Car Parking Demand

- 4.18 Based on the review of traffic generation rates from various sources in the ITA and the number of car parking spaces on-site, I consider the hotel could generate up to 30-40 two-way vehicle movements per hour during peak times. That represents 15-20 vehicle movements per hour at each of the Dee Street driveways or one vehicle movement every three to four minutes at each driveway.
- 4.19 Based on the various parking demand scenarios outlined in the ITA, I consider guest car parking demands could be up to approximately 20-40 parking spaces depending on the make-up of guests. Guest car parking demands will be highest overnight. I consider that most overnight guest car parking demand will be able to be met on-site in the 32 car parking spaces proposed.
- 4.20 Based on a function room capacity for 120 people and the different event scenarios outlined in the ITA, I consider conferences and

other events in the function room could generate additional car parking demands of 15 vehicles and occasionally up to 25 vehicles.

4.21 I consider most people using the café and bar would be hotel guests and any external car parking demand associated with the café and restaurant would be small and not add to the peak car parking demands.

4.22 I forecast a total car parking demand for the hotel of 35-55 vehicles and occasionally up to 65 vehicles. With a car parking supply of 32 spaces on-site, that represents a typical overflow demand of approximately 20-25 vehicles and a peak overflow demand of 30-35 vehicles.

Assessment of Transport Effects

4.23 The design of the Dee Street accesses will result in slow vehicle speeds, vehicles crossing the footpath at right angles, maximising visibility between drivers and pedestrians, and will allow room for drivers to wait clear of through traffic and the footpath. The footpath will have a continuous surface with unchanged grades along the site frontage and pedestrians will have priority over vehicle movements.

4.24 Drivers entering the site will have clear visibility to pedestrians on the footpath in both directions given they will be approaching at right angles. At the exit driveway, drivers will have limited visibility to pedestrians to the south, due to the substation and the porte-cochere column. I consider that pedestrians would be unlikely to walk right against the road reserve boundary / building frontages along Dee Street, where they would have very limited visibility of exiting traffic. I would expect that people would tend to walk more towards the middle of the footpath, and regularly to the left of oncoming pedestrians. The judder bars proposed will ensure that vehicle speeds are very slow exiting the site and in my opinion, there will be sufficient visibility for drivers to give-way to pedestrians on the footpath.

4.25 A survey of pedestrian movement volumes on Dee Street in October 2018 recorded an average of one person per minute

moving past the site during the weekday evening peak with slightly lower volumes during the morning. At these volumes, there will be a very low level of potential conflict between pedestrians and vehicles crossing the footpath. In my opinion, there are no reasons why vehicle movements cannot occur safely and with no noticeable effects on pedestrian movements.

- 4.26 Drivers exiting the site will readily be able to safely select a gap in the southbound traffic stream on Dee Street to turn left into. There will only be low traffic volumes using the hotel driveways on Dee Street and accordingly I anticipate minimal queuing at the exit. Further, the 7 metre separation between the footpath and the edge of Dee Street will allow an inward driver to give-way to pedestrians on the footpath while waiting clear of through traffic on Dee Street. The separation will also allow outward vehicles to stop clear of the footpath while waiting to enter Dee Street.
- 4.27 Overall, I consider the Dee Street access designs will result in convenient and safe access for visitors to the hotel while having a negligible effect on pedestrians on the footpath and traffic on Dee Street.
- 4.28 The Don Street service access will only carry low volumes of up to 10 two-way service vehicle movements per day. Since the service access will be narrow and there will be limited visibility between an exiting driver and pedestrians on the footpath, I recommend that signage is installed to alert service vehicle drivers to approach the exit with caution.
- 4.29 Based on the car parking survey information in the Inner City Revitalisation Master Plan Report, I conclude that the overflow car parking demands generated by the hotel could be met within the surrounding area, requiring a walk of only up to approximately five minutes to reach the hotel.

Heritage Elements

- 4.30 I understand that the existing kerb and channel along the hotel frontage to SH1 comprises some historic stone and cobbles that

have some heritage status. Dr Cawte has noted that the kerb and channel are unlikely to be in their original location¹.

- 4.31 I am aware of two options for the design of the bus pick-up / drop-off area: one which retains the kerbs in their existing location and one which allows for them to be relocated and re-installed. With the first option, bus passengers would disembark onto the road carriageway and then have to cross the channel to the footpath. The second option would allow passengers to disembark directly onto the footpath. In my opinion, the second option should be preferred because it removes a potential trip hazard from the disembarkment area. I consider that the integration of the historic kerb and cobbles into an extended kerb line can form part of the detailed design for the porte-cochere which is required under proposed Resource Consent Condition 16.

District Plan Transport Rules Compliance

- 4.32 The ITA assessed the proposed hotel against the Invercargill City Operative District Plan transport rules related to car parking, loading and access. I understand these transport rules have been replaced by the transport rules in the Proposed District Plan and I have assessed the proposed development against these new rules. I note that for the purposes of this assessment, there is no change between the two versions of the rules and how they apply to the proposed hotel.
- 4.33 The Invercargill City Proposed District Plan does not require any car parking or loading spaces within the City Centre Priority Redevelopment Precinct in the City Area (Rules 3.20.1 and 3.20.6).
- 4.34 The car parking space design requirements of Rule 3.20.2 and the loading facility manoeuvring requirements of Rule 3.20.7 will be met.
- 4.35 Under Rule 3.20.11, it is a discretionary activity to construct and use new vehicle accesses from, and egresses onto, State Highways for any discretionary or non-complying activity where the speed

¹ Paragraph 7.19 of the Evidence of Dr Hayden Cawte (13 November 2018)

limit is 50kph or less. As I have stated earlier, I consider the proposed vehicle crossings on Dee Street will operate safely with negligible effects on Dee Street traffic and pedestrians passing the site.

5 COMMENTS ON SUBMISSIONS

5.1 I have read the submissions and respond to the transport related matters as follows.

Christine Edgley

5.2 Christine Edgley expressed concerns about the location of the porte-cochere on the Dee Street frontage and vehicle movements associated with it and the car park having an adverse effect on the pedestrian experience on the frontage. My assessment of the transport effects considers the concerns raised by Ms Edgley.

NZTA

5.3 NZTA, as the Road Controlling Authority for Dee Street, provided a submission addressing access, reverse sensitivity and demolition and construction management plans. I have focussed on the Dee Street access matters raised as the other matters are not related to my assessment.

5.4 I note that NZTA do not have significant concerns with the layout and location of the proposed accesses, however they require further detail on the design of the porte-cochere layout and how it will ensure visibility for vehicles and pedestrians is retained, and that the design reinforces the priority for pedestrians across the access. I have already referenced these matters at paragraphs 4.23 to 4.27 of this evidence.

5.5 The submission raises the possibility of coach parking on Dee Street potentially impacting on visibility for vehicles and pedestrians, but acknowledges that this is mitigated to an extent by restricting the use of the coach park to loading / unloading only.

- 5.6 Furthermore, the separation between the traffic lanes and the footpath means that vehicles exiting the site will be able to cross the footpath and then wait clear of the traffic lane to observe approaching traffic. Based on the outside of the coach being 3m from the kerb, there will be more than 2m separation between the coach and the nearest traffic lane. I consider this will be enough separation to allow minimum sightlines appropriate for the town centre environment.
- 5.7 I consider pedestrian safety will not be affected by the coach parking, with approaching vehicles on Dee Street having visibility to pedestrians on the footpath due to either the kerb build-out at the coach park or the separation between the bus park and the kerb.
- 5.8 NZTA have since written to Invercargill City Council, on 8 November 2018, informing them that they would like to withdraw their right to be heard. This is based on the recommended conditions in the s42a report, including condition 16 relating to approval of the porte-cochere detailed design, and amended conditions related to demolition and construction management plans.

6 COUNCIL'S PLANNER'S REPORT

- 6.1 The Council's Planner agrees that the proposed development complies with the transportation rules of the Proposed District Plan, with the exception that resource consent is required for the construction and use of the new vehicle access and egress from Dee Street.
- 6.2 The s42A report also states that Russell Pearson, the City Council's Roading Manager, did not raise any concerns with the impact of the proposal on the safety or efficiency of Don Street.
- 6.3 The Council's Planner concluded that the matters identified in the NZTA submission and the submission of C Edgley regarding pedestrian safety can be appropriately addressed through a condition of consent that requires approval of the detailed design

of the porte-cochere. I agree and consider that the proposed condition in the S42A report is appropriate.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 I conclude that the proposed hotel will generate low traffic volumes throughout the day and the entry and exit to the porte-cochere on Dee Street will be able to operate efficiently with low delays and minimal queuing.
- 7.2 The design of the accesses proposed will result in a safe environment for pedestrians on the Dee Street footpath.
- 7.3 Based on my analysis of the parking demands, the hotel will generate an overflow car parking demand, particularly when functions are being held. In my opinion, this car parking demand could be accommodated on-street and in nearby off-street car parking facilities.
- 7.4 I have addressed submissions relevant to transport, including the NZTA submission, and the Council's Planner's Report, and have concluded that there are no transport reasons that the proposal could not be approved.

ANDREW LECKIE

Traffic

Stantec

13 November 2018