

Before an Independent Hearings Panel  
Appointed by Waimakariri District Council

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*under:* the Resource Management Act 1991

*in the matter of:* Submissions and further submissions on the Proposed  
Waimakariri District Plan

*and:* Hearing Stream 12D: Ōhoka rezoning request

*and:* **Carter Group Property Limited**  
(Submitter 237)

*and:* **Rolleston Industrial Developments Limited**  
(Submitter 160)

Summary of evidence of Simon Milner

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Dated: 1 July 2024

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**SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF SIMON MILNER**

- 1 My full name is Simon Nicholas Milner.
  - 2 I prepared the following statements in support of the Submitters' rezoning request:
    - 2.1 Statement of evidence dated 5 March 2024;
    - 2.2 Supplementary statement of evidence dated 13 June 2024; and
    - 2.3 Further supplementary statement of evidence dated 24 June 2024.
  - 3 My summary of evidence is focused how proposed public transport solution for Ōhoka contributes to Policy 1(c) of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020. This policy states that urban environments should have good accessibility for all people between housing, jobs, community services, natural spaces and open spaces, including by way of public or active transport.
  - 4 I have considered "good accessibility" for Ōhoka in terms of public transport to be primarily a function of three matters:
    - 4.1 whether Ōhoka is in the right place to achieve this, relative to other settlements in the district;
    - 4.2 whether the proposed public transport product and level of service is commensurate with that offered elsewhere in the district; and
    - 4.3 whether the proposed public transport solution is enduring, relative to what is / might be offered elsewhere in the district.
- Location**
- 5 Ōhoka is located approximately 7.5km away from Kaiapoi and 9km away from Rangiora. Given the current scale of the settlement, there is no existing public transport service that links it directly to other locations or into the wider public transport network.
  - 6 Pegasus Township is a similar distance away from Rangiora and slightly further away from Kaiapoi and is connected to both with existing public transport services.
  - 7 Oxford is approximately 33km away from Rangiora and over 40km from Kaiapoi. There are no current public transport services to/from Oxford. Peak commuter services have been trialled in the past but have not been enduring. Its distance from other settlements is a significant barrier to public transport ever being a viable option.

- 8 Linking Ōhoka with a public transport service to Kaiapoi is relatively efficient from a resource perspective, given the distances involved, and it would connect the village into a range of bus services in Kaiapoi for onward travel.
- 9 It is generally easier to link settlements that are closer to other settlements with existing public transport. Ōhoka is of a distance to adjoining settlements to make this possible.

#### **Level of Service**

- 10 Pegasus and Woodend are linked by an hourly bus service to Kaiapoi / Christchurch outside peak periods and every 30 minutes at peak times on weekdays. The service to Rangiora is hourly.
- 11 Rangiora and Kaiapoi are linked to Christchurch by a half hourly service, which is supplemented with peak express services that deliver a 15 minute or better peak period weekday service.
- 12 The proposal for Ōhoka is for a half hourly service to/from Kaiapoi. This is in line with levels of service that are currently provided to the larger settlements and double that which is currently offered to smaller settlements.
- 13 The level of service for Ōhoka can be provided because of the short length of the trip to/from Kaiapoi. Other submitters have noted that the price that potential customers pay for this is a forced onward connection and have noted that this is unattractive in terms of growing demand. These views are not consistent with the manner in which the Greater Christchurch public transport has developed over the past few years – there is a recognition that service frequency is the more important factor. There is ample evidence from Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland (as well as overseas) that this connective model works, if the connections are good.
- 14 The draft timetable supplied by the submitter in evidence has demonstrated how the onwards connection in Kaiapoi can work – by connecting the Ōhoka service to Kaiapoi, it is linked in several existing bus services, which means that the timing of onward connections becomes less of an issue for service design.
- 15 Other submitters have noted the lack of a direct public transport connection to Rangiora is a significant shortcoming of the Submitters' proposal. In my evidence, I have further noted that whilst the draft proposal is for a "Kaiapoi only" connection, it is feasible for the off-peak service pattern to serve both destinations on an hourly basis. The Submitters have confirmed that they are committed to a certain level of public transport resource and is willing to work with the community and contracting authorities to deliver a bus service that meets the needs of the existing and future Ōhoka community.

**Long-term commitment**

- 16 The Submitters have confirmed a 10-year commitment to funding of public transport services for Ōhoka. Whilst the mechanism to deliver this needs to be confirmed, this should give local authorities and the community the comfort that the proposal is not a short-term service trial proposal that will be withdrawn after a couple of years. As noted, the Submitters are willing to work with the local community to fine tune and adjust the service to give it the best chance of longer-term success.
- 17 The evidence of Mr Metherell comments on the fact that service trials are normally introduced by contracting authorities in response to lobbying from local communities for bus services. This is an important point for the Ōhoka context. Many service trials fail because the requests are from a small number of residents, sometimes supported by survey data that indicates that others “might” use the bus service if it was provided. Established communities that do not have public transport are highly likely to have a car-centric pattern of trip making, as there is typically no alternative for longer trips. Often these service trials fail because actual demand is not reflective of stated potential demand, as many residents see the bus as the back-up option for occasional use, not for regular use.
- 18 The Submitters are committed to establishing a bus service from the outset for a growing Ōhoka community. This will mean that new residents will have a high-quality public transport option available to them from the day that they move in. This makes public transport (and also bike / bus) travel options a realistic travel choice from the outset.

**Conclusion**

- 19 The public transport service proposal has a service level and service design that will ensure that Ōhoka would have good accessibility via public transport if the rezoning is approved in accordance with Policy 1(c) of the NPS-UD.

Dated: 1 July 2024

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Simon Milner