

**BEFORE INDEPENDENT HEARING COMMISSIONERS
FOR TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**I MUA NGĀ KAIKŌMIHANA WHAKAWĀ MOTUHAKE
TE KAUNIHERA Ā-ROHE O TE TIHI O MARU**

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)
AND
IN THE MATTER of the hearing of submissions in relation to the
Proposed Timaru District Plan

HEARING TOPIC: (Hearing A): Overarching Matters, Part 1 and
Strategic Directions

**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF JOSHUA NEVILLE
ON BEHALF OF KĀINGA ORA – HOMES AND COMMUNITIES**

CORPORATE

08 MAY 2024

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 My name is Joshua Thomas John Neville, I am Team Leader – Development Planning for the South Island at Kāinga Ora - Homes and Communities (**Kāinga Ora**). I am authorised to present this evidence on behalf of Kāinga Ora in support of its primary submission and further submissions (submitter #229) on the proposed Timaru District Plan (**pTDP**).
- 1.2 With me today is Nardia Yozin, Senior Planner and Brendon Liggett, Manager of Development Planning, both supporting in the Timaru Proposed District Plan Process.
- 1.3 Kāinga Ora have not lodged legal submissions or other expert evidence for this stream.
- 1.4 For the benefit of the panel, I will first provide a brief introduction to Kāinga Ora, and some context for our involvement in Timaru, before addressing the matters related to Hearing Stream A. I am envisioning that this background will suffice as context for the remainder of our Hearing attendances.

Background

- 1.5 Kāinga Ora homes and communities was established in 2019 and we are a crown owned entity. We have a broad responsibility and mandate, through two core roles:
- (a) Being a world class public housing landlord; and
 - (b) Leading and coordinating urban development projects.
- 1.6 The statutory objectives of Kāinga Ora require it to contribute to sustainable, inclusive, and thriving communities, through the promotion of a high-quality urban form that:
- (a) Provide people with good quality, affordable housing choices - that meets diverse needs;
 - (b) Support good access to jobs, amenities and services; and
 - (c) Otherwise sustain or enhance the overall economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of current and future generations.
- 1.7 Kāinga Ora is responsible for about 72,00 public homes, which includes about 4900 homes providing for community group and supported housing. Roughly, 185,000 people live in a Kāinga Ora home.
- 1.8 There has been increased demand, as well as a changing need for public housing and Kāinga Ora has been funded to address this. Many of the older state homes that Kāinga Ora own are in need of redevelopment, and we are building new, modern, warmer, and dryer houses for people on

the properties we own. The homes we are developing are better matched to our tenants and I discuss this in my evidence in paragraphs 4.3-4.6, but generally, they have less bedrooms, are on smaller sites, and have improved design and landscaping. We are also catering to larger families through the construction of family homes in areas where this is needed.

Timaru Context

- 1.9 Taking a more local view, in Timaru, the portfolio currently consists of 417 units, comprising of mainly 2 and 3-bedroom units (42%) and (40%) respectively.
- 1.10 In the last 5 years, the housing register for Timaru has increased by nearly fourfold to 143 households needing housing in 2024. This is generally consistent with national and regional public housing trends. However, over this period (December 2018 – December 2023), Kāinga Ora homes has delivered an additional six homes.
- 1.11 Compounding this challenge, the existing Kāinga Ora portfolio in Timaru does not meet the needs and demands of the growing housing register waitlist. As discussed, the portfolio is mostly 2 - 3 bedroom homes, however, the demand for 1-bedroom homes makes up approximately 58% of the total demand for homes on the Housing Register. Kāinga Ora is working to better configure its housing portfolio to increase the supply of more 1-bedroom homes.
- 1.12 To respond to these challenges, Kāinga Ora is building additional public housing in Timaru. As discussed in our evidence, this is to give effect to the Public Housing Plan 2021-2024.
- 1.13 Notable projects under investigation and/or in development include the proposed developments in Tyne Street and Essex Street, Cain Street, and the development at 29 Grey Road.

Our submission and the Timaru Proposed District Plan

- 1.14 With respect to the District Plan, both within the context described, and in accordance with the principles of the Kāinga Ora Act and giving effect to government policy, Kāinga Ora is seeking a planning framework that enables the delivery of more homes and typologies that meets the demand in locations within high accessibility to jobs, amenities and services.
- 1.16 Kāinga Ora seeks to ensure that the proposed Timaru District Plan provisions align with national planning directions. In particular, the objectives of NPS-UD 2020 and policies 1, 2, 5 and 6, to provide for well-functioning environments that meet the needs of current and future generations. In our submission Kāinga Ora is seeking amendments to the proposed District Plan to ensure that development opportunities are maximised in locations that are close to public transport, employment and public amenities.

Hearing Stream A

- 1.17 With respect to the topics covered by Hearing Stream A, Kāinga Ora has reviewed the Section 42A reports and support the recommendations that have been made by the reporting planners Ms Hollier and Mr Willis on those Kāinga Ora submission points addressed in this hearing. In particular, Kāinga Ora supports Ms Hollier's recommendation to reject the submission point from Corrections seeking a new definition of 'household'.
- 1.18 Kāinga Ora opposed in part the submission from Corrections, which sought a new definition for 'household' to be included in the plan as there was concern on how the proposed definition of 'household' would relate to other activities.
- 1.19 Kāinga Ora provides, as part of its role, residential accommodation where there is some support provided to those residing in the residential unit. This supported housing brings together publicly funded housing with support services that are essential to the wellbeing of people and whānau living in the home. Supported housing can include some of the housing provided within both transitional housing, and community group housing.
- 1.20 Community Group Housing provides residential and non-residential community housing for people with specific and often complex needs. This can include people living with mental illness, people who have physical and/or intellectual disabilities, people who abuse substances or have addictions, people who require refuge, families who need emergency housing, and children/youth at risk. Importantly, residents of these homes are not detained on site, nor are they held under the Intellectual Disability (Compulsory Care and Rehabilitation) Act 2003.
- 1.21 When providing supported housing for a CGH provider, Kāinga Ora, in most cases, seeks for homes to be located in existing residential areas, close to amenities and services to best enable and allow residents to participate in the local community. It is the position of Kāinga Ora that CGH (generally) is no different to any other residential use. Kāinga Ora seek that any CGH falls under residential activities and be a permitted activity in residential zones. The definition for 'Supported Residential Care Activity' as notified in the proposed District Plan would cover most Community Group Housing.
- 1.22 Where our issue arises in respect to the definition of household that is proposed, is that if adopted it may create a barrier for Kāinga Ora community group housing and may change the 'residential activity' status of CGH:

"means a person or group of people who live together as a unit... (b) one of more members of the group (whether or not they are paid) provides day-to-day care, support and supervision to any other(s) of the group."

- 1.23 As read, the people that provide the care or support services must also reside at the house (if they are not a family member). For Kāinga Ora, this would mean that CGH would not be considered a residential unit, as often staff will work shifts or sessions, and they do not always reside in the home.
- 1.24 Additionally, the proposed 'household' definition results in what would otherwise be permitted 'supported residential care activity' (which Kāinga Ora would rely on for CGH activity in Timaru), to become a discretionary activity.
- 1.25 I discuss this through my evidence more fulsomely in section 6, and how the plan provisions work in practice. Overall, the proposed definition of 'household' does not add value to plan users in terms of interpretation, but rather confuses what is considered to be a residential activity, or what is intended to be captured the permitted activity rules for 'supported residential care activity'.
- 1.26 Kāinga Ora, therefore, agrees with Ms Hollier that submission 239.4 be rejected.
- 1.27 With respect to the Strategic Directions and Urban Form and Development Chapters drafted by Mr Willis. He has recommended accepting some but not all the changes requested by Kāinga Ora. Kāinga Ora generally accepts the position now adopted by the Section 42A report and recommends the panel adopt their proposed changes.
- 1.28 I am now happy to take any questions and thank the panel for their time.