

UNDER the Resource Management Act 1991 ("**RMA**")

AND

IN THE MATTER of a notice of requirement ("**NoR**") for a designation by KiwiRail Holdings Limited ("**KiwiRail**") for the Palmerston North Regional Freight Hub ("**Freight Hub**") under section 168 of the RMA

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF KIRSTY AUSTIN
ON BEHALF OF KIWIRAIL HOLDINGS LIMITED**

SOCIAL IMPACT

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Four categories of social effects are relevant to the assessment (quality and amenity of the environment, people's way of life, the community, and income and employment). I considered these effects at two levels, to reflect the different types of social effects that communities are anticipated to experience:
- (a) the local impact area where the community will be directly affected by land-take and / or changes in amenity and connectivity; and
 - (b) the wider impact area where the community will most likely experience employment related, housing supply and connectivity effects without the amenity effects experienced in the local impact area.
- 1.2 I consider that the Freight Hub has the potential to reduce the quality and amenity of the environment as a result of increased noise levels and changes to the landscape / visual character both during the construction and operation of the Freight Hub. While noise and landscape mitigation can be implemented, the changes will still impact on values of importance to some of the local community and there is a degree of uncertainty on the final design and associated mitigation. The character of the community will change due to a community that largely consists of rural residential homeowners being

replaced by an industrial workforce, and the loss of the quiet, rural 'feel' that characterises the area.

- 1.3 However, once the Freight Hub is operational, there will be improved safety for people using roads and footpaths as a result of improvements to the roading network.
- 1.4 While there is the potential for housing supply issues in the short-term, if some of the construction workforce chooses to move close to the Site, there would be positive effects from employment opportunities for residents who may gain access to construction jobs as well as employment opportunities at the Freight Hub once it is operational.
- 1.5 Most social effects arise from changes to noise, landscape / visual and transport matters. Mitigation recommended by the technical experts on these matters are also important for mitigating social effects. In particular, the requirement for management plans to address construction and operational noise and vibration, landscape, construction traffic, level crossing safety, stormwater and dust.
- 1.6 I recommend further measures to address social effects and these are reflected in the Proposed Conditions. They are predominantly based on providing timely and appropriate information to communities, and opportunities for community feedback and include that KiwiRail:
 - (a) appoint a Community Liaison Person;
 - (b) prepare and implement a Construction Engagement Plan;
 - (c) establish a Community Liaison Forum; and
 - (d) establish a project hotline and complaints management register.
- 1.7 I support the relevant Proposed Conditions as attached to Ms Bell's evidence at **Appendix 1**.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 My full name is Kirsty Jane Austin. I am an Environmental Planner specialising in Social Impact Assessment. I hold the qualifications of Master of Regional and Resource Planning (distinction) from Otago University and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Canterbury. I have completed a social impact assessment course endorsed by the Environment Institute of Australia and

New Zealand ("**EIANZ**"). I am a full member of the New Zealand Planning Institute ("**NZPI**") and EIANZ.

Experience

- 2.2 I have been working as a social impact assessor since 2002, when I undertook social impact assessments on large regeneration projects in the United Kingdom. Since 2006 I have worked on social impact projects in New Zealand.
- 2.3 I have prepared social impact assessments on a range of developments, including roading projects such as alternative routes for a new arterial road into Nelson (for Nelson City Council) and the Whakatu Drive to Queen Elizabeth II roundabouts (for Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency), an offshore iron sand mining operation (for Trans Tasman Resources), a private plan change to establish an 800 home mixed use neighbourhood on the Kāpiti Coast (for Waikanae North Ltd), and for proposed defence-related operations (Ministry of Defence and New Zealand Defence Force).
- 2.4 I have reviewed social impact assessments for councils, including the Te Ahu a Turanga —Manawatū Tararua Highway project (for Palmerston North City Council, Manawatū District Council and Tararua District Council), a proposed extension to Waihi Correnso Underground Mine (for Hauraki District Council), and proposed water takes and associated consents for the Central Plains irrigation scheme (for Selwyn District Council).
- 2.5 I have undertaken social impact monitoring in response to conditions on designations for Peka Peka to Ōtaki Expressway, Auckland South Corrections Facility and Otago Corrections Facility.
- 2.6 I have also run a two day social impact assessment training course and co-presented seminars on social impact assessment at NZPI and EIANZ branch events.

Involvement in the Freight Hub

- 2.7 I was engaged by Stantec New Zealand in 2020 to undertake a social impact assessment of the Freight Hub on the preferred site.
- 2.8 I prepared the Social Impact Assessment that was included with the Assessment of Environmental Effects for the Freight Hub. I also provided input to KiwiRail's section 92 response dated 15 February 2021 ("**First Section 92 Response**") (Attachment 12). This included illustrating social impact information on maps (including the range and geographic location of social

effects in the local impact area and the location of houses in the local impact area), and matters relating to the proposed conditions, effects on the main community facilities and values of Bunnythorpe, and effects from construction traffic.

Code of conduct

- 2.9 I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2014 and that I agree to comply with it. I confirm that I have considered all the material facts that I am aware of that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express, and that this evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying on the evidence of another person.

3. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 3.1 This statement of evidence will:
- (a) provide an overview of the methodology and key conclusions of the Social Impact Assessment;
 - (b) respond to the submissions received that relate to the social impact effects on the environment; and
 - (c) address relevant matters raised in the Section 42A Report.

4. METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 I followed the four principal elements of social impact methodology to undertake the Social Impact Assessment (scoping, profiling, analysis of potential social effects, identifying measures to address effects) and applied the International Association of Impact Assessment ("IAIA") framework to determine the relevant social impact categories.
- 4.2 The categories of social effects selected for this assessment were:
- (a) Quality and amenity of the environment –this includes effects on people's wellbeing from changes to the physical environment (from dust and noise for example) and the amenity of that environment (people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes). It also includes effects on people's physical safety from a change to the environment.

- (b) People's way of life – this includes effects on patterns of daily living at home, work, school, for social and recreation pursuits, and on connectivity.
- (c) The community – this includes effects on the community from changes to its character and community cohesion. It considers changes to the people who live and work in the impact areas, the feel of the impact areas, and community resources.
- (d) Income and employment - this includes effects on people's wellbeing from changes to employment or income opportunities, and from other financial implications.

4.3 I applied a seven-point scale of effect ranging from high positive to high negative to each of the four social impact categories. This rating is without mitigation. The following factors are considered as part of this rating:

- (a) stage of effect and length of time the effect will be experienced (ie across construction and operation);
- (b) who is affected (for example landowners within the Designation Extent, others in the local impact and wider impact areas);
- (c) likelihood of the effect (high, medium or low);
- (d) severity of the effect (high, medium or low); and
- (e) importance of affected feature (local, regional or national importance).

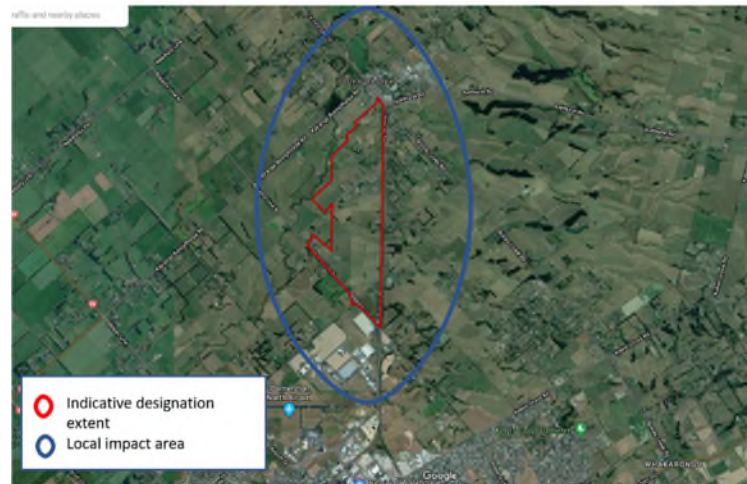
4.4 A high social impact effect (either high positive or high negative) is one where the effect is either highly likely to occur, severe, affects a large area, or affect a regionally or nationally important feature.

4.5 The geographic area that the Social Impact Assessment applies to is referred to as the 'affected area'. The affected area was defined at two levels to reflect the different types of social effects that communities will experience. These are the local impact area and the wider impact area.

4.6 The local impact area covers the Designation Extent and extends approximately 1 kilometre from the Designation Extent as shown in Figure 1 below from the Social Impact Assessment and more detailed Maps 1 – 3 in KiwiRail's First Section 92 Response (Attachment 12) which are provided in Appendix 1 of my evidence. The local impact area is a combination of the area

where the community will be directly affected by land-take, and the area surrounding the Designation Extent where the community will be directly affected by changes in amenity and connectivity. This area was identified having regard to factors such as the outer extent of the noise contours, outcomes of travel time modelling, and engagement feedback.

Figure 1 – Indicative location of the local impact area



- 4.7 The wider impact area covers the territorial authority jurisdictions of Palmerston North and Manawātū District. This is the area most likely to experience employment-related, housing supply and connectivity effects, without the amenity effects the local impact area will experience.

5. EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

Local impact area

- 5.1 The local impact area is characterised by rural and rural residential land uses, with Bunnythorpe township at the northern end and an industrial area at the southern end. The local impact area covers rural, rural residential, village centre / small-scale retail and industrial land uses. Map 1 (Appendix 1) indicates the locations of the main existing community facilities and services, places of cultural / historic value, and commercial services (food and retail premises principally serving the local community). By way of summary:

- (a) An estimated 431 houses are located in the local impact area, which equates to approximately 1,265 residents (applying average resident per household data for the area from the 2018 Census) as shown in

Map 2 (Appendix 1)¹. This includes the 24 houses within the Designation Extent.

- (b) The local impact area, including Bunnythorpe township, is bisected by the NIMT railway line and several roads which provide important connections for residents, as well as communities from further afield. Connectivity between Bunnythorpe township (and surrounding rural / rural-residential area), and Palmerston North is important for accessing work, services and facilities (such as schools and doctors) and shopping (such as supermarkets).
- (c) Bunnythorpe township had a population of 687 residents at the time of the 2018 Census. It has a small centre that provides a few retail facilities, volunteer fire brigade, places of worship and Bunnythorpe school (including a playgroup) which has been part of the community since the 1880s. Other community facilities and sites of value are located further from the centre, such as the Bunnythorpe recreation ground, cemetery, and historic features such as Bunnythorpe War Memorial and the Old Glaxo Building.
- (d) The values and aspirations of Bunnythorpe residents are articulated in the Bunnythorpe Village Plan 2018.² Bunnythorpe residents value the quiet village and rural lifestyle, which is cited as the reason that people choose to live there. The community also values the easy access to nearby facilities and services in Palmerston North and Feilding, and strong sense of local community. Their aspirations are for roading improvements in and around Bunnythorpe to improve the safety for people using roads, footpaths and railway crossings, a desire for a community centre to create a hub for the community to come together, and a desire to retain the village feel of Bunnythorpe. These are common themes raised in engagement undertaken for the NoR and in various council engagement.³

¹ This housing information was produced from GIS analysis, which was undertaken after the Social Impact Assessment. It has enabled a better understanding of the total population within the local impact area.

² *Bunnythorpe Village Plan 2018* (PNCC, 2018).

³ *Bunnythorpe Public Hall Society and Bunnythorpe Community Committee Survey* (July 2015), *City Council Village Plan Survey* (PNCC, September 2016), *Bunnythorpe Wishing Tree* (PNCC, March 2016), and NoR engagement activities as summarised in Appendix 2 of Technical Report J Social Impact Assessment, dated 20 October 2020.

- (e) The central and eastern parts of the local impact area consist of rural and rural residential land uses. In addition to farming, this area has a few commercial activities. The Mangaone Stream runs through the local impact area on the western side of the Designation Extent, and is fished in places.
- (f) The Designation Extent currently consists of rural and rural-residential land uses. It includes residents who have lived there for decades, through to those who have moved there recently. Similarly, some homes have been there for over a hundred years and some have been built recently or were being built at the time of preparing the Social Impact Assessment.
- (g) The southern end of the local impact area is at the urban edge of Palmerston North city. It is zoned for industrial land uses and includes part of Palmerston North Airport, large warehouse and industrial buildings. Not all of the industrial zone has been developed for this purpose yet. Some areas remain rural / rural-residential (the "Industrial Area" illustrated in Map 2 (Appendix 1) shows the extent of land zoned for industrial purposes).

5.2 The key demographic characteristics of the local impact area are summarised below. They are largely based on information from the 2018 Census.⁴

- (a) Age – the percentage of children and young adults in the local impact area was similar to New Zealand as a whole. The local impact area had a lower percentage of residents in the 25 – 44 year age bracket (22%) compared to New Zealand as a whole (27%), but a greater percentage of residents in the 45 – 64 year age bracket (30% compared to 25% in New Zealand).⁵ The local impact area had a lower percentage of residents of retirement age compared to New Zealand.
- (b) Ethnicity – residents in the local impact area are predominantly of European and Māori ethnicity. The ethnic diversity differs to New Zealand as whole. For example, nearly twice the percentage of residents in the local impact area (31%) were of Māori ethnicity

⁴ Further detail, including 2018 Census statistics, is provided in section 3.1 and Appendix 1 of Technical Report J Social Impact Assessment, dated 20 October 2020.

⁵ This higher percentage of 45 – 64 year olds may explain the higher median household income in the local impact area I refer to in point (d).

compared to New Zealand (17%), and there were significantly smaller percentages of residents of Asian and Pacific ethnicities.

- (c) Years at usual residence and home ownership - residents moved homes less frequently in the local impact area than New Zealand residents as a whole. Home ownership was significantly more common in the local impact area (81%) compared to New Zealand as a whole (65%).
- (d) Income – the median annual household income (\$97,433) was significantly higher than in New Zealand as a whole (\$75,700). Nearly half of households in the local impact area earned \$100,000 per year (47%), which was larger than households in New Zealand (37%). Conversely, the local impact area had a smaller percentage of households earning low incomes.)⁶
- (e) Employment – a higher percentage of residents participated in the workforce compared to residents in New Zealand as a whole. The type of employment that would be associated with the Freight Hub is 'wholesale trade' and 'transport, postal and warehousing' (collectively referred to as distribution and logistics). The local impact area had a higher percentage of residents employed in these (11.8%) compared to New Zealand's workforce as a whole (9.2%).
- (f) Travel to work and places of education – compared to New Zealand as a whole, a significantly higher percentage of residents in the local impact area used private or company vehicles to travel to and from their places of work (80% compared to 73% in New Zealand as a whole) or education (72% compared to 50% in New Zealand as a whole). Conversely, the percentage using public transport, cycling or walking was lower.

Wider impact area

- 5.3 The wider impact area covers the full extent of Palmerston North City and Manawātū District. Palmerston North city is the main urban area, housing the majority of residents and providing key health, education, public administration

⁶ For the purposes of the Social Impact Assessment, low household income is defined as Census 2018 data on households that earned \$30,000 or less per year. The 2018 NZ Deprivation Index sets household equivalised income for deprivation at \$34,023 or less per year. People living in a household with an equivalised household income below \$34,023 are considered to be income-deprived (*NZDep2018 Index of Deprivation*, December 2019).

and retail services for the Manawatū-Wanganui region. Feilding township is the next largest urban area, providing the main administrative functions and community services for Manawatū District. The remainder of the wider impact area is largely rural with a number of small townships.

- 5.4 Several main roads in the wider impact area, run through the local impact area, and provide important links between Feilding and Palmerston North (including to Palmerston North airport), Feilding and Ashhurst (and across the ranges), and to State Highways 3 and 54.
- 5.5 The key demographic characteristics of the wider impact area are summarised below. They are largely based on information from the 2018 Census.
 - (a) The wider impact area had a population of 114,804 residents across 41,724 households. This included 91,812 residents of employment age. While the population increased between 2006 and 2018 by 11%, the percentage increase was less than across New Zealand as a whole (17%).
 - (b) The percentage of households in the wider impact area that own their own home (66%) is similar to households in New Zealand as a whole (65%).
 - (c) PNCC's Housing and Business capacity assessment concludes that sufficient housing supply can be provided in the short-term. PNCC has identified housing supply targets to meet projected demand over the medium and long terms and notes that there will be a short-fall in land to meet these medium and long term targets. PNCC and is addressing this through its Future Development Strategy.
 - (d) Palmerston North city provides a significant employment base for the wider impact area and the region as a whole. PNCC's Long Term Plan notes that while the city has 34% of the regional population, it provides 48% of the jobs in the region.⁷ PNCC's Housing and Business Development Capacity Assessment cites more affordable housing in districts surrounding Palmerston North as a contributor to this trend.
 - (e) Similar to the local impact area, the main industries that residents in the wider impact area were employed in were health care and social assistance (12%) and education and training (12%). The wider

⁷ PNCC, 2018, *Palmerston North 2028: 10 Year Plan 2018-2028* (pages 56, 168).

impact area had a greater percentage of residents employed in these industries, as well as public administration and safety (10%), than New Zealand's workforce as a whole.

- (f) The wider impact area had a slightly higher percentage of residents employed in distribution and logistics compared to the New Zealand workforce as a whole. PNCC's Long Term Plan indicates that logistics is one of six priority sectors that influence the city's economic wellbeing, and it is PNCC's goal to support and grow this sector.⁸

6. ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL SOCIAL IMPACT EFFECTS

- 6.1 In the following sections, I describe the main findings of the Social Impact Assessment in terms of the potential effects at the construction phase and operational phase. Within each of these phases, I identify the main effects on the relevant social impact categories for the local impact area and wider impact area. Map 3 (Appendix 1) illustrates the social impacts anticipated in the local impact area. These effects described below are considered without mitigation.

Construction phase effects

- 6.2 The assessment of effects from the construction phase was high level to reflect the level of construction details available for the NoR and the extent to which other technical assessments were available to inform the Social Impact Assessment. Therefore, I applied a conservative approach to determining the significance of construction effects.

Local impact area

- 6.3 I determined the overall scale of construction effects on the local impact area for each of the main social impact categories to be:
- (a) Quality and amenity of the environment: moderate negative
 - (b) People's way of life: low-moderate negative
 - (c) The community: moderate negative
 - (d) Income and employment: low positive

⁸ PNCC, 2018, *Palmerston North 2028: 10 Year Plan 2018-2028* (page 57).

6.4 **Quality and amenity of the environment.** Construction will impact people's wellbeing in the local impact area from a reduction in the quality and amenity of the environment, and a potential reduction in safety from temporary changes to roads. I gave an overall rating of moderate negative, which reflected the following:

- (a) Amenity – changes to the quality and amenity of the environment for residents in the local impact area is rated moderate negative. This is based on noise and visual effects some residents will experience, uncertainties at this stage of the NoR process, and on the cumulative effect for some residents who may experience noise, visual and traffic safety effects. In particular:
 - (i) uncertainty about which homes will experience construction-related noise at a level that will disturb them and whether specific mitigation will be required for them;
 - (ii) uncertainty about the significance of visual changes to expect during the construction. In addition, detail of some construction-noise mitigation (temporary noise mitigation hoardings) will not be available until the detailed design stage;
 - (iii) residents will experience a lengthy construction phase; and
 - (iv) uncertainty about how long during the construction phase individual properties can expect to be affected, and the intensity of construction post-2030.
- (b) Safety – safety of residents moving around the local impact area (on the road and footpaths) is rated as low negative due to the potential for greater numbers of construction vehicles, detours, temporary lanes/roads and other unfamiliar roading changes.

6.5 **People's way of life.** The daily pattern of residents may be disrupted due to effects on connectivity and from a noisier environment at home. I gave an overall rating of the effect of construction on people's way life in the local impact area as low-moderate negative, which reflected the following:

- (a) Connectivity – residents may find their usual patterns of movement disrupted at times when temporary road closures and detours are required, as intersections are changed, and as private access ways are relocated. The movement of construction traffic onto / off the Site

may also affect road and footpath users. Mr Georgeson responds to submissions on this matter and concludes that the use of a Construction Traffic Management Plan will be sufficient to manage and adverse effects on safety and property access.⁹

- (b) Noise – noise generated from construction activities at the Site and from construction vehicles may have an impact on the way residents plan their days. Construction noise can be a source of disruption and frustration for residents who are home during the day, and particularly those who need sleep during the daytime. In considering this matter, I noted Dr Chile's statement "*most people should be able to continue normal domestic activities with only minor adjustments, particularly if there is effective advanced communication about when construction activities are due to occur*".¹⁰
- (c) There is some uncertainty about construction traffic effects and associated noise effects on people's way of life at this early stage.¹¹ I have undertaken an initial analysis of the people that may experience short-term disruption when the new roading network is constructed (due to works on roads and footpaths outside their properties, temporary detours, and from adjusting to new routes). This disruption may affect people's movements by making it more difficult or take longer to enter / leave properties, increasing travel times if traffic is halted when construction vehicles enter/leave the site, or making it more difficult for resident to cross roads to access key facilities. This is indicative however, because key decisions that will influence construction routes have not been made (such as the source of quarry material).

6.6 **The community.** I gave an overall rating of the effect of construction on the community in the local impact area as moderate negative. This reflected the following:

- (a) Impact of potential property acquisition:
 - (i) Approximately 41 properties will be acquired by KiwiRail, consisting of 24 homes (some of which accommodate both home and business) and some properties that are for

⁹ Evidence of Mark Georgeson, dated 9 July 2021, at section 9 – Property access.

¹⁰ Technical Report D - Acoustics Assessment, dated 23 October 2020 at page 35.

¹¹ Further detail on where the effects may be experienced and by whom is outlined in response to question 108 in the First Section 92 Response (Attachment 12).

commercial / investment purposes, including grazing for adjacent farms. Many of these property owners will have already experienced anxiety and stress while the extent of land take is confirmed and as properties are acquired. Feedback from engagement undertaken prior to lodging the NoR illustrated this point.

- (ii) KiwiRail adopted a strategy to minimise stress and anxiety that can arise over uncertainty about which properties will need to be acquired. For example, by providing an early indication to the community that the preferred site would likely be located to the north-east of Palmerston North; engaging with the community once the preferred site had been determined (rather than at the stage when nine potential site options were considered and hence affecting a much larger number of landowners); and initiating early property purchase to enable property owners to relocate as soon as possible (if that is the landowner's preference). While KiwiRail's approach does not alter the outcome for property owners whose land is now subject to the NoR, it does remove some uncertainty that has been introduced to their lives and enables them to make future plans.

- (b) Impact on resources in the community – this was considered in terms of the effect of construction on housing supply and community facilities.

- (i) If some of the construction workforce chooses to move close to their work, it may result in an increased demand for housing, and housing supply issues, in the local impact area in the short term. However, because of the Freight Hub's location to larger urban areas such as Feilding and Palmerston North, it is likely that the construction workforce will travel from a range of locations.
- (ii) While construction noise will be audible at Bunnythorpe School and Bunnythorpe Cemetery, noise modelling results in the Acoustic Assessment indicate they will not be at levels that will cause disturbance or affect amenity.

- (iii) Given that Bunnythorpe School students predominantly live in Palmerston North, any disruption to bus routes and the roads will affect the school.
- (iv) It is anticipated that Te Araroa trail will remain open during construction. The only disruption may be to temporarily divert a section of it for earthworks.

6.7 **Income and employment.** The effect on residents' ability to earn an income or access a job in the local impact area as a result of the construction phase was rated as low positive. Approximately 9% of residents of employment age in the local impact area currently work in construction, and therefore it is reasonable to assume that some may benefit from new opportunities for construction jobs. In addition, the proximity of a large construction workforce near Bunnythorpe township may create employment benefits from local retail and other businesses that service the workforce.

Wider impact area

6.8 I determined the overall scale of construction effects on the wider impact area for each of the main social impact categories to be:

- (a) Quality and amenity of the environment: negligible
- (b) People's way of life: low negative
- (c) The community: negligible-low negative
- (d) Income and employment: low positive

6.9 **Quality and amenity of the environment.** I rated the effect of construction on residents in the wider impact area as a result of changes to the quality and amenity of the environment as negligible. Changes to the physical environment (and enjoyment of that environment) during construction will not extend to the wider impact area, and the potential for road safety concerns for residents in the wider impact area driving through the Site during construction will be minimal.

6.10 **People's way of life.** I rated the effect of construction on people's way life in the wider impact area as low negative, as a result of the potential impact on the daily pattern of residents who regularly travel to / from Palmerston North through the Site. Disruptions for road users may occur when the road layout changes, accessways are replaced and intersection upgrades occurs, and

from additional traffic associated with construction works. Residents may also find it difficult to anticipate when / where delays will occur, given it is a lengthy construction phase and works are likely to happen in different locations at different times.

- 6.11 **The community.** I rated the effect of construction on the community in the wider impact area as negligible-low negative, as a result of the potential impact on housing supply issues. Pressure on housing supply may occur because there may not be a sufficiently large construction workforce in the wider impact area to resource the Freight Hub as well as other large construction projects scheduled in the area and neighbouring districts.¹² This was discussed with PNCC staff who indicated that housing supply for the construction workforce could be a challenge for all districts in the region in the short-term.
- 6.12 **Income and employment.** I rated the effect on residents' ability to earn an income or access a job in the wider impact area as a result of the construction phase as low positive. Mr Colegrave's evidence estimates that the construction phase could provide employment for almost 460 people in the region. With approximately 7% of residents of employment age in the wider impact area working in construction, it is reasonable to assume that existing residents could benefit from new opportunities for construction jobs. In addition, the Freight Hub is expected to attract new residents to the wider impact area to resource these jobs, which has the potential to create employment benefits from businesses that service the construction workforce in the wider impact area.

Operational phase effects

- 6.13 The assessment of effects from the operational phase was based on the following main components of the NoR:
- (a) The Site occupying 177.7 hectares of land in the local impact area to operate the Freight Hub and to incorporate the land required to mitigate effects from the Freight Hub (such as noise bunds and landscape treatment).

¹² The *Urban Development Capacity Indicators for Palmerston North: year ended 2019* (PNCC, 2019) lists major construction projects scheduled for 2019 to 2030. These include Waka Kotahi's Manawātū Gorge replacement highway, New Zealand Defence Force projects at Linton and Ohakea, Massey University projects, and a number of others that are awaiting final approval (eg Mid Central District Health Board projects), and projects located in close proximity to the wider impact area (eg Waka Kotahi's Ōtaki to Levin expressway).

- (b) New roads, and changes to existing roads, intersections and private accessways to accommodate the Freight Hub.
- (c) Operating up to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- (d) Anticipated increase in traffic by 6,900 vehicles per day.

Local impact area

6.14 I determined the overall scale of operational effects on the local impact area for each of the main social impact categories to be:

- (a) Quality and amenity of the environment: high negative
- (b) People's way of life: moderate-high negative
- (c) The community: moderate negative
- (d) Income and employment: low positive

6.15 **Quality and amenity of the environment.** The predominant social effects from the operational phase is anticipated to be on the wellbeing of residents from a change to the environment in the local impact area. I gave an overall rating of high negative, which reflected the following:

- (a) Amenity – effects from changes to the amenity of the environment for residents in the local impact area is rated high negative for the following reasons:
 - (i) Increased noise levels and changes to the landscape will be noticeable across most of the local impact area and are not consistent with the amenity values for much of the area.
 - (ii) Residents that experience the most significant change will experience both noise and visual effects, and will also have experienced these throughout the construction phase.
 - (iii) There is uncertainty for the community about the extent of noise and visual effects, particularly at nighttime. For example, it is not currently known which houses will need to be treated to avoid sleep disturbance inside bedrooms. This uncertainty will remain until further design work is undertaken for the outline plan of works / regional resource consent stages and details of mitigation are confirmed.

(iv) While the noise and landscape specialists have identified measures to mitigate effects, the changes will still impact on values of importance to the local community.

(v) Residents living with visual and / or noise effects of the Freight Hub may feel a sense of unfairness that they did not receive compensation.

(b) Safety – the Freight Hub is anticipated to create a safer environment for people moving around and through the local impact area from new and aligned roads, and improvements to intersections and rail crossings. This aligns with Bunnythorpe community's aspirations for roading improvements as noted above. I rated this as low positive.

(c) Risk of property damage – the Site is partly situated in a flood prone area. Feedback during engagement indicated that some residents were anxious about the potential for their properties to be damaged if the Freight Hub exacerbates this risk. The Stormwater and Flooding Assessment concludes that suitable measures can be contained within the Freight Hub boundary. I rated this as negligible.

6.16 **People's way of life.** The effect on residents' daily patterns at home, work, social / recreation pursuits, and getting to and from those places, may be disrupted when the Freight Hub is operational. I gave an overall rating on people's way of life in the local impact as moderate-high negative, which reflected:

(a) Noise – the noisier environment created by the Freight Hub and associated changes to traffic routes, and level of traffic generated, may result in changes to resident's daily routines. Of most significance would be the effect from noise if night-time activities occur, which could negatively impact residents' sleep. Increased day time noise will be experienced by many residents, to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the proximity of their home to the Freight Hub. For residents in the more rural / rural-residential parts of the local impact area, this may also affect their workdays.

(b) Connectivity – some residents' daily life may be negatively affected by longer travel times to work, school and other services and facilities as a result of the new Perimeter Road, road closures and relocated entry / access points to properties. The Integrated Transport

Assessment¹³ calculated the average change as being less than 2.5 minutes, but identified some routes where travel times could increase by up to 4 or 6 minutes.

- (c) Recreation – the project design enables the continued use, and potential enhancement of Sangsters Road for the Te Araroa trail and it retains opportunities to integrate with PNCC's planned extension to shared cycling and pedestrian infrastructure (although it will change the alignment). This will maintain the existing positive impact on residents' daily lives if they cycle to work, school or other facilities, or for recreational purposes, and aligns with community values.

6.17 **The community.** I gave an overall rating on the effect of the operational phase on the community in the local impact area as moderate negative. This reflected:

- (a) Impact on community character – a change in land use within the Site is anticipated to affect the character of the community as a result of the following:
 - (i) A community that largely consists of rural residential homeowners will be replaced by an industrial workforce.
 - (ii) It is uncertain whether residents whose land will be acquired will remain living locally, or whether residents close to the Freight Hub will choose to move away because of the changes once it is operational. The demographic characteristics I referred to earlier, indicate that residents in the local impact area are typically settled (move less frequently). This means established families may move, or families who had planned to be part of the community for a long time, and this could affect community character (particularly cohesion).
 - (iii) The existing quiet, rural 'feel' of the community will change, as noted in relation to the 'quality of the environment and amenity' category. This affects a key community value established in the Bunnythorpe Village Plan¹⁴ (referred to earlier in the description of the existing environment), which

¹³ Technical Report C, Integrated Transport Assessment, dated 23 October 2020 at page 78.

¹⁴ *Bunnythorpe Village Plan 2018* (PNCC, 2018).

is that Bunnythorpe residents choose to live in Bunnythorpe for the quiet village and rural lifestyles. The Freight Hub will increase background noise levels the township will experience and may increase the activity ('busyness') in the township due to a large, new workforce adjacent to it. It will also replace some of the rural lifestyle with industrial development, which will reduce the physical separation of the township from Palmerston North. I do not consider that the other values and aspirations in the Bunnythorpe Village Plan will be negatively affected.¹⁵

(b) Impact on resources in the community – this was considered in terms of the effect of the Freight Hub on housing supply and community facilities.

(i) It is reasonable to assume some of the workforce may choose to move to Bunnythorpe township or surrounding rural / rural-residential areas to be close to their job although, it is not possible at this stage to estimate the size of a future workforce that may relocate (and hence the effect on housing supply). I understand the council is considering locations for additional housing supply as it prepares its Future Development Strategy and housing supply is not anticipated to be a concern by the time the Freight Hub operates. This is confirmed in the Section 42A Report, which considers that sufficient land is available to accommodate predicted residential growth.¹⁶

(ii) Community facilities – I anticipate effects on the main community facilities to largely be negligible, but more detailed assessment and mitigation is required for Bunnythorpe Cemetery. In summary:

(aa) While noise from operations at the Freight Hub will be audible at Bunnythorpe School and along Te Araroa trail, noise modelling results in the Acoustic Assessment indicate it will not be at

¹⁵ The other values and aspirations are: Bunnythorpe residents like the easy access they have to nearby facilities and services in Palmerston North and Fielding; Bunnythorpe residents have a strong sense of local community; and Bunnythorpe residents want improvements to roading in and around Bunnythorpe.

¹⁶ Section 42A Report, dated 18 June 2021, at paragraph [818].

levels that will cause disturbance or affect amenity.

- (bb) It is unlikely the Freight Hub will affect the viability of Bunnythorpe School. The majority of existing pupils live in Palmerston North (only one school family will be displaced) and there is potential that new families will be attracted to the area when a large permanent workforce is based at the Site.
 - (cc) There will be little or no change in travel time for Bunnythorpe School students travelling from Palmerston North to get to / from school.
 - (dd) In terms of changes to visual amenity, Ms Rimmer's evidence indicates that mitigation planting will improve the visual amenity of Te Araroa trail over time, as well as the entrance to Bunnythorpe.¹⁷ There will be no views from Bunnythorpe School.
 - (ee) In terms of changes to the amenity and character of Bunnythorpe Cemetery, the noise modelling results indicate that noise levels will be greater than currently experienced but will not be at levels that would disturb services (I address this further in response to the Section 42A Report). I note Ms Rimmer's evidence that there will be limited views of the Site from Bunnythorpe Cemetery and therefore very low visual effects.
- (c) Impact on individual property owners – as noted in relation to the construction phase, the Freight Hub will require the acquisition of 41 properties, including approximately 24 homes. The relocation of households will create anxiety and stress for these residents, and their network of family and friends. These residents will be compensated through the acquisition process, which will largely address financial concerns. However, wellbeing impacts for these individuals may remain. For example, compensation does not address feelings of loss associated with the emotional attachment to

¹⁷

Evidence of Lisa Rimmer, dated 18 June 2021, at section 7 – Visual amenity.

their home (or home / business) and negative feelings may remain once they have relocated, if they consider their new home (or home/business) is not comparable to what they had.

6.18 **Income and employment.** I rated the effect on residents' ability to earn an income or access a job in the local impact area as a result of the operational phase as low positive overall. This reflected:

- (a) The Freight Hub will provide the opportunity for residents in the local impact area to access employment. Approximately 12% of local residents of employment age currently work in distribution and logistics, which will be the main sectors of employment associated with the Freight Hub, so it is reasonable to assume residents will have appropriate skills to access these jobs. This is consistent with Mr Paling's conclusion that Bunnythorpe residents would benefit from increased job opportunities.¹⁸
- (b) During engagement activities, some residents in the local impact area expressed concern about the negative effect of the Freight Hub on property values. People's property is a major contributor to personal wealth and feelings of security. If the value of people's homes reduces, and therefore their equity, it can impact on their future opportunities. Property value projections are not available to determine whether this is a real or perceived fear, but notwithstanding this, fear and uncertainty for residents creates a negative impact in its own right.

Wider impact area

6.19 I determined the overall scale of operational effects on the wider impact area for each of the main social impact categories to be:

- (a) Quality and amenity of the environment: low positive
- (b) People's way of life: negligible-low positive
- (c) The community: negligible
- (d) Income and employment: low positive

6.20 **Quality and amenity of the environment.** I rated the effect of the operational phase on residents in the wider impact area as a result of changes to the

¹⁸ Evidence of Richard Paling, dated 9 July 2021, at paragraph [7.35].

quality and amenity of the environment as low positive due to safety improvements to the roading network and they will not experience amenity effects from the changed environment.

6.21 **People's way of life.** I rated the effect of the operational phase on people's way of life in the wider impact area as negligible-low positive, as a result of improvements to the roading network and cycling and pedestrian provision:

- (a) The daily patterns of residents who travel to / from Palmerston North will not noticeably alter when the new and realigned roads, intersections and rail crossings are operational. Mr Georgeson considers there will be minimal effect and indicates that PNCC's transport expert has reached a similar conclusion.¹⁹
- (b) Residents in the wider impact area who commute to Palmerston North by bicycle, or walk or cycle for recreational purposes, will continue to have access to Te Araroa trail. The project design retains opportunities to integrate with PNCC's planned extension to shared cycling and pedestrian infrastructure (although it will change the alignment).

6.22 **Income and employment.** I rated the effect on residents' ability to earn an income or access a job in the wider impact area from the operational phase as low positive. PNCC has identified the logistics sector as influential for Palmerston North's economic wellbeing and Mr Colegrave considers that KiwiRail's preliminary analysis of 1,000 jobs is a conservative estimate.²⁰ I note that approximately 10% of residents of employment age in the wider impact area currently work in distribution and logistics, and therefore I believe it is reasonable to assume that residents in the wider impact area will have the ability to access new job opportunities at the Freight Hub (or associated with the Freight Hub). I also note Mr Paling's conclusion that the Freight Hub will provide opportunities for other businesses to relocate to the area, such as specialist support services supporting businesses in the area (especially logistics) and to support the community (such as cafes, childcare and other personal services).²¹

6.23 **The community.** I rated the effect of the operational phase on the community in the wider impact area as negligible. The Freight Hub will not affect

¹⁹ Evidence of Mark Georgeson, dated 9 July 2021 at section 9 – Effects on commuters between Feilding and Palmerston North.

²⁰ Evidence of Fraser Colegrave, dated 9 July 2021, at paragraph [4.39].

²¹ Evidence of Richard Paling, dated 9 July 2021 at paragraph [7.24].

community character or resources within the wider impact area. While new residents may move to the wider impact area to take up jobs at the Freight Hub, I understand this future workforce will not have a significant effect on housing supply (taking in the account the estimated 10 year timeframe to become operational and the additional housing supply PNCC and MDC are planning for).²²

7. MEASURES TO ADDRESS EFFECTS

7.1 Most of the identified social effects arise from changes to noise, landscape / visual and transport matters. Mitigation is recommended in the evidence of the technical experts relevant to these matters, and are important measures for mitigating social effects as well. In particular, the requirement for:

- (a) A Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan – this will assist in managing effects on people's routines and enjoyment of their homes and local area from noise during construction, and on key community infrastructure (for example, I understand it is normal practice for the plan to specify a halt to construction works during burial times at cemeteries). It will also provide certainty that further noise assessment will be undertaken to identify the houses that will be affected by construction activities, and mitigate as required, and to monitor noise throughout construction.
- (b) An Operational Noise and Vibration Management Plan – this will assist in managing effects on people's routines and enjoyment of their homes and local area from noise when the Freight Hub operates. It also provides certainty that further assessment will be undertaken to determine the noise levels and mitigation measures for homes where the initial assessment indicated that acceptable noise limits may be exceeded.
- (c) A Landscape and Design Plan – this will manage adverse effects on people's enjoyment of their landscape and views, including assisting to maintain a visual separation between Bunnythorpe and Palmerston North (and hence separate identity), and enjoyment of key community infrastructure (such as Bunnythorpe cemetery and Te Araroa trail), and will provide opportunities for the community to

²² Section 42A Report, dated 18 June 2021 at paragraph [818] indicates that sufficient land is available to accommodate predicted residential growth.

feedback on the design principles and outcomes of that plan as part of the Community Liaison Forum.

- (d) A Construction Traffic Management Plan, Level Crossing Safety Impact Assessment and Road Network Integration Plan – these will assist in addressing effects on the safety of residents moving around the local impact area, on people's routines moving around and through the local impact area, and on key community infrastructure during construction (such as travel to school routes and any temporary diversions to sections of Te Araroa trail). A Road Network Integration Plan will also assist in providing assurance to residents concerned at the effect on future plans for the wider roading network.
- (e) A Stormwater Management Report and Stormwater Monitoring and Maintenance Plan – these will assist in providing assurance to residents concerned about the risk of property damage from flooding.
- (f) A Construction Dust Management Plan and Operational Dust Management Plan – these will assist in managing effects on people's enjoyment of their homes and local area, and on their health from increased levels of dust and potential roof rainwater contamination.

7.2 I support these Proposed Conditions.

7.3 I also recommended additional measures where I considered it necessary to address social effects more comprehensively. This was predominantly based on providing timely and appropriate information to communities, and opportunities for community feedback. In my opinion, mitigation that focuses on communication can address frustration and fear that arises from the uncertainty and unpredictability about a development. It can be used to provide channels for distributing factual and timely information, opportunities to have a say on problems that arise, and opportunities to influence aspects of a project that have not been decided but are important to the community.

7.4 This latter point is important for NoRs which have subsequent detailed design and outline plan of work processes. It is particularly important for the Freight Hub because of the long construction phase until the Freight Hub becomes operational (2030) and further stages of development beyond that (until 2050).Community liaison person

7.5 I recommended that a specific person be appointed by KiwiRail as the primary point of contact for the community to engage with from the time the NoR is confirmed until the first year after the Freight Hub operates. The purpose of

establishing this position is to provide the community with easy access to someone within KiwiRail (or its delivery partner) who has accountability for responding to questions and concerns relating to land acquisition, detailed design, construction progress, and operational matters.

- 7.6 This recommendation is addressed in the Proposed Conditions which specify the purpose and responsibilities of the role, when it must commence, and that the person's contact details must be made publicly available.

Preparation of a Construction Engagement Plan

- 7.7 I recommended that a plan for engagement be prepared before construction starts, to ensure a two way flow of information would occur between the project team on construction and design matters until construction finishes.
- 7.8 This is addressed by the Construction Engagement Plan in the Proposed Conditions attached to Ms Bell's evidence, which will establish procedures for information flow from the project team to the community until construction is complete, and the Community Liaison Forum which provides opportunities for community feedback on construction and design matters.

Establish Community Liaison Forum

- 7.9 I recommended that a forum for community liaison be established to provide opportunities for the community to provide feedback on project details, such as draft management plans. The purpose of this forum is to provide a mechanism for regular and interactive discussions between the project team (KiwiRail and its delivery partners) and representatives of the community, to ensure the community is kept informed of, and can respond to, construction related matters, final project details and monitoring. This includes providing the opportunity for involvement of key service providers to assist them in planning for future capacity (such as housing, schools and roading) and to help the community understand the relationship between the Freight Hub and this key infrastructure.
- 7.10 The shape the forum ultimately takes is something that I expect KiwiRail and the community to decide together. These forums traditionally involve representatives of the community meeting to discuss matters related to the project, but they do not need to be if the community would prefer something else.

- 7.11 The Community Liaison Forum is provided in the Proposed Conditions. This includes providing opportunities for community feedback, including feedback on draft management plans.

Establish project hotline and complaints management register

- 7.12 I recommended a project 'hotline', together with a complaints management register, be established from the time that property is acquired and be in place until 12 months after the Freight Hub becomes operational. The purpose is to provide a direct and immediate means for the community to raise any concerns during construction. This is a useful means of:
- (a) providing transparency that concerns are being considered and actioned, by requiring regular updates of the register to the community (via the Community Liaison Forum);
 - (b) addressing potential issues early, such as property vandalism when properties become vacant. This is appropriate given that properties may be vacant well in advance of construction activities occurring across the Site;
 - (c) monitoring construction effects (including social effects) and for adapting construction and communication activities to reduce similar issues arising again; and
 - (d) providing an opportunity for the community to raise unanticipated effects that occur when the Freight Hub starts operating, or effects they consider are not sufficiently mitigated.

- 7.13 This recommendation is addressed in the Proposed Conditions attached to Ms Bell's evidence through the appointment of a Community Liaison Person whose contact details will be made available to the community and the proposed Complaints Register.

Mitigation of amenity-related effects

- 7.14 In addition to the mitigation recommended by other technical experts to address amenity effects and any subsequent effects on property values, I recommended the following:

Provide clarity about night time activities and mitigate night-time noise appropriately

- 7.15 Dr Chile's evidence introduces a requirement to establish a noise management boundary, which extends beyond the NoR boundary. I understand this is a means of setting an 'envelope of potential effects' in which KiwiRail will be required to monitor noise levels and ensure compliance with day-time and night-time limits.²³ This is in addition to proposed conditions that require night-time noise to be managed through an Operational Noise and Vibration Management Plan, specify the process for modelling, monitoring and mitigating effects from this noise, and require this information to be publicly available.
- 7.16 In my view, these conditions demonstrate a commitment to appropriately manage the effects of night time noise. However, it is important to note that even with these conditions, there still remains uncertainty for the community. For example, until the modelling is undertaken, it is not known which houses will be subject to noise levels that require acoustic treatment to avoid sleep disturbance.²⁴ For this reason I consider the proposed conditions requiring engagement between KiwiRail and the community, as an important component of the 'mitigation package'.

Maintain ongoing site management when properties are acquired and throughout the construction phase

- 7.17 The Community Liaison Person will receive and be able to respond to concerns relating to acquired properties, including maintenance matters. This will assist in managing concerns that properties will be left looking vacant and subject to vandalism. This is also a subject relevant to the Community Liaison Forum.

Commence mitigation screening and planting as soon as possible

- 7.18 Mitigation screening and planting that is undertaken before construction, can assist in addressing amenity effects from the construction phase, as well as ensuring noise and visual mitigation is effective in time for the operational phase. This is addressed in the Landscape and Design Plan and the Construction Management Plan.

²³ Evidence of Stephen Chiles, dated 9 July 2021, at paragraphs [9.12 – 9.15], and Figure 1 of the Operational Noise and Vibration Proposed Condition.

²⁴ Evidence of Stephen Chiles, dated 9 July 2021, at paragraph [8.7].

- 7.19 Some submissions supported the requirement of these conditions to implement noise and visual mitigation as soon as possible, which I discuss in the next section of my evidence.

8. RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

- 8.1 I have reviewed the submissions received on the NoR. Most submissions are relevant to social impact effects because the majority of submissions relate to matters that affect people's environment and their daily lives (such as noise, lighting, dust, landscape and traffic). These issues will also be addressed from a technical perspective by other experts in their evidence. I respond to these issues only from a social impact perspective.
- 8.2 Most submissions are from residents within the local impact area, or that would be experienced within the local impact area.
- 8.3 Appendix 2 lists the submissions relevant to social impacts. I respond to these submissions by way of themes rather than individual submissions.

Effects on 'quality and amenity of the environment', 'people's way of life' and 'the community' from changes to the environment

- 8.4 The majority of submissions expressed concern at increases to noise, vibration, lighting and dust from construction and / or when the Freight Hub operates. Many of these were concerned that noise, vibration and lighting would be experienced 24 hours a day, 7 days a week,²⁵ and that there would be changes to increased amounts of traffic or changes to transport routes (new roads or traffic re-routed onto existing roads).²⁶
- 8.5 Changes to the physical environment can create different types of social effects, which I considered in relation to the following social impact categories.

²⁵ These include submissions from R & R McGill (7), M Woods (15), M Jones (16), A J Hofman (25), P Hurly (26), H & P Kinaston (27), K George (28), L Spearpoint (33), S Robinson (34), R Curtis (35), H S Thompson (36), I Harvey (37), L Harvey (38), G Rose & G Frampton (40), A Fox (47), R M Eastwood (53), J Austin & R Wapp (57), J K Whittle (59), F Lugt (68), D O'Keeffe & D Butts (72), I & A Ritchie (75), R Carey (84), J I Hurly (86) and C J Dingwall (88).

²⁶ These include submissions from Aorangi Papakainga (3), R & R McGill (7), Tutaki 2019 Ltd (13), F Hurly (22), T Burleigh Behrens (29), L Spearpoint (33), G Rose & G Frampton (40), M Taipana (44), A Fox (47), J Williams (52), J Austin & R Wapp (57), M A Chapman (62), S L Gore (64), A Wotton (66), R L Thomas-Crowther (70), A & F Gibson (76), W J Bent (77), R Carey (84), J I Hurley (86), M & M Hurley (87), J Jensen (90), C Forbes (93) and O L Reid (95).

Quality and amenity of the environment

- 8.6 As referred to earlier in my evidence, the predominant social effect identified from the operation and construction phases was on the wellbeing of residents in the local impact area from a change to the quality and amenity of their environment. I recognise there will be a change in amenity as a result of the Freight Hub.
- 8.7 However, I consider that the proposed mitigation measures and conditions will assist in mitigating social effects on the quality and amenity of the environment. This includes through the preparation of the management plans addressing effects from noise, traffic, landscape, dust and lighting, for example. In addition, Ms Rimmer's evidence recommends a process for further investigating opportunities to minimise adverse visual amenity effects at specific residences.²⁷
- 8.8 In my opinion, the requirements for ongoing engagement through the Community Liaison Forum, the Community Liaison Person, and Complaints Register process, will also contribute positively to this mitigation. The Community Liaison Forum will provide allow the community opportunities to provide feedback on draft management plans, including on the design principles and outcomes of the Landscape and Design Plan.
- 8.9 I note that A G Park (74) supported the location of the Freight Hub on the basis it would improve the visual amenity of the area.

People's way of life – effect on patterns of daily living

- 8.10 As I refer to earlier in my evidence (paragraphs 7.15 – 7.16), the proposed noise mitigation conditions, together with the conditions requiring engagement, will in my opinion, assist in mitigating social effects arising from noise and the uncertainty about noise effects on people's lives.
- 8.11 I acknowledge some submissions indicate there are also residents in the local impact area who have sensory conditions that make them sensitive to sound and vibration. Dr Chiles indicates that noise assessments are based on a community response, rather than individual (personal) responses. In my opinion, it would appropriate to engage with these residents (and any other residents) that are identified as being residents of affected dwellings as

²⁷ These residences are listed in section 8 (Further investigation of opportunities to minimise adverse visual amenity effects) of the Evidence of Lisa Rimmer, dated 9 July 2021..

determined through investigations required under the Operational Noise and Vibration Management Plan.

People's way of life - increased travel times / connectivity

- 8.12 Some submitters were concerned that increased travel times from roading changes will affect people's routines and connectivity during construction and when the Freight Hub is operational. This applied to people in the local and wider impact areas.
- 8.13 I addressed the effect of travel disruption and times under the category of 'people's way of life – connectivity' and rated these low-moderate negative (construction) and low negative (operational).
- 8.14 Mr Georgeson has considered these submissions from a technical transport perspective. Mr Georgeson concludes that effects of construction related effects on property access, traffic safety and efficiency can be appropriately managed through a Construction Traffic Management Plan.²⁸ In respect of the effects from the new roading layout, Mr Georgeson concludes that where roads or intersections are closed, the proposed alternative access will cater for all traffic movements (acknowledging that some will experience longer travel times).²⁹

The community - character / feel

- 8.15 Some submitters were concerned that the feel or character of the Bunnythorpe township and surrounding area will change due to a noisier environment, increased traffic, and/or a significant change to the rural / rural residential outlook.
- 8.16 I rated the effect on community character as moderate negative in my assessment.
- 8.17 In my opinion, the landscape and engagement mitigation will go some way to addressing the effects on character, through the development of a Landscape and Design Plan (including the design principles that will underpin that plan), and providing an opportunity for the community to provide feedback on the plan at the detailed design stage.

²⁸ Evidence of Mark Georgeson, dated 9 July 2021, at section 9 – Property access.

²⁹ Evidence of Mark Georgeson, dated 9 July 2021, at section 7 – Travel time effects, section 9 – Property access, and section 9 – Closure of Railway Road and level crossings.

- 8.18 However, not all submissions considered these changes to be negative and some submitters identified the potential that the workforce servicing the Freight Hub may create a more vibrant township with additional facilities.

Effect on cycleway and walkway provision

- 8.19 Some submitters raised concerns about provision and continuity of cycling and walking facilities.
- 8.20 In my assessment I concluded the effect of the Freight Hub on pedestrian and cyclist resources would be negligible ('people's way of life' category). This took into account that Te Araroa trail can continue to be used, and may result in improvements to it along Sangsters Road, and that footpaths will be provided along the new Perimeter Road, which will be an improvement along the existing stretch of Railway Road which does not have footpaths.
- 8.21 The project design also retains the potential to accommodate the shared pathway between Bunnythorpe and Palmerston North that PNCC is delivering. I acknowledge that the alignment will be affected because the stretch of Railway Road that the extension is planned for will be replaced by the new Perimeter Road. This extension is identified in the Palmerston North Urban Cycling Network Masterplan 2019 (interactive version) and Bunnythorpe Village Plan 2018, and is budgeted for in PNCC's Long Term Plans (2018-2028 and 2021-2031).
- 8.22 From a social impact perspective, I consider that this is a matter relevant for the Community Liaison Forum. As referred to in paragraph 7.9 of my evidence, this forum will provide opportunities to involve key service providers (such as PNCC and MDC) and enable the community opportunities to provide feedback as the design and project progresses. The submission from Horowhenua District Council supports this approach to ongoing community engagement as the detailed design relating to Te Araroa trail is developed, and supports further investigation of opportunities for walking and cycling.

Loss of private property / homes

- 8.23 Submissions from residents (landowners) within the Site expressed their opposition to losing their homes and businesses.
- 8.24 I considered the effect of the loss of residents' homes at the construction / pre-construction phase and operational phase ('the community – impact of property acquisition' category). I concluded that effects on wellbeing, such as anxiety and stress, are already occurring due to uncertainty about the land take (before

the Site was confirmed), and will occur while uncertainty and concerns remain about land acquisition and relocation.

- 8.25 In considering mitigation, I took into account KiwiRail's approach to minimising uncertainty by limiting the number and time involved in site selection before announcing the preferred site (and thus reducing the number of potentially affected landowners) and by providing the opportunity for early property purchase which gives landowners a degree of control and choice over when they begin the process of relocating. Ms Poulsen's evidence confirms that KiwiRail has purchased a number of properties already which will reduce some of the uncertainty for those landowners.

Effect on housing supply

- 8.26 Some submitters were concerned at the loss of housing supply because the Freight Hub will displace existing houses and will remove the potential for housing to be accommodated on the Site in the future.
- 8.27 In my assessment, I rated this low negative to negligible–low negative for the construction phase, and negligible for operational phase ('the community – impact on resources in the community').
- 8.28 In terms of the Freight Hub removing a future housing source, PNCC has confirmed there is sufficient land available for future residential development, and if the Freight Hub progresses, PNCC may rezone additional land for housing in the vicinity of Bunnythorpe.³⁰ Housing supply is addressed in further detail in the evidence of Mr Colegrave.

Effect on Bunnythorpe School

- 8.29 The Ministry of Education raised the potential for noise and traffic to affect Bunnythorpe School at the construction and operational phases and Bunnythorpe Community Committee requested consideration be given to effects on the school.
- 8.30 I considered the effect on Bunnythorpe School would be negligible as summarised earlier (paragraph 6.6b and 6.17b). The evidence of Dr Chiles and Mr Georgeson responds to these submissions in further detail on noise and traffic effects.

³⁰ Section 42A Report, dated 18 June 2021, at paragraph [818].

- 8.31 I acknowledge the Ministry's request for engagement. As previously noted, I recommended key service providers have the opportunity to be involved in the Community Liaison Forum (such as the school) for this reason. KiwiRail has not proposed that the forum have specific membership which enables these parties to opt in and participate if they wish to.

Effect on health

- 8.32 Some submissions were concerned at the potential effect on people's health.³¹ Health concerns were mainly attributed to the potential contamination of residents' drinking water sources (dust entering rainwater collection systems), night-time noise, anxiety due to uncertainty of the Freight Hub (such as how much noise or light will affect them), and perceived reductions in road safety.
- 8.33 Health considerations have influenced my assessment as summarised below, and have contributed to the high negative ('quality and amenity of the environment') and moderate-high negative ('people's way of life') ratings I gave to the operational phase:
- (a) in considering people's physical safety from changes to roads and flooding ('quality and amenity of the environment' category).
 - (b) in considering people's mental health as a result of people's homes and businesses being compulsorily purchased, and for the people remaining in the local area ('the community' category).
 - (c) in considering the impact on people's mental health from living in a noisier environment, and from changes to aspects of the environment and community that are valued (such as the landscape and character of the area).
 - (d) in considering the effect on people's mental health from dealing with uncertainties, such as when and how construction will affect them, what night-time noise and lighting will be like in reality and the effect on property values.
- 8.34 In contrast to the above submitters, a few were of the view that the operational phase will improve health and safety by removing some existing freight traffic off roads.

³¹ Submissions included those from R & R McGill (7), M Woods (15), S Robinson (34), G Rose & G Frampton (40), R M Eastwood (53), J Austin & R Wapp (57), J K Whittle (59), S L Gore (64), D O'Keeffe & D Butts (72), I & A Ritchie (75), R Carey (84), MidCentral DHB Public Health Service (94).

- 8.35 In my opinion, the effects on health have been appropriately addressed through the range of conditions to manage adverse effects from noise, roading, dust and construction activities, and the different avenues for engagement. In relation to the concern raised about residents' drinking water sources Mr Heveldt, has identified options available to mitigate the risk and has recommended a condition that establishes a process for selecting an appropriate solution, which has been incorporated into the Proposed Conditions.³² I support that approach.

Effect on employment opportunities

- 8.36 Some submitters considered the opportunities that people will have to get jobs during construction and / or operational phases to be a benefit of the Freight Hub. Some submissions noted this may include jobs at businesses associated with the Freight Hub and servicing the Freight Hub's workforce.
- 8.37 I agree with the view of these submitters. Mr Colegrave's evidence provides estimates of the numbers of jobs generated during construction and the operation of the Freight Hub. In my opinion there is good reason to believe that residents in the local and wider impact areas could access these jobs and as referred to earlier in my evidence, In summary:
- (a) The construction workforce required to build the Freight Hub provides employment opportunities for residents. Construction is one of the larger employment sectors for residents in the wider and local impact areas. With many large construction projects forecast over a similar period, the number of residents with appropriate skills to access these jobs may increase.
 - (b) Jobs created at the Freight Hub and from businesses associated with the Freight Hub provide an opportunity for local employment. Residents in the wider and local areas are currently employed in relevant sectors and will therefore have appropriate skills to access these jobs (transport, warehousing and the wholesale trade).
- 8.38 One submission considered that the new jobs created by the Freight Hub will come at the cost to old ones. On the basis of Mr Colegrave's evidence, which indicates that many more jobs will be created than lost, I do not consider this will have a material effect on people's income and employment.

³² Evidence of Paul Heveldt, dated 9 July 2021, at section 9.

9. RESPONSE TO SECTION 42A REPORT

9.1 I have reviewed the sections of the Section 42A Report relevant to my evidence, particularly the Technical Evidence: Social Impacts of the Section 42A Report.

9.2 The Section 42A Report raises two main issues and recommends mitigation in relation to these. I respond to each in turn.

Gaps in information

9.3 The Section 42A Report considers there is insufficient information (such as no cultural values assessment and some uncertainty on timing of works) on some construction and operational aspects of the Freight Hub upon which to accurately assess the severity of social effects.³³

9.4 I agree that if more detailed information had been available and cultural values assessments, it would have provided greater certainty on the level of social effects, both in terms of the geographic area of impact and scale of impact. I also consider that some of these are matters of detail that are not always available at this early stage of an NoR process. My assessment recognised this by applying a conservative approach to the area and scale of impact, and focussing the mitigation on reducing uncertainty, as described earlier in my evidence. There are also a suite of conditions requiring detailed management plans that will provide additional detail at appropriate stages, and will require appropriate processes to be followed.

9.5 The Section 42A Report questioned some assumptions applied to my assessment, stating that they are uncertain. In summary:³⁴

- (a) whether landscaping will largely take place and have matured by the commencement of construction;
- (b) whether noise mitigation will be in place before construction and largely sufficient to address levels of noise generated by the Freight Hub; and
- (c) whether sequencing and staging of construction will occur in the order set out in the AEE.

³³ Section 42A Technical Evidence: Social Impacts, dated 18 June 2021, at paragraph [17].

³⁴ Section 42A Technical Evidence: Social Impacts, dated 18 June 2021, at paragraph [18].

- 9.6 These are not assumptions, but are aspects of the NoR that I identified as being uncertain and for that reason I recommended mitigation. For example, my assessment stated:³⁵

where appropriate, commence mitigation screening and planting prior to construction so the construction site is screened as much as possible from public viewing areas prior to works beginning, and so noise and visual mitigation is effective in time for the site becoming operational.

- 9.7 This recommendation is reflected in the following conditions:

- (a) Landscape and Design Plan – the proposed timing for any landscape or visual amenity planting to maximise mitigation planting coverage prior to construction of the main buildings and / or operation of the Freight Hub where practicable with opportunities through the Community Liaison Forum for feedback on management plans, including the Landscape and Design Plan and the design principles and outcomes that plan seeks to achieve;
- (b) Construction Management Plan – details on the timing of the installation of screening and planting and opportunities where this can be undertaken prior to works commencing.

Adequacy of local community impact

- 9.8 The Section 42A Report considers that the Bunnythorpe community within the local impact area should have a separate focus (the area circled in red in Appendix A of the report). I believe I have appropriately considered Bunnythorpe community.
- 9.9 The circled area reflects the main township of Bunnythorpe I refer to in my assessment, particularly in relation to the community's vision for the area. I consider that the summary of different social effects across different geographic areas provided in Map 3 (Appendix 1 of my evidence) is appropriate to illustrate the variation in different social effects anticipated at different locations. I am also mindful that there are differing perspectives as to where the boundary of Bunnythorpe extends (where to define 'Bunnythorpe community'). For example, information from engagement exercises indicated that some residents in the more rural and rural-residential areas towards

³⁵ Technical Report J Social Impact Assessment, dated 20 October 2020, at section 6.5, page 34.

Palmerston North / Kelvin Grove identify with Bunnythorpe, whereas others do not.

9.10 The Section 42A Report identifies three aspects of effects on the Bunnythorpe community where our conclusions on the scale of impact differ:³⁶

- (a) Bunnythorpe community character – I applied an overall rating of moderate negative on the character of the local impact area, whereas the Section 42A Report gave a moderate-high negative rating for Bunnythorpe.
- (b) Bunnythorpe community's way of life during construction – I applied an overall rating of low-moderate negative during construction in the local impact area, whereas the Section 42A Report gave a moderate-high negative rating for Bunnythorpe during construction.
- (c) Bunnythorpe cemetery – in considering the effect of the Freight Hub on the main community facilities, I concluded that the effect on the cemetery would be negligible. The Section 42A Report disagreed.

9.11 With the exception of Bunnythorpe cemetery, I consider my initial assessment of the scale of effects to be appropriate. In coming to this view, I have reviewed the evidence of other technical specialists that contributed to my conclusions on character, as well as the perspectives of submitters.

9.12 In terms of Bunnythorpe cemetery, I acknowledge that while the noise effects are not considered to disturb services, the effect may be greater than I originally concluded when the Freight Hub is operational. I acknowledge that the change in noise level will affect the "feel" of the cemetery. This will be better understood as more detailed noise modelling and mitigation is undertaken and cultural values assessed.

Response to recommended conditions

9.13 The Section 42A Report includes a number of recommendations for mitigation (including conditions). I address these in turn.

Extend the lifetime of the complaints register

9.14 The Proposed Conditions require a complaints register to be in place until 12 months after the Freight Hub commences operation. The Section 42A Report

³⁶ Section 42A Technical Evidence: Social Impacts, dated 18 June 2021, at paragraphs 40, 42 and 48.

notes this will not cover the full build out of the Site and recommends it be an ongoing requirement.

- 9.15 The purpose of the complaints register is to provide a mechanism for the community to raise construction related issues as they arise. While other phases of construction will occur after the Freight Hub starts operating, KiwiRail's corporate complaints process will be in force (starting from the time the Freight Hub starts operating) and will take the place of the construction related complaints register. The Community Liaison Person also provides a mechanism by which the community can raise complaints on construction matters (as enabled by the Proposed Conditions).

Include more specificity about the Community Liaison Forum

- 9.16 The Section 42A Report recommends additional specificity regarding the Community Liaison Forum. I summarise and respond to each point as follows:

- (a) *Include a list of organisations or sectors of the community that should be invited to participate.* I agree this would provide certainty about the range of community members that should have the opportunity to be part of the forum. I consider that local residents, businesses and community organisations, together with mana whenua representatives be included (as listed in my assessment and the Section 42A report).³⁷ As a point of clarification, the forum will not have a prescribed membership with limited numbers of representatives for each organisation as per the traditional Community Liaison Group model. It is intended to be a forum (possibly online, in person, or a combination) that will be available to any organisation or individual throughout the design and construction phase as / when they determine it relevant to them. In this regard, it would be useful to clarify the processes for identifying who may wish to be involved and the format for engagement. The Proposed Conditions attached to Ms Bell's evidence address these matters.
- (b) *Extend the responsibilities of the forum to include inputting into design outcomes and any urban or landscaping plans, particularly in respect of staged development and timing and nature of mitigation works.* I believe this matter is addressed in the Proposed Conditions. The purpose of the forum is to provide a two-way flow of information

³⁷ Technical Report J Social Impact Assessment, dated 20 October 2020 at page 33 and Section 42A Report Technical Evidence: Social Impact, dated 18 June 2021, at paragraph [59(a)].

on construction and operational matters, and the Community Liaison Forum specifically enables forum participants to provide feedback on all draft management plans that are required with each outline plan. These plans are listed in the Proposed Conditions and include landscape plans and construction-related plans.

- (c) *Provide the forum with the opportunity to review and give feedback on each stage of construction and operation.* I believe that this matter is addressed by Proposed Conditions relating to the Community Liaison Forum, together with an amendment to the Proposed Conditions to ensure the forum applies to the full construction (as I discuss next). My understanding is that each phase of construction will require an outline plan and associated management plans, and as I have mentioned above, the forum will have an opportunity to provide feedback on these.
- (d) *The Community Liaison Forum should apply in perpetuity or until the community representatives confirm the Site is in its final form.* One of the principal reasons for establishing a forum is to address the current uncertainty around the staging of the main phases of construction through to the full design, and the design of specific structures / features relevant to those stages. Therefore, I agree that the Proposed Conditions should be amended to apply across the main construction phases (until completion of all main components of the Freight Hub), and the timeframe should similarly be extended for the Community Liaison Person. I consider the Proposed Conditions attached to Ms Bell's evidence address this point.
- (e) *Once operational the forum should meet annually, but may meet more or less frequently where the forum deems this necessary / appropriate.* The frequency of the forum will change depending on the stages of design, construction and operation, and in response to unanticipated matters. Flexibility is therefore required. I have reviewed the relevant Proposed Condition consider that the wording "at least ...12 months during operation" provides this flexibility [emphasis added].
- (f) *Where the forum has provided input to a management plan, it has the opportunity to review whether the implementation of that plan has been undertaken in accordance with outcomes identified in a Design Framework.* The forum has the opportunity to provide feedback on design and construction matters as they evolve. If a strategic /

design plan becomes a requirement of the NoR, then I consider it appropriate that this would extend to feedback relevant to the framework (I discuss this next).

Require a Design Framework

- 9.17 The Section 42A Report recommends the development of a design framework that sets principles and outcomes for the Site. The purpose is to have a guiding document that will inform design, construction and operation as specific parts of the Site are developed over time. The report specifies the types of principles to include.³⁸
- 9.18 As I have outlined earlier, addressing uncertainty is a primary focus of the social impact mitigation. The requirement for KiwiRail to establish a community liaison forum in which it provides information on the stages and progress of the project, and enables participants of the forum to see and provide feedback on draft management plans as the design and construction develops, is key to this mitigation.
- 9.19 I also see value in having some form of strategic / design plan that provides clarity for the community on:
- (a) *what they can expect to see and experience* – for example, a plan that illustrates the full build out contemplated for the Site, as well as the design principles that underpin it and will guide future detailed design and management plans. I have not considered the specific matters listed in the Section 42A report in detail (as summarised in footnote 38 below), but from a social impact perspective they would be a useful starting point
 - (b) *when they can expect to see it* – for example, the staging of construction and the relationship of this to the outline plan of works, associated management plans, and resource consent applications

³⁸ The principles are: integrating the Freight Hub with its immediate and wider landscape setting; maximising beneficial outcomes for natural and rural character and visual amenity; maintaining and/or enhancing amenity values; noise mitigation that has regard to visual amenity, outlook, privacy and landscape character; lighting design that has regard to visual amenity, landscape character and the night sky; building and structure design; community identity and place; community connectivity through and around the site; pedestrian and cycle access around the site and to/from the Bunnythorpe community area; reflecting cultural values (Section 42A Technical Evidence: Social Impacts, dated 18 June 2021, at paragraph [66]).

- (c) *how and when the community can contribute* – for example, engagement principles and the requirements for engagement as set out in relevant conditions and management plans.

- 9.20 In terms of the timing for producing a strategic / design plan, I believe it would be an appropriate focus for early sessions with the community liaison forum.
- 9.21 In my opinion, Ms Rimmer's recommendation to broaden the Landscape Plan to a Landscape and Design Plan (which would include setting design principles and outcomes), together with the opportunity for the community to provide feedback on this plan through the community liaison forum, will help the community understand the design process for the Freight Hub and provide opportunities to shape that process.

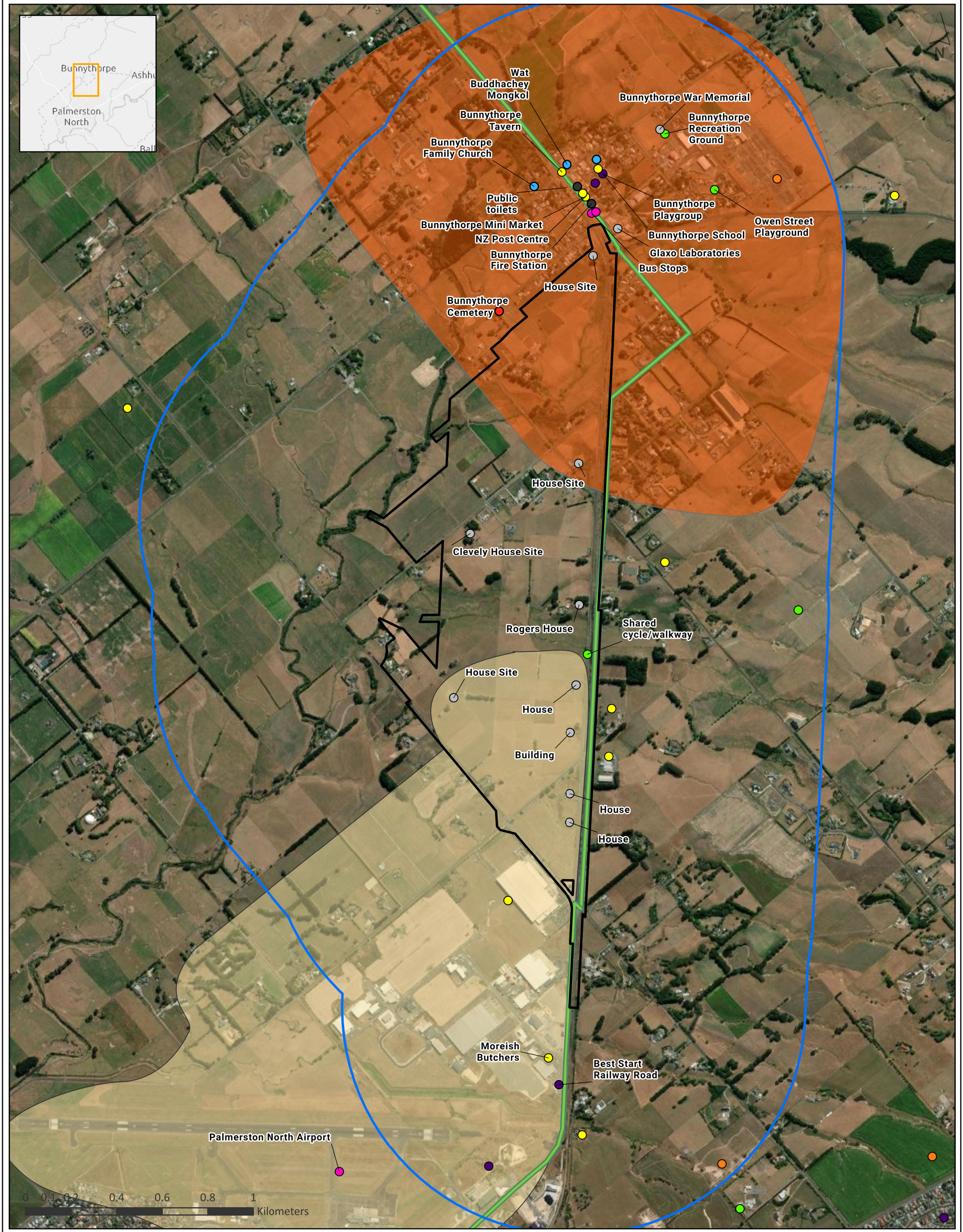
Undertaking a Cultural Values Assessment and reflecting these values in the design

- 9.22 The Section 42A Report notes the lack of a Cultural Values Statement to inform the NoR and recommends a Cultural Values Assessment be undertaken, with the outcomes of this assessment reflected in the design framework and management plans.
- 9.23 I have not been involved in KiwiRail's engagement with mana whenua and this is addressed in Ms Poulsen's evidence. KiwiRail has committed to continuing to work with mana whenua to determine an acceptable way forward, which includes agreeing on opportunities for mana whenua values to be expressed in the design and development of the Freight Hub, as indicated by the Proposed Conditions. For these values to effectively influence the design, the timeframes and relationships between the various design and management plan processes will need to be co-ordinated and clearly communicated.

Kirsty Austin

9 July 2021

Appendix 1 – Maps of the local impact area

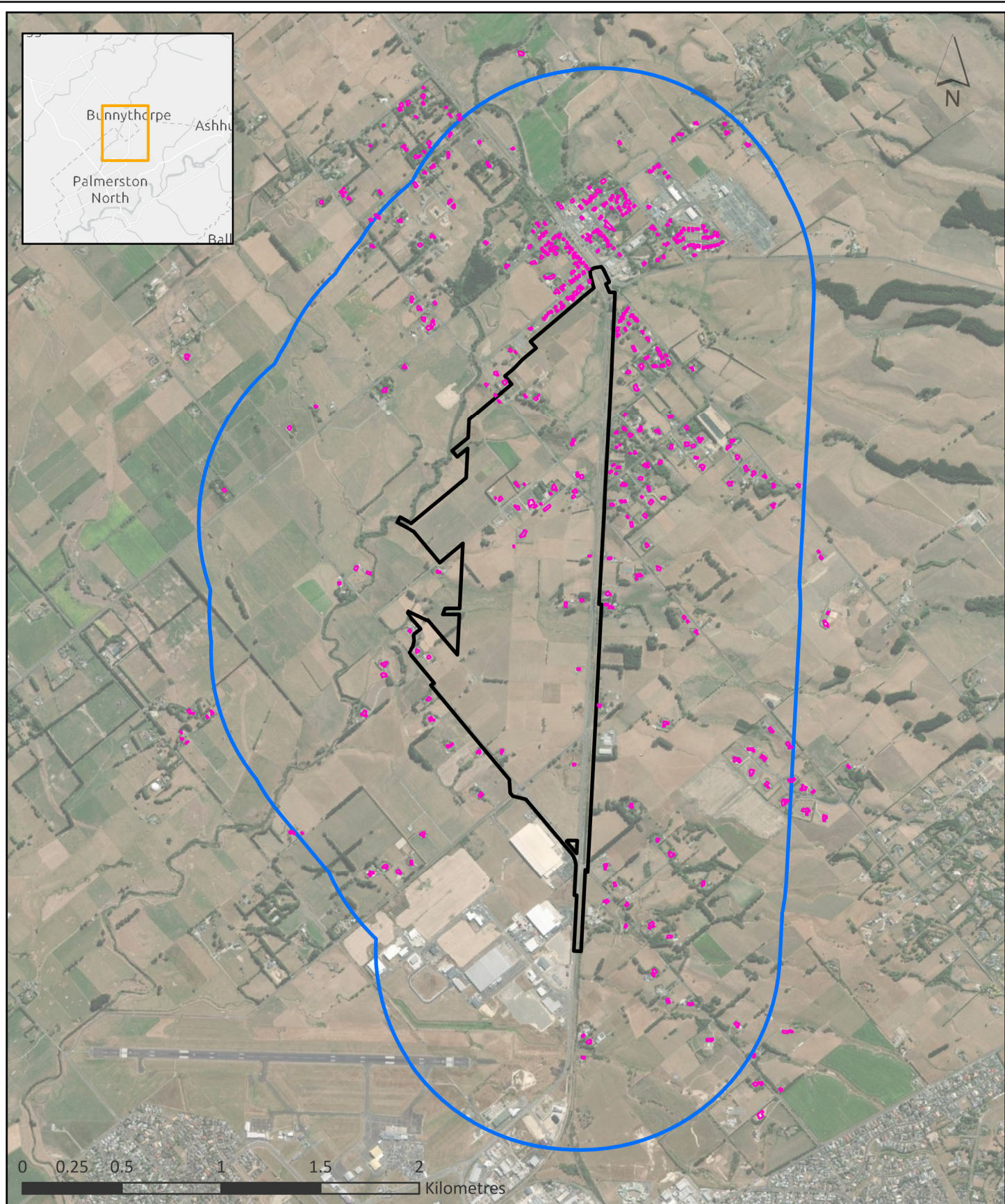


Map 1 : Community Facilities
Within the Local Impacted Area

Data Sources: Palmerston North City Council, Walking Access, Stantec
Baseemap Service Credits: Earthstar Geographics, LINZ, Stats NZ, Eagle Technology, Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS
Map displayed in NZGD 2000 New Zealand Transverse Mercator coordinate system.
Author: CW
Reviewed by: CD
Review date: 4/2/21
Project Code: 310003007

- | | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Services/Activities | Education | KiwiRail Designation Boundary |
| ● Cultural/Historic | ● Cemetery | Local Impact Area |
| ● Designation, substation, transmitter mast | ● Other Facilities | Industrial Area (Indicative) |
| ● Commercial | ● Public Transport | Bunnythorpe Village (Indicative) |
| ● Recreation/Leisure | ● Te Araroa Trail | |
| ● Place of Worship | | |

This document has been prepared based on information provided by others as cited in the data sources. Stantec has not verified the accuracy and/or completeness of this information and shall not be responsible for any errors or omissions which may be incorporated herein as a result. Stantec assumes no responsibility for data supplied in electronic format, and the recipient accepts full responsibility for verifying the accuracy and completeness of the data.



Map 2 - Residential Dwellings Within the Local Impacted Area

- Residential Dwellings (431)
- KiwiRail Designation Boundary
- Local Impact Area

Data Sources: Palmerston North City Council, LINZ, Stantec

Basemap Service Credits: Earthstar Geographics, LINZ, Stats NZ, Eagle Technology, Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS

Map displayed in NZGD 2000 New Zealand Transverse Mercator coordinate system.

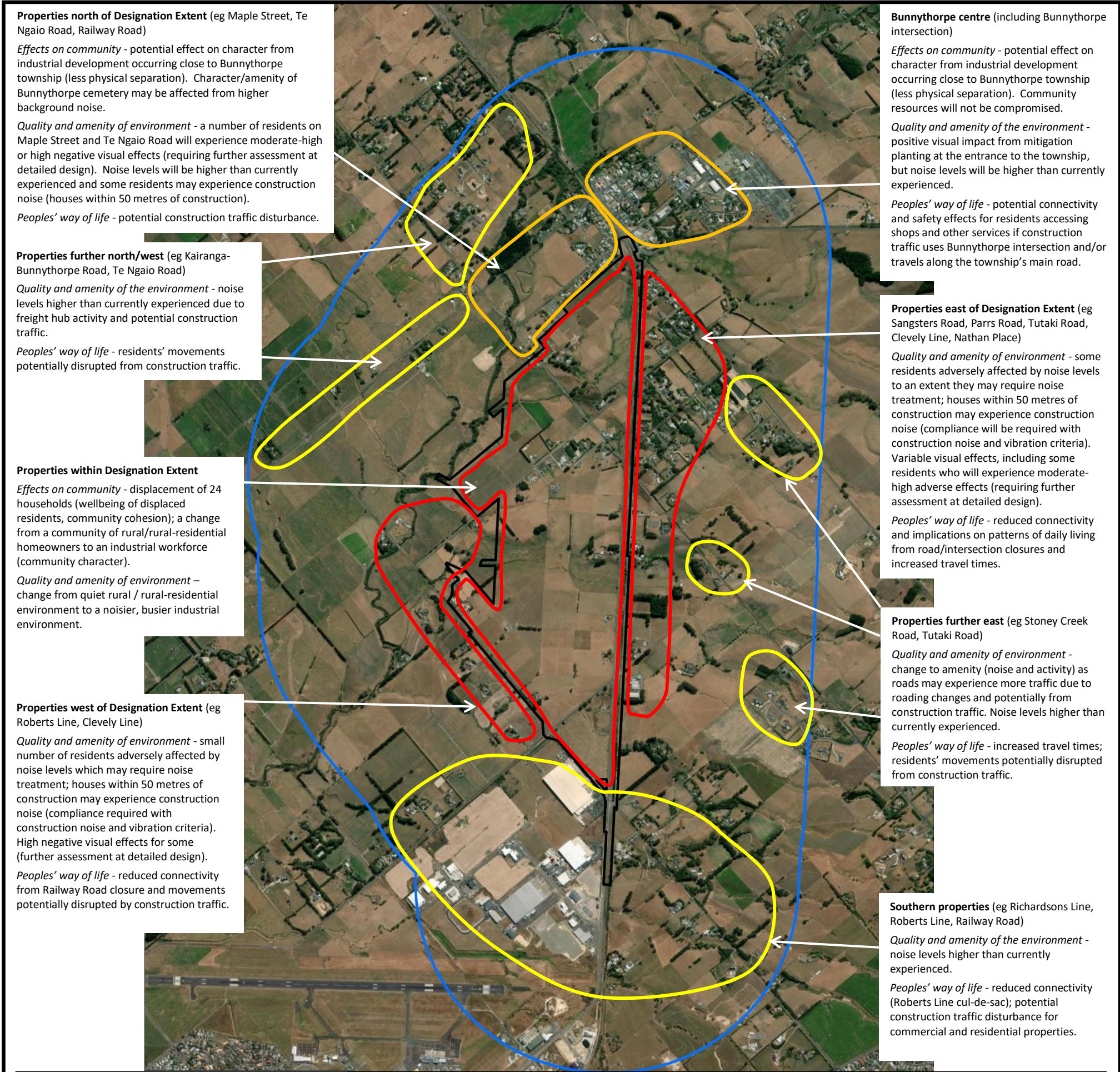
Author: CW

Reviewed by: CD

Review date: 4/2/21

Project Code: 310003007

This document has been prepared based on information provided by others as cited in the data sources. Stantec has not verified the accuracy and/or completeness of this information and shall not be responsible for any errors or omissions which may be incorporated herein as a result. Stantec assumes no responsibility for data supplied in electronic format, and the recipient accepts full responsibility for verifying the accuracy and completeness of the data.



Map 3 – Comparison of social impact across the local impact area

- Designation boundary
- Local impact area

Relative level of impact within the local impact area:

Higher

Lower

All boundaries are indicative and for illustrative purposes only.
Version 2

Appendix 2 - Submissions relevant to social impacts

Submission	Submission	Submission
1 Sonia and Neal Watson	32 Richard John Kibby	71 Darren Green
2 Warren Bradley	33 Linda Spearpoint	72 Danelle O'Keeffe and Duane Butts
3 Aorangi Papakainga	34 Stuart Robinson	73 Horowhenua District Council
4 Bruce and Alison Hill	35 Robyn Curtis	74 Arthur George Park
6 Glen & B Karen Woodfield	36 Helen S Thompson	75 Ian & Andrea Ritchie
7 Rochelle & Rex McGill	37 Ian Harvey	76 Athol & Florence (Flo) Gibson
9 Jim Jefferies	38 Logan Harvey	77 William John Bent
10 Timothy Te Wake	39 Letitia Stick	79 Kate McKenzie
12 Central Economic Development Agency	40 Gerry Rose & Gill Frampton	80 Riana Carroll
13 Tutaki 2019 Ltd	41 Warrick George	81 Dianne M C Tipene
15 Maree Woods	42 Matthew McKenzie	82 Christina Jeanne Holdaway
16 Martin Jones	43 Nick Turner	83 Gordon H Malcolm
17 Nicola Schreurs and Thomas Good	44 Mereti Taipana	84 Raewyn Carey
18 Kevin and Yvonne Stafford	47 Aaron Fox	85 Carole Ann and Anthony Booth
19 Janet Susan Stirling	50 Kevin and Erina Carroll	86 June Irene Hurly
20 Horizons Regional Council	51 Manawatu District Council	87 Mary & Michael Hurley
21 Ian Alexander Shaw	52 Jeff Williams	88 Corinne J Dingwall
22 Fiona Hurly	53 Raewyn Margaret Eastwood	90 Justine Jensen
23 Mike Tate	55 Michael Sharp	91 Steve Michael Kinane
24 Zaneta Park	57 John Austin and Rosaleen Wapp	92 Ministry of Education
25 Andreas Johannes Hofman	59 Joanne Kathrine Whittle	93 Craig Forbes
26 Peter Hurly	61 Peter Gore and Dale O'Reilly	94 MidCentral DHB Public Health Service
27 Helen and Pita Kinaston	62 Mary Anne Chapman	95 Owen Leonard Reid
28 Katrina George	64 Sharon Lee Gore	97 Anonymous
29 Tomas Burleigh Behrens	66 Andrew Wotton	98 David Odering
30 Bunnythorpe Community Committee	68 Friederike Lugt	
31 Courtney Kibby	70 Renee Louise Thomas-Crowther	