

Before the Independent Hearing Panel
at Taupo

in the matter of: Proposed Plan Change 36 to the Taupo District
Plan – Request under Schedule 1 of the RMA to
rezone Rural Land to Residential at Whareroa North
by The Proprietors of Hauhungaroa No. 6

to: **Taupo District Council**

Applicant: **The Proprietors of Hauhungaroa No.6**

Statement of Evidence of **Stephen Sanderson** [Submitter #4]

1. Introduction

- 1.1. My name is Stephen Sanderson and I live at 21 Hinekapi Terrace, Whareroa Village (see Appendix 1).
- 1.2. I declare that I am a Real Estate Salesperson for Bayleys Turangi specialising in Whareroa and have been for the last 16 Years. I would also remind people that I have been actively involved with the Village since 1987. I am a past Chairman of the Whareroa Residents Association, past organiser of the Whareroa fishing competition, organiser of the Whareroa Christmas Holiday Concert, past lawn mowing contractor, part of the Whareroa harbour masters team & general “go to person” at Whareroa.
- 1.3. My submission is a private submission on the proposed plan change and in no way reflects the opinion of the Whareroa Residents Association or any other person.
- 1.4. I am in support of the proposed plan change. I do so in the knowledge that when I purchased my section in 1987, I understood Whareroa to be a staged development and that growth northwards across the river long-term was a part of that ongoing development.
- 1.5. I can remember the discussions by land owners at that point, which included discussing the possible ramifications concerning the disruption to the Whareroa Stream, which is a very significant brown trout spawning stream.
- 1.6. Since then having had many a discussion with the developers, I know that they are very mindful of the stream and will do what is needed to protect it. This gives me confidence to support the plan change and future subdivision.

Relevant experience

- 1.7. I worked for Lands & Survey Rotorua from 1969 to 1973, for the Department of Maori affairs from 1973 to 1974 and for Lands & Survey Rotorua from 1975 to 1979 as part of the property team.
- 1.8. I moved permanently from Te Kuiti to Whareroa in September 2001. I am currently working for Bayleys Turangi as a Real Estate Salesperson and have been doing so for 16 Years. I specialise in Whareroa property.
- 1.9. I was previously Chairman of the Whareroa Residents Association from 2002 to 2017 and am still on the Committee. During my time as Chairman I worked with the Council and the trustees of the Proprietors of Hauhungaroa No.6 on some projects such as the Tennis court and Jetty
- 1.10. I was also a Councillor for the Waitomo District Council for 12 years from 1986 to 1995 and from 1998- 2001.

2. History and Background

- 2.1. My very first contact with Whareroa was when I was working for the Lands & Survey Department in Te Kuiti in 1973. Whareroa Station was then one of the development blocks supervised by Lands & Survey Te Kuiti.

- 2.2. I was working in the administration section of the Te Kuiti Branch. I came down to Whareroa Station for a meeting with some of the owners. My job was, along with my section head, to take notes. We stood out on the now Whareroa Village and had some discussions about the future development as a holiday subdivision.
- 2.3. After the 2nd auction in 1987, my wife and I bought the pegged-out section at 21 Hinekapi Terrace, which was built on when finances permitted in 1989. We moved here permanently in 2001. I started a lawn mowing business in 2002 and selling Real Estate in 2004.
- 2.4. Over the years the Trust has had several open days in the Village where they have had their proposal for Whareroa North on display for the residents to view.
- 2.5. I have raised the question regarding the access across the stream with the Trust and received assurances that the bridge and access road will be of a standard that won't be detrimental to the stream. I have no reason to doubt their integrity when dealing with them. They have always been supportive of our activities and our aspirations for the Village. They provided the land for the tennis court.
- 2.6. The one question I do have of Council is why this Plan Change was not worked through in the 2006 Structure plan process, knowing that the Trust wanted to develop it in the future? It would have saved both the Council and the Trust a great deal of money and time.

3. Village

- 3.1. The Village consists of 201 sections. There are currently 23 permanent houses, 47 vacant sections and the rest of the sections have holiday houses on them. A current breakdown of the vacant sections, to the best of my knowledge, is attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.2. There are currently five private sections for sale. Of those five sections, four are completely vacant and one has limited development on it. There are no houses for sale. These sections are all owned independently of the Proprietors. Two are owned by one person and the other three have different owners. I am not the agent for any of these sales.
- 3.3. The number of people that regularly camp/motor home on the sites at Whareroa Village vary. There were three groups this Christmas and new year that I am aware of. There are two groups that camp regularly. I am sure if there were utilities on more sections then they would be used more often.

4. Staging of Development and Use of Sections

- 4.1. My observations regarding Whareroa section sales has been that there has always been a timing issue when sections have come to the market. The 1987 share market crash and the 2008 GFC are examples of events which impacted sales. Prior to these events, both sections and houses at Whareroa sold well. In the last 12 months sales have been very good, with 23 in total, but it is expected that Covid-19 will cause sales to slow.
- 4.2. Timing is an important consideration with holiday subdivisions such as Whareroa from my experience and observations. Whenever we have a dip in the economy, sales of

both houses and sections slow and it takes a couple of years to regain any momentum. There were 23 sales of houses and sections in the last twelve months, with prices ranging from \$115,000 to \$550,000 for sections. \$550,000 was an exception, most were in the \$130,000 to \$200,000 bracket. The \$550,000 section is front row lakeside and there will be a house built on it in the near future. The prices for baches range from \$235,000 to \$805,000.

- 4.3. For a staged development like Whareroa, of say 30 sections at a time, I would expect the sale of sections at the proposed development to go very well. I would estimate prices of around \$160,000 to \$200,000 for sections in the area as such sections will be relatively flat and easy to build on. In my view there needs to be provision for a utility block in the covenants as this will encourage average New Zealanders and allow for affordable entry to the holiday market, which will allow more people to experience the unique lifestyle at Whareroa. A lot of coastal and lakeside subdivisions around the country are not affordable. Further development at Whareroa will allow for a wider demographic to purchase a section at a lakeside subdivision.
- 4.4. At Whareroa there are relatively relaxed building standards. You do not have to build a house with a certain size and certain colour like at a lot of holiday subdivisions such as Whangamata, where you are told how you need to build. Whareroa is unique in that sense.

5. Whareroa North Plan Change – Proposed Plan Change 36

- 5.1. The Village is unique around the lake with the majority of sections having a view. I would estimate that about 90% of the existing properties have panoramic views of the lake or surrounding area. There is also about 1km of beach at Whareroa. Residents from Omori and Kuratau come to Whareroa for the beach access.
- 5.2. There is no shop or dairy at Whareroa and this appeals to the people who own property here. People here want to get away from things and enjoy the quiet that comes with the absence of shops. In my opinion Whareroa will never have any commercial centre. It does not have the population to support a business. The first question most people ask me when they come to Whareroa to look at property is “will there be any shops in future?” because they want the quiet atmosphere to be retained.
- 5.3. Some people like suburbia which is catered for by places like Kuratau and Omori. There is a “feeling” of isolation and retreat at Whareroa which is different to the atmosphere provided at those other lakeside settlements. People here are very like-minded. A lot of the time Whareroa will appeal to a different type of person than a purchaser who is looking to be close to a business centre. This, with its other attributes, makes Whareroa unique. I have been involved with many different communities, but Whareroa truly has a different “feel” about it.
- 5.4. Whareroa also has first class amenities such as reticulated sewage, water and a refuse and recycling station which I understand was originally designed to make provision for Whareroa North. The refuse and recycling station in particular is second to none. It is very well designed and functional. In my time with the Waitomo District Council we looked at transfer stations around the country. Whareroa’s refuse station is up there with the best.
- 5.5. Even with the addition of the Whareroa North stage there will only be a total of approximately 360 properties. Being a staged development means that sections will only be released onto the market as demand requires, which is how it has worked in the

past.

6. The Submissions to PPC36

6.1. I have read through all the submissions on the Plan Change and I want to address some of these submissions, set out below:

My comments regarding specific submissions are below:

1 Robert and Deborah Ewen - Own (as trustees) 9 Turangitukua Tce Whareroa

6.2. **Submission Point:** It was submitted that Robert's parents purchased the first section at the original auction at Whareroa, where they were assured by the Vendors that there would be no further subdivisions or developments North West of the river. It was submitted that to go ahead with a further development now is a potential breach of that implied covenant.

6.3. **Reply:** When Whareroa was first brought to my attention in the 1970s, the piece of land now known as "Whareroa North" was shown on the concept plan as land that would eventually be the last stage of the development and the subdivision. This was also discussed when I bought my section in 1987. I do not know what was said at the first auction or for subsequent stage one sales as I was not present.

7 Dr Ruth and Simon Ewen – Own 35 Turangitukua Tce Whareroa

6.4. **Submission Point:** It was submitted that Simon's parents purchased the first section at the original auction at Whareroa where they were assured by the Vendors that there would be no further subdivisions or developments North West of the river. It is submitted that to go ahead with a further development now is a potential breach of that implied covenant.

6.5. **Reply:** See [6.3].

6.6. **Submission Point:** It was further submitted that one of the Whareroa residents (referring to myself) has a conflict of interest being an employee of Baileys Real Estate who stands to benefit from the commission on sale of sections at Whareroa North.

6.7. **Reply:** While I am a resident Real Estate salesperson there is no guarantee that I, or the company I work for, will be involved in the section sales. I remind the submitter that I am also a long-term resident of Whareroa and have an interest in ensuring that the quality of the project is maintained and the river is protected. The Trust has always, in my view, had the protection of the stream and its surroundings clearly in their plan. The Trust has been mindful all the way through the Whareroa development of what they wanted to achieve.

13 Robert and Jo Colman

6.8. **Submission Point:** It was submitted that it is significant that the existing users of the Whareroa Village have chosen the word "village" to describe the area. It is an area with minimal population and with community spirit. The village is not a developed area such as Taupo or the Coromandel and that developments such as the proposed plan change will impact hugely on the area's existing character and not in a positive manner.

6.9. **Reply:** I would say that up until now, 99% of people who have bought property at

Whareroa have been very like-minded people wanting a more peaceful holiday spot and somewhere safe for children. I do not believe that will change significantly with a total of say 360 properties in all, nor will community spirit be affected. It may make the boat ramp and jetty busier around Christmas and other holidays, but this only happens no more than half a dozen days of the year. There is sometimes a certain amount of pressure from boaties from Tamarunui, Kuratau and Omori but most of the year it is relatively quiet. Being largely a holiday destination 90% of the time, Whareroa is very quiet. There's not enough entertainment, cafes etc. to change that feel, and we are too far, for most, from the shops! The only busy times are around the Christmas period, Easter and other long weekends. Community spirit comes from the people, no matter how many are actively involved. You could say that with Covid-19 the true community spirit of our country is being rekindled and the love for holidays in our own country.

6.10. **Submission Point:** It was further submitted the only people who will benefit from the proposal are those who will sell the land (the Trustees).

6.11. **Reply:** We need to be mindful that we are only here in the first instance because the Trust developed the land. We have benefited from the actions of the Trust and have the privilege to occupy Whareroa.

[Anything additional?]

7. Overall Conclusion

7.1. **In summary: Right from the beginning my recollection has been that Whareroa North as it has become known was a part of the long term, last stage of the development. All of the major infrastructure was either allowed for in the original design and construction of Whareroa or is included in the development of Whareroa North with no financial burden to the ratepayers in the short to medium term. The Council was remiss in not including this change in the 2006 Structure Plan resulting in a great deal of time wasting and expense to the Trust. In my View the Council should be responsible for the total costs incurred bring this change to the plan!!**

7.2. I believe that this Plan Change will allow the Proprietors of Hauhungaroa No 6 Trust to complete the Whareroa Project and provide long term income for the wider Whanau.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Whareroa Village – Sanderson Residence

Address 21 Hinekapi Tce



Appendix 2: Vacant Sections at Whareroa

Location	Check on Aerial Photos (taken between 18 Dec 2018 and 17 April 2020)	Status	Further Details
21 Ngati Parekawa Drive, Whareroa	Limited development	Private sale	
26 Piripi Place, Whareroa	Vacant	owner Living overseas retirement project	
20 Piripi Place, Whareroa	Limited development		
16 Piripi Place, Whareroa	Vacant	sold building in short term	
12 Piripi Place, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale	
8 Piripi Place, Whareroa	Vacant	owner looking at building	
6 Piripi Place, Whareroa	Vacant	owner looking at building	
2 Piripi Place, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale	
7 Poriwira Drive, Whareroa	Vacant	being built on	House under construction
15 Poriwira Drive, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale	
17 Poriwira Drive, Whareroa	Vacant	Sold New owner	Unconditional Sale
25 Poriwira Drive, Whareroa	Limited development		
26 Poriwira Drive, Whareroa	Vacant	being developed by new owner	
20 Poriwira Drive, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale	
16 Poriwira Drive, Whareroa	Vacant	private sale just sold	new owners
14 Poriwira Drive, Whareroa	Vacant	private sale	
10 Poriwira Drive, Whareroa	Limited development		
8 Poriwira Drive, Whareroa	Vacant	owner living next door not for sale	
2 Poriwira Drive, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale	
503 Whareroa Road, Tongariro Ward	Vacant	Sold New owners	new owners
486 Whareroa Road, Tongariro Ward	Vacant	not for sale	
14 Turangitukua Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	owner to build	
24 Turangitukua Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale	
30 Turangitukua Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	Sold New owners to build	new owners
32 Turangitukua Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	Private Sale	
39 Turangitukua Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	Private sale	
37 Turangitukua Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	Just sold	
29 Turangitukua Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	just sold	
15 Turangitukua Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	private sale	
11 Turangitukua Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	Sold	

Appendix 2: Vacant Sections at Whareroa (continued)

Location	Check on Aerial Photos (taken between 18 Dec 2018 and 17 April 2020)	Status	Further Details
5 Turangitukua Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale	
1 Turangitukua Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale	
502 Whareroa Road, Tongariro Ward	Vacant	Adjoining owner space	
504 Whareroa Road, Tongariro Ward	Limited development		
514 Whareroa Road, Tongariro Ward	Vacant	not for sale	
8 Hinekapi Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	being built on	House under construction
14 Hinekapi Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	being built on	House under construction
28 Hinekapi Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale	
42 Hinekapi Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale	
37 Hinekapi Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale	
27 Hinekapi Terrace, Whareroa	Limited development		
23 Hinekapi Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	just sold	new owners
16 Te Amio Place, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale	
18 Te Amio Place, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale	being prepared to be built on
11 Te Amio Place, Whareroa	Vacant	Adjoining ownwer space	
1 Hinekapi Terrace, Whareroa	Vacant	not for sale owner to build soon	
35/2 Hinekapi Tce Whareroa	House	Sold	
			Total vacant lots: 47