

**Before Palmerston North City Council**

**Under**

the Resource Management Act 1991

**In the matter of**

a proposed plan change to the  
Palmerston North City District Plan,  
being Plan Change E: Roxburgh  
Residential Area

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**LEGAL SUBMISSIONS FOR FRANCES HOLDINGS LTD**

**8 MAY 2025**

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**Counsel Acting**

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1. These submissions are made on behalf of Frances Holdings Limited (FHL). FHL has filed a submission (S11) and further submission (FS2) in relation to Plan Change E.
2. In light of the Panel's experience and the lack of any apparent legal issues arising in respect of the relevant statutory provisions, these submissions do not address the plan change provisions of the RMA. Instead, they provide a brief introduction to FHL and its position in relation to Plan Change E. The details to support that position are more appropriately addressed as matters of evidence by Mr Thomas (planning) and Ms Blagrove/Ms Devereux (urban design).
3. FHL is an experienced developer of both residential and industrial land. It is part of a suite of companies owned by the Higgins Family. A recent consolidation has merged some company entities such as Higgins Family Holdings Ltd into FHL. While Higgins Construction was sold to Fletcher Building Ltd some years ago, the family continue to operate Higgins Concrete and associated aggregate and quarry activities. FHL is notably the owner and developer of the Manawatu Business Park that makes up the majority of the North East Industrial Zone. It also has a history of residential development in Palmerston North and other north island centres and is a partner in the development of the Matangi Residential Area.
4. FHL is the dominant landowner in the Plan Change area, and has been liaising with the Council closely during this Plan Change process.
5. In principle FHL is a supporter of the redevelopment of this area to residential activities.
6. However, there are significant commercial differences between greenfield development and infill and brownfield redevelopment. Key elements, specific to this proposed Plan Change, are pre-development costs associated with demolition of existing buildings and clean-up of contaminated land from past industrial activities. FHL estimates these costs to be in the order of \$4-5 million dollars. This places FHL at a significant commercial disadvantage compared with other land development opportunities in the City.

7. For these reasons FHL considers it is critical that the plan change provides a framework that is devoid of unnecessary restrictions, and sufficiently flexible to enable development that is commercially realistic. FHL considers the refinements to provisions recommended in the planning evidence of Mr Thomas and the urban design evidence of Ms Blagrove/Ms Devereux meet those requirements, and therefore supports those refinements.



**M J Slyfield**  
Counsel for Frances Holdings  
8 May 2025