

**BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT HEARING COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED BY THE  
WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER** of Hearing of Submissions and Further Submissions on the  
Proposed Waimakariri District Plan (**PWDP** or **the Proposed Plan**)

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER OF** Submissions and Further Submission on the Proposed Waimakariri  
District Plan by **McAlpines Limited (McAlpines)**

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**SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF JOHN DUNCAN ON BEHALF OF MCALPINES LTD**

Dated: 24 August 2023

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 My name is John Maxwell Duncan
- 2 I commenced my employment with the McAlpine's group in 1969 as a junior shortly after it had established its operations at the current sites on Ellis Rd and Todds Rd (**McAlpines site** or **site**). I worked my way through the business and became General Manager of McAlpines Timber during the mid-1980s and held that position until about 3 months ago.
- 3 I have been closely involved in the development of processing capability and operational matters associated with sawmilling and timber processing on the McAlpines site for many years up to the present day.
- 4 I have earlier filed a Statement of Evidence dated 7 August 2023 (my **evidence**) together with a **Graphic Supplement**, which contains a site plan and various aerial photographs illustrating the development of the site. I have also filed a Supplementary Statement of Evidence dated 18 August 2023 (my **supplementary evidence**).

## USE OF MCALPINES SITE AT SOUTHBROOK

- 5 The McAlpines' sawmill at Rangiora was originally located on High Street. The decision was made to move from High Street and between approximately 1964 and 1969 the company established its operations in Southbrook.
- 6 Since then McAlpines has acquired further landholdings at Southbrook, as shown on **Appendix A** to my Statement of Evidence. **Appendix B** to my evidence contains a table showing among other matters, the street address, legal description, date of purchase and current use of the McAlpines land at Southbrook.

## Residential dwellings in the locality of the site

- 7 The **1964 aerial photograph** within the Graphic Attachment shows the McAlpines site as rural land shortly before McAlpines began to establish sawmill operations on the site. The original three blocks of land forming the McAlpines site is marked on this photograph as well as the four closest residential dwellings lying to the northwest and southwest and on Ellis Road and Todds Road (marked 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively), as follows:

- (a) The dwelling marked 1 is owned by McAlpines and is tenanted.
  - (b) The dwelling marked 2 was demolished by McAlpines a number of years ago.
  - (c) The dwellings marked 3 and 4 can be seen on the various aerial photographs included in the Graphic Supplement and they continue to be used for residential purposes today.
- 8 McAlpines has been fortunate that in the intervening years no further residential dwellings have been constructed on the rural zoned land lying to the west/northwest/ southwest of the site between 1964 and today's date.

### **Main uses of the McAlpines site**

- 9 Since 1964, the operations of the company have grown considerably at the McAlpines site. McAlpines operations can be broken down into four main uses:
- (a) the production of timber,
  - (b) the processing of timber,
  - (c) the reception and dispatch of timber, and
  - (d) commercial operations.
- 10 McAlpines sawmill operations at Southbrook entails a sawmill and associated timber treatment, timber drying, timber machining activities and related machinery and vehicles (collectively described as the **sawmill**).
- 11 A **site plan** is attached in the Graphic Supplement, with the main noise generating activities highlighted in green.
- 12 McAlpines holds several resource consents for use of the site at Southbrook which are listed at paragraph 31 of my evidence.

### **DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE OVER TIME**

- 13 As mentioned, the site has developed considerably over time. As requested by our legal advisor, my evidence has broken the chronology of site development into sections that discuss establishment and operation of noise generating activities on the site prior to the introduction of planning rules relevant to management of noise emissions from the site.

- 14 In particular, and relevant to the question of existing use rights, my evidence discusses the following matters:
- (a) Activities established on the McAlpines site prior to Chapter 13 of the 1980 Rangiora District Plan becoming operative on 1 March 1985;
  - (b) Additional activities established prior to Operative Waimakariri District Plan, noise control rule 31.12.1.2 (operative 28 November 2005); and
  - (c) Additional activities established after the 2005 Operative Waimakariri District Plan.
- 15 To summarise, the majority of the noise-emitting operations have been in use by McAlpines since 2004, as shown by the **2010 aerial photograph**. The primary equipment in the sawmill has not changed substantially although there have been significant improvements in technology to improve the output, and efficiency of the sawmill over the years.
- 16 Apart from the annual Easter and Christmas closedowns, and the recent Covid 19 Level 4 lockdown, the site has operated continuously since it was established.

#### **NOISE COMPLAINTS FROM THE MCAPLINES SITE**

- 17 The Council has never requested or required us to modify our operations, or apply for a resource consent to manage the noise from the sawmill.
- 18 The company is very proud of its record operating at Southbrook and to my knowledge there has never been a complaint about noise levels emanating from the sites that we operate.
- 19 We want to be considered a good neighbour and we do try to mitigate or reduce noise emissions whenever we can. Everything we do now in terms of development of the site is undertaken with a view towards reducing noise levels as much as practically possible.

#### **POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF COMPLAINTS ABOUT NOISE ON THE OPERATION OF THE MCALPINES SAWMILL.**

- 20 If there are noise sensitive activities located on land within the 55 dBA noise contour, it seems likely that some of them will complain about the irritating noises emanating from the McAlpines' timber operations.

21 Should future residents lodge complaints with the Council, there are potentially significant negative implications for the site's operations including:

- (a) Reduced Safety.
- (b) Increased compliance costs.
- (c) Decreased productivity.
- (d) Loss of the McAlpine's business in its entirety.
- (e) Loss of jobs.
- (f) Reduced competition.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE**

22 The following section provides a brief summary of my supplementary evidence.

#### **Number of persons employed to operate the sawmill**

23 McAlpines employs 65 full time staff to work in the sawmill. There are approximately 20 people indirectly employed by the sawmill. Based on running full time staff, McAlpines is likely to be one of the top 10 employers in Rangiora

#### **Steps taken by McAlpines to reduce the noise from the sawmill**

24 The measures we have taken to manage noise from machinery and operations that generate the most noise can be summarised as follows:

- (a) Reduction in noise emitted from the use of the chipper by constructing the building with an outer and an inner wall, with the cavity filled with noise dampening insulation;
- (b) Locating the Waco planer inside a specially constructed noise-proof enclosure, designed to reduce the noise emitted from the operation of this machine;
- (c) Limiting our operations as far as possible to within the usual business hours of five days a week, from 7am to 4:30pm;

- (d) Removal of noisy plant by decommissioning the bandsaw in 2021 and the steamer in 2022; and
- (e) Construction of a 2.1m high wooden fence along the Todds Road boundary.

25 Later this year McAlpines plans to extend this fence to the end of the Todds Road boundary. The extension of this fence will help further reduce the emissions of noise from the sawmill.

**Factors that limit McAlpines' ability to reduce sawmill noise**

26 The nature of some machinery we use to operate the sawmill makes it very difficult to reduce noise from those machines. This includes noise emissions from forklift reversing beepers and noise from the stacker which is open at both ends of the building so that it can receive and dispatch packs of timber.

27 Thank you for the opportunity to present my evidence.

John Duncan

24 August 2023