

**BEFORE THE HEARING PANEL FOR TAUPŌ DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER** of a submission by Contact Energy Limited on Proposed  
Plan Change 43 to the Taupō District Plan relating to the  
Taupō Industrial Environment

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JEREMY WILLIAMS**

**ON BEHALF OF CONTACT ENERGY LIMITED**

**CORPORATE**

**10 AUGUST 2023**

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## QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 1 My name is **Jeremy Williams**. I am a Senior Advisor - Environment at Contact Energy Limited (**Contact**) based at Wairākei Power Station near Taupō.
- 2 I have a Bachelor of Science (Land Planning and Development) from the University of Otago. I am a member of New Zealand Planning Institute (Associate) (since 2006).
- 3 I have 21 years of experience in resource management working in planning authorities (Councils) in New Zealand and the UK, as a consultant and as an environmental advisor with Genesis. In these roles, I have had experience in processing and submitting large scale infrastructure projects including Tauhara Geothermal power station (Contact), Ngatamariki Power Station (Mercury) and the Wairākei-Whakamaru C Line (Transpower) within the Taupō District.
- 4 I joined Contact in 2019 as an Environmental Advisor in the Generation and Trading Team.
- 5 In my role as a Senior Advisor - Environment at Contact I am responsible for the following:
  - Support the development of Contact's environmental and land strategy, projects, policies, practices targets and associated resources and systems;
  - managing relationships with contractors, landowners, iwi, and local and regional government with regard to geothermal generation activities, its effects and the wider opportunities it presents;
  - ensuring all site works and operations on the geothermal generating and development sites comply with legislative, regulatory, and environmental requirements are met. Ensure all resource consent conditions are met (approximately 100 resource consents);
  - engaging and communicating with relevant regional and local authorities, tangata whenua, neighbouring landowners and other environmental stakeholders about the environmental and cultural effects associated with Contact's geothermal business and operations;

- Ensure consents are understood and complied with, and that district and regional plans are monitored to identify changes that may affect Contact's operations and resource consents are fit for purpose and managed alongside community expectations; and
- Support other potential development downstream or cascade opportunities from Contacts operations i.e., Tenon or Nature's Flame as an example of a cascade user.

## BACKGROUND

6 In preparing my evidence I have reviewed at a high level the relevant parts of:

- Proposed Change 43 to the Taupō District Plan (**District Plan**) relating to the Taupō Industrial Environment (**PC43**);
- Contact's submission on PC43;
- the Taupō District Council's (**District Council**) section 42A reports for Plan Changes 38, 42 and 43, including the versions showing recommendations from the District Council's supplementary evidence and additional supplementary evidence (**section 42A report (July version)**); and
- the statement of planning evidence prepared by Mr Mark Chrisp (**Mr Chrisp**) on behalf of Contact.

7 This statement is a corporate one, and not expert evidence. I am authorised by Contact to provide this evidence on its behalf.

## SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

8 The purpose of this statement is to provide:

- an overview of Contact and the key geothermal electricity generation sites that are the subject of PC43;
- Contact's position of the re-zoning of the Rural Environment to Taupō Industrial Environment and reasons for supporting and opposing these (respectively); and
- An overview of the relief requested by Contact.

## CONTACT ENERGY LIMITED

- 9 Rather than repeating material in this statement of evidence, please refer to the statement of evidence of Mr Michael Stevens on behalf of Contact in relation to Plan Change 38 which provides an overview of Contact's electricity generation activities nationally and within the Taupō District. In summary, Contact owns and operates 12 power stations across the country, of which seven of these are located within the Taupō District (with another two power stations in the Taupō District currently under construction).

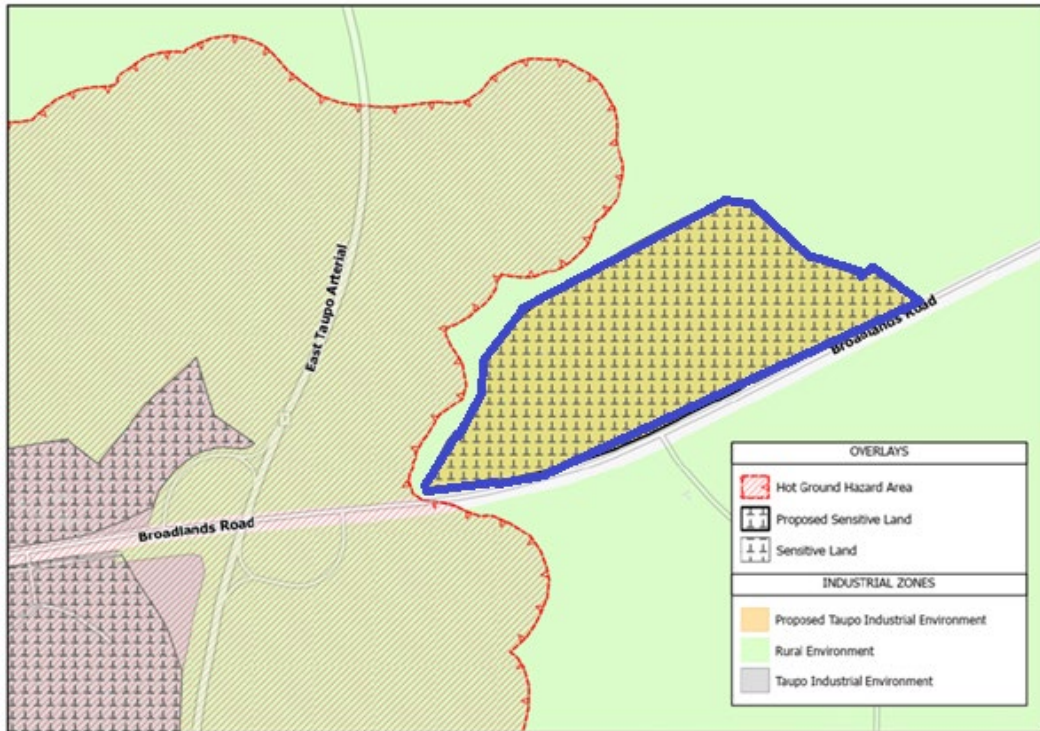
## PC43

- 10 PC43 seeks to rezone two areas of land being Broadlands Road West (known as **Site 4**) and Napier Road (known as **Site 7**) from Rural Environment to Taupō Industrial Environment. These areas are shown in **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1 – Proposed Taupō Industrial Environment zones**

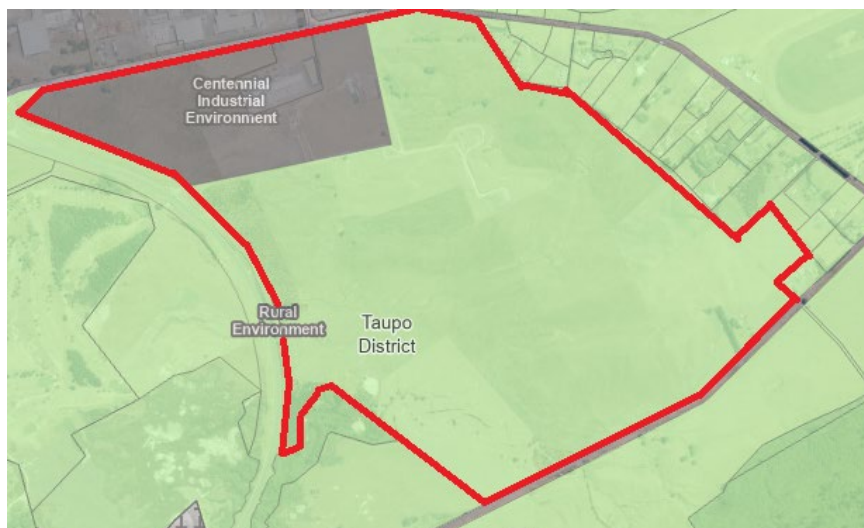
- 11 PC43 introduces the proposed rezoning of an area of land owned by Contact (Site 4 at 263 Broadlands Road, Rotokawa (Lot 1 DP 445148)) from Rural Environment to Taupō Industrial Environment which forms part of Contact’s landholdings on which the Te Huka Power Station is located (Figure 2).



**Figure 2 – Site 4 proposed to be rezoned from Rural Environment to Taupō Industrial Environment (blue outlined area)**

### TE HUKA POWER STATION

- 12 Contact’s Te Huka Power Station (**Power Station**) generally comprises an existing Binary Power Station, steamfield, a new Binary Power Station under construction and an area of vacant farmland surrounding the Power Station which serves as a buffer, and a potential area for further development. Consequently, this property owned by Contact is zoned Centennial Industrial Environment and Rural Environment, as shown in **Figure 3**.



**Figure 3 – Contact's property (red boundary) where Te Huka Power Station is located.**

- 13 Commissioned in 2010, Te Huka Power Station generates 28 MW to the national grid. At Te Huka power station, electricity is generated through a binary process. A second binary plant is currently under construction, to the south of the existing Power Station.
- 14 The land proposed to be rezoned is currently leased and used for grazing stock.

#### **CONTACT'S POSITION ON PC43**

- 15 Contact supports the rezoning of the 3.5 hectare block of land on the corner of Napier Road and the East Taupō Arterial to Taupō Industrial Environment (referred to as Area 7) for the reasons set out in the evidence of Mr Chrisp.
- 16 Contact disagrees with the proposed rezoning of the part of Site 4 owned by Contact to Taupō Industrial Environment because it has no intention to develop (or allow others to develop) this part of its property for industrial purposes (at least in the foreseeable future).
- 17 Contact has discussed the re-zoning proposals with Council on many occasions. To be clear, Contact is concerned that rezoning this land might create false expectations and the outcome will not assist Taupō District Council meet its obligations under the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020.

- 18 It is noted in paragraphs 200 and 204 of the s42A report for PC43 that Contact's submission is recommended to be rejected on the basis that the area of land proposed to be re-zoned, known as Broadlands Road West – Site 4 (**Site 4**) was not considered to be encumbered. This is only because Contact own Lot 1 DP 445148 which the eastern half (approximately) of Site 4.
- 19 It is acknowledged that Taupō District Council needs to identify areas for future industrial land, however Site 4 is not considered appropriate for rezoning by Contact for the following reasons:
- Contact has no intention to develop (or allow others to develop) this part of our property for industrial purposes in the foreseeable future;
  - Contact is currently working with Unison to establish a 33kV overhead line through this area (route to be confirmed) to provide reticulation as part of the Laminex expansion; and
  - The rezoning of this land is likely to create false expectations of the availability of industrial zoned land within the District Council has previously been critical of Contact for holding large tracts of industrial zoned land. These are generally around power station sites.

## **CONCLUSION**

- 20 Contact supports the rezoning of Site 7 from Rural Environment to Taupō Industrial Environment.
- 21 That part of Site 4 within the property owned by Contact should not be rezoned to Taupō Industrial Environment and instead retain the current Rural Environment zoning.

**Jeremy Williams**

**10 August 2023**