

**IN THE ENVIRONMENT COURT OF NEW ZEALAND
WELLINGTON REGISTRY**

**I MUA I TE KŌTI TAIAO O AOTEAROA
TE WHANGANUI-Ā-TARA ROHE**

ENV-2023-WLG-000005

Under the	RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991
In the matter of	the direct referral of applications for resource consents and notices of requirement under sections 87G and 198E of the Act for the Ōtaki to North of Levin project
By	NEW ZEALAND TRANSPORT AGENCY-WAKA KOTAHI
	Applicant

**JOINT STATEMENT OF LANDSCAPE, VISUAL, NATURAL CHARACTER
EXPERTS**

27 July 2023

INTRODUCTION

1. This joint witness statement relates to expert conferencing on the topic of landscape, visual, natural character.
2. The expert conferencing was held on 27 July 2023, facilitated by Environment Commissioner Buchanan.
3. Attendees at the conference were:
 - (a) Gavin Lister (witness for Waka Kotahi). Mr Lister is the author of Technical Assessment D: Landscape, Visual and Natural Character lodged with the application, and of a statement of evidence dated 4 July 2023.
 - (b) Julia Williams (witness for both the District Councils and the Regional Councils). Ms Williams is the author of Appendix 7 (Natural Character) to the section 87F report and Appendix 2 (Landscape and Visual) to the section 198D report of the Councils. Ms Williams provided a note setting out matters that remain in dispute in advance of the conference.
 - (c) Siobhan Karaitiana (witness on behalf of Muaūpoko Tribal Authority). Ms Karaitiana lodged a statement of evidence dated 4 July 2023.
 - (d) Quentin Parr (witness on behalf of Ngāti Raukawa). Mr Parr lodged a statement of evidence dated 4 July 2023.

CODE OF CONDUCT

4. This joint statement is prepared in accordance with section 9.4 of the Environment Court Practice Note 2023.
5. We confirm that we have read the Environment Court Practice Note 2023 and agree to abide by it.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF CONFERENCING

6. The purpose of conferencing was to identify, discuss, and highlight points of agreement and disagreement on landscape, visual, natural character issues arising from the Project.
7. Conferencing proceeded in line with the agenda agreed to by all relevant parties and experts, and provided to Commissioner Buchanan in advance of the conferencing.

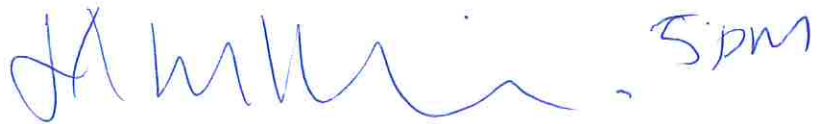
8. All attendees reviewed Technical Assessment D and the evidence, council expert reports and notes on issues that remain in dispute in advance of the conference.
9. **Annexure A** records the agreed issues, areas of disagreement and the reasons, along with any reservations.
10. Except where recorded in Annexure A, the attendees agree that the primary data, methodologies and standards, and key facts and assumptions are as set out in the Assessment of Environmental Effects for the Project, and in particular Technical Assessment D: Landscape, Visual and Natural Character.

Date: 27 July 2023



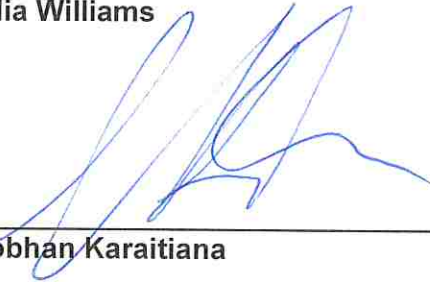
5 PM

Gavin Lister



5 PM

Julia Williams



Siobhan Karaitiana



Quentin Parr

ANNEXURE A – EXPERT CONFERENCING ON LANDSCAPE, VISUAL, NATURAL CHARACTER
Participants: Gavin Lister (GL), Julia Williams (JW), Siobhan Karaitiana (SK), Quentin Parr (QP)

Issue	Agreed Position [Where not unanimous, add initials of agreed experts]	Disagreements or reservations, with reasons
<p>Appropriateness of the Project's landscape planting approach including ongoing monitoring, differentiation between Categories of planting (landscape; ecology; natural character)</p>	<p>The natural character planting is part of the landscape planting which is over and above the planting associated with the regional consents. Landscape planting goes to the outline plan process.</p> <p>The regional council is concerned that the provisions for the project currently don't provide a mechanism for regional council involvement in the outline plan process related to natural character planting. The experts agree that this involvement is desirable and recommend that a mechanism for this involvement be included along the lines of DGA6 for the district councils.</p>	
<p>Natural character planting beyond the designation</p>	<p>GL and JW agree that if the planting is undertaken as per the planting plans there will be no net loss in natural character. However, if landowner approval is not given for natural character planting on private land, there will be some loss in natural character.</p>	
<p>Addressing effects on visual amenity on private property. Condition DLV2 – the level of effects which should trigger revisiting mitigation provided on properties</p>	<p>GL and JW agree that the conditions need revisiting because clauses (a) and (c) need to be consistent.</p>	

<p>Provision of Planting Specifications prior to the Hearing</p>	<p>DLV1 provides some detail on landscape planting standards. All agree that P39 is an appropriate general specification as adjusted to the project specifics including measures in the CDEF.</p>	<p>JW and SK consider that more detail is required for quality assurance as part of this project. For example, pest plants are absent or suppressed after 3 years. SK considers 90% canopy coverage to be more appropriate to minimise weed incursions, as seen on other projects. GL considers the outline plans as the appropriate stage for detailed specifications.</p>