

**BEFORE THE HEARINGS PANEL
AT THE RANGIORA TOWN HALL FUNCTION ROOM IN RANGIORA**

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

AND

IN THE MATTER of hearing of submissions on Stream 1 and
2 to the Proposed Waimakariri District Plan

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF SARAH CAMERON FOR HORTICULTURE
NEW ZEALAND**

28 April 2023

INTRODUCTION

Qualifications and experience

1. My name is Sarah Cameron. I am a Senior Environmental Policy Advisor at Horticulture New Zealand (HortNZ). I am involved in HortNZ's national, regional, and district planning processes across New Zealand. I have been in this role since 2 May 2022.
2. I have over four years of experience in environmental policy. During this time, I have worked for the horticulture industry. I am an associate member of the New Zealand Planning Institute.
3. Since beginning my role at HortNZ, I have met with growers across New Zealand to better understand their horticultural operations and how resource management issues impact them.
4. I have led involvement and consultation on the development of District Plans across horticulture growing regions in New Zealand

INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROCEEDINGS

5. I have policy oversight for the Canterbury region and the role of HortNZ lead in these proceedings since February 2023.

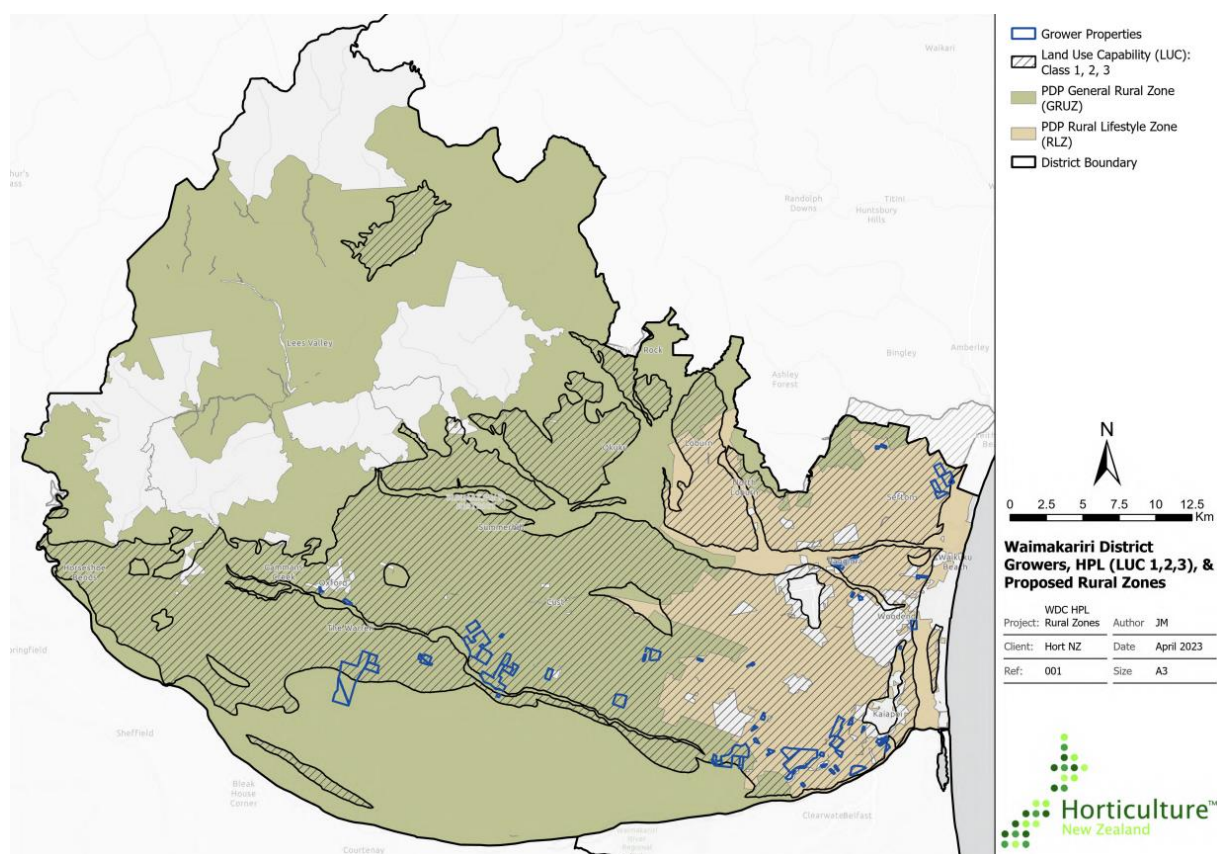
PURPOSE AND SCOPE

6. HortNZ is the industry body for the horticulture sector, representing growers who pay levies on fruit and vegetables sold either directly or through a post-harvest operator, as set out in the Commodity Levies (Vegetables and Fruit) Order 2013.
7. My evidence describes the horticulture sector in Waimakariri and a summary of HortNZ's position on Stream 1 and 2.

HORTICULTURE IN Waimakariri

8. There are 242.10 hectares of horticulture grown in the Waimakariri District of which 135.2 hectares is grown in the General Rural Zone (GRUZ) and 101.3 hectares in the proposed Rural Lifestyle Zone (RLZ).

Picture 1: Location of horticulture operations overlaid by highly productive land and proposed zones



9. The majority of the uncovered growing operations are located on highly productive land (HPL) and are soil reliant land-based primary production activities.
10. Crops grown include:

Table 1: Fruit grown in Waimakariri district

Wine grapes	Apples	Feijoas
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Table 2: Vegetables grown in Waimakariri district

Asparagus	Potatoes	Cucumber	Sweet corn
Squash	Broccoli	Carrots	Cauliflower
Green beans	Lettuce	Onions	Pumpkins

Covered cropping

11. With a moving climate, changing practice, crop types and diversification in the horticultural sector, growers have become increasingly reliant on a variety of covered cropping methods. Growing within a greenhouse can

produce a more consistent yield and consistent quality of product for longer periods of the year in comparison to outdoor growing.

12. As an example, Coolcumber Products have been operating in the Waimakariri District for 35 years and have grown considerably since starting out. They supply telegraph cucumbers for the South Island domestic market. This includes 98% of the New World's and 4 Square's in the South Island. Their green houses have a total floor area of 16,000m² and produce 100 cucumbers per square meter, per year. Coolcumber Products employ 14 full time staff and can pick 15,000 - 16,000 cucumbers in a day¹.
13. Of the 242ha growing area in the district, 3.28 hectares is estimated to be covered crops based on 2023 AgriBase data and HortNZ Grower information. All greenhouses are situated on HPL.
14. Greenhouses have a functional and operational need to locate on HPL. In particular they require flat land to build on, and adjacent productive land for their nutrient storage and disposal system.
15. Historically greenhouse crops were typically grown on soil. As the industry expanded and become more sophisticated crops went from the soil to soilless media or hydroponics using gullies. This brought without a significant increase in productivity and reduction in agrichemical use.

Growth in the district

16. The Waimakariri district is a potential growth area for horticulture due to over 40 percent of soils being HPL², its close proximity to market and transport links.
17. Both Progressive Enterprises and Foodstuffs South Island headquarters are located in Christchurch and there is also a strong support for local farmers markets in the district.
18. There is easy access to State Highway 1, which runs through the district as well as Christchurch Airport and Lyttleton Port.

¹ <http://www.coolcumber.co.nz/>

² <https://ourenvironment.scinfo.org.nz/maps-and-tools/app/>

Hearing Stream 1: Strategic Directions

19. HortNZ engaged Vance Hodgson (Planner) to assist HortNZ with providing evidence for the hearing. In his evidence, Mr Hodgson sets out recommendations on the following objectives:

SD-O2 Urban Development

- i. Support S42A direction that no amendment to SD-O2 is required as the NPSHPL would guide future urban development proposals that sought to rezone rural land for urban use. It is also noted that an assessment of NPSHPL will be undertaken as part of the S42A report for the Rural Zones.

SD-O4 Rural Land

- ii. Support objective name change from Rural 'land' to Rural 'environment'
 - iii. Support additional changes to SD-O4 to replace the term 'rural production' to 'primary production'
 - iv. Notes that in considering the NPSHPL at future hearings (namely the Rural Zones), that changes to the Strategic Directions could be an outcome.
20. Like Mr Hodgson, I also recommend that given the NPSHPL was gazetted after the proposed plan was notified and submissions closed, there might be benefit in requesting council officers to prepare a S42A report to provide direction on how the NPSHPL will be given effect to through the district plan. This was a direction from the Selwyn District Plan Hearing Commissioners during the recent proposed district plan hearings³ Ms Atkins for HortNZ provides a legal perspective on this issue.

CONCLUSION

21. I support the recommendations of Mr Hodgson.
22. HortNZ is particularly interested in how the NPSHPL will be managed through the district across both the GRZ and RLZ and the plans response to soil-reliant and non-soil reliant land-based primary production and

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<https://extranet.selwyn.govt.nz/sites/consultation/DPR/Shared%20Documents/Hearings%20Panel%20directions%20&%20minutes/Minute%2029%20-%20Directions%20of%20the%20Commissioner%20-%20Rezoning%20Requests%20-%20NPS-HPL.pdf>

supporting activities. While we understand that the NPSHPL does not apply to the RLZ, HPL exists in this environment and enables the primary production activity to occur.

Sarah Cameron

28 April 2023

