

BEFORE THE INVERCARGILL CITY COUNCIL

RMA/2020/80

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991
("the Act")

AND

IN THE MATTER of an application to establish and operate a
residential care facility at 40 Fairview
Avenue and 32 Stuart Street.

BETWEEN **THE HAWTHORNDALE CARE VILLAGE
CHARITABLE TRUST**

Applicant

AND **INVERCARGILL CITY COUNCIL**

Local Authority

EVIDENCE OF STEWART FLETCHER ON BEHALF OF WAKA KOTAHI
November 2020

My name is **STEWART FLETCHER** of Christchurch and I work for Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency (Waka Kotahi) as a Principal Planner. I have been requested by the Agency to assist them in the provision of evidence regarding their submission on the notified resource consent application for the Hawthorndale Care Village Charitable Trust.

It is intended that this evidence will be tabled at the hearing for this resource consent application and that my evidence will be taken as read. I will not be in attendance at the hearing due to other commitments and also, due to the nature of the proposal as it relates to Waka Kotahi, it is likely that there will be little value in my attendance.

1 Qualifications

- 1.1 I am a Principal Planner and have been practicing as a Planner for over 20 years. I have a Bachelor of Resource Studies from Lincoln University and am a full member of the NZ Planning Institute.
- 1.2 I have worked in a number of planning roles and have recently commenced employment with Waka Kotahi as a Principal Planner. Prior to this recent change I operated my own consultancy for the past ten years.

2 Expert Witness Practice Note

- 2.1 While not a Court hearing I note 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 Background

- 3.1 A resource consent application has been lodged with the Invercargill City Council by The Hawthorndale Care Village Charitable Trust to establish and operate a residential care facility at 40 Fairview Avenue and 32 Stuart Street.
- 3.2 Waka Kotahi lodged a neutral submission on the proposal on the basis that the applicant had previously amended the proposal to address any concerns of Waka Kotahi. These amendments consisted of the relocation of the main proposed vehicle crossing to a more central point along the street frontage, including the establishment of a turning bay through the central median on Tay Street. Conditions were recommended as part of the submission and I note that the applicant and Council Planner have expressed their agreement as to the imposition of such conditions.

4 Submissions

- 4.1 Aside from the submission lodged by Waka Kotahi there were other submissions also lodged regarding the proposal and some of those submissions raised traffic related concerns. This evidence does not attempt to address all points in those submissions and instead I provide comment on some of those points where they are relevant to Waka Kotahi.

Relocation of Vehicle Crossing Location

- 4.2 Waka Kotahi recommended that the vehicle crossing be relocated to a more central point and alterations to the median occur to improve road user safety. An increase in the frequency of motorists undertaking U Turns was of concern and the alterations to the proposal regarding entrance location and median was considered to improve motorist safety compared to the original proposal, particularly given the scale of the proposed activity.

No Stopping Lines

- 4.3 The application site is on the southern frontage of Tay Street. This is the side of the Street where the new vehicle crossing will be constructed. Any alterations to the site frontage will consist of the construction of the new entrance and the establishment of no stopping lines on the eastern side of the entrance for a length, yet to be determined, but most likely to be around 6 metres. The no stopping lines will ensure that a vehicle pulling out of the new vehicle crossing will be able to see any cars travelling in a westerly direction towards the town centre.
- 4.4 The works will also include alterations to the central median on Tay Street in order to establish a new turning bay. This will include excavations, sealing and possibly the relocation of a street light. It is not envisaged that the proposal will result in any changes to the east bound lane of Tay Street. There is no intention to establish no stopping lines on the northern boundary of Tay Street as there would be no need for such lines. This is consistent with other median crossing points along Tay Street.
- 4.5 The detailed design of the works required to Tay Street are yet to be prepared by the applicant, which is usual at the resource consent stage, but a general design has been provided which shows a relatively standard layout. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that the detailed design will need to be prepared and provided to Waka Kotahi for their approval prior to works commencing and conditions have been suggested and agreed to which also ensure the works will be completed at the appropriate time.

- 4.6 Therefore there will be no changes to parking opportunities for those properties on the northern side of Tay Street as a consequence of the vehicle crossing and / or changes to the central median. It is also highly likely there will be no changes to the width of the road verge parking area on the northern side of Tay Street.

Crossing Facilities

- 4.7 Questions have been raised through the submissions as to whether the existing crossing area, which previously serviced the school, would remain. In the design work undertaken by the applicant there has also been no indication that the existing crossing / pedestrian refuge will need to change or be removed. It is currently the intention of Waka Kotahi that the pedestrian facilities will remain and if any change was to occur in the future it would not be because of the proposed vehicle crossing for the proposed activity.

Single Laning

- 4.8 It has been raised, through one of the submissions, that Tay Street may be single laned. I have spoken with the relevant roading managers within Waka Kotahi and can advise that the concept of single laning this section of Tay Street has been voiced within Waka Kotahi but the idea is yet to be progressed. If it was proposed to investigate the option further, more detailed investigations would be required, most likely including consultation and internal funding for such a change would need to be allocated. Therefore, it is my understanding that while there is the potential that one day this section of Tay Street may be single laned, right now there is formal plan to reduce the number of lanes in either direction along Tay Street.

5 Conditions

- 5.1 Waka Kotahi recommended the imposition of conditions to ensure that any vehicle crossing, and any other works proposed, will be carried out at the appropriate time and to ensure there are appropriate lines of communication between the Council, as consenting authority, and Waka Kotahi as road controlling authority. The recommended conditions provide clear mechanisms for Council to ensure all works have been constructed and completed to appropriate standards.
- 5.2 There is general agreement between parties that the suggested conditions are appropriate and it continues to be recommended that the conditions are imposed if the Commissioner is of a mind to grant resource consent.

6 Summary

- 6.1 Waka Kotahi remains neutral regarding the proposal activity and acknowledges that any potential effects have been suitably addressed by the applicant, including the acceptance of suggested conditions.
- 6.2 While not intending on attending the hearing I am available to respond to any questions the Hearings Commissioner may have and would be open to responding to any queries in writing or making myself available via technologies such as Zoom.

Stewart Fletcher

9 November 2020