

In the matter of the Resource Management Act 1991

and

In the matter of the Timaru Proposed District Plan

and

In the matter of submissions by the House Movers Section of the New Zealand Heavy Haulage Association Inc for Hearing B1 – Rural Zones, and B2 – Urban Zones

**Statement of Evidence of Jonathan Bhana-Thomson (CEO, House Movers
Section of New Zealand Heavy Haulage Association Inc)**

For: Hearing B1 – Rural Zones, and B2 – Urban Zones

Hearing date: 22 – 26 July 2024

NEW ZEALAND HEAVY HAULAGE ASSOCIATION INC

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I, Jonathan Bhana-Thomson, state:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Thank you for the opportunity to address you in relation to Hearing B1 (Rural Zones) and B2 (Urban Zones) matters.
- 1.2 I am the Chief Executive of the New Zealand Heavy Haulage Association Inc (the Association) and have been in this role 21 for years.
- 1.3 I am very familiar with the process of relocating buildings and have made submissions in the past at various district plan hearings. I am authorised to give this evidence on the Association's behalf.
- 1.4 The New Zealand Heavy Haulage Association was established in 1965 as the national trade association for member companies that transport overweight or over dimension loads.
- 1.5 The Association has an advocacy role with central and local government agencies.
- 1.6 There are 35 members of the House Movers Section of the Association. By numbers the Association estimates that its members move about 80% of the buildings relocated in any one year nationally. With a couple of exceptions, most of the Association's House Mover members are family-owned businesses. Most have been involved in the industry for many decades. Members are also involved construction and fabrication of (new) transportable or prefabricated buildings as well as 'second hand' used buildings. This includes shifting of classrooms and similar for government agencies as well as buildings for the private sector.
- 1.7 The Association has been submitting on district plans around the country for 20+ years. Initially many first-generation RMA plans had restrictions on relocated buildings. In most second and third generation plans, the trend over time has been more permissive i.e. to provide for relocated buildings as a permitted activity with standards, or in more recent plans not to differentiate between new and relocated buildings, and to leave matters to the Building Act.

2. Approach to B1 (Rural Zones) and B2 (Urban Zones) hearing

- 2.1 The Association's primary focus is on the treatment of relocated buildings across all zones.
- 2.2 The outcome that the Association is seeking – is to treat relocated dwellings on the same or similar basis as new *in situ* dwellings, subject to performance standards, including the requirement for a pre-inspection report, prior to relocation, which contains the necessary requirements to upgrade the relocated dwelling within a prescribed time period (12 months).
- 2.3 The draft rule framework is specified in the Association's submission, and I attach that as a schedule to this statement.
- 2.4 It is acknowledged that the relocated building topic is listed for later hearing in hearing F, currently scheduled for hearing in April 2025. However, given the outcome that the Association seeks is relevant to B1 (rural zones) and B2 (urban zones) it appears appropriate for the Association to signal its position at this stage of the hearing process, but acknowledges that relocated building matters will be addressed later at hearing F.

3. Staff Reports

- 3.1 I have read the s42A staff reports and note that these do not address the issue of relocated buildings.
- 3.2 However, as stated above, given the changes to relocated building rules that the Association is seeking, there may be consequential amendments to all zones. The Association wishes to signal in advance its concerns regarding relocated buildings and canvas these issues with the Council.

4. Summary of Evidence

- 4.1 The Association:
- (a) **Acknowledges** that relocated buildings are dealt with under the RELO chapter under Other District-wide Matters (which is scheduled for hearing in April 2025), which is the Association's primary focus. However, considers that it is appropriate to signal the Association's position on relocated buildings because relocated building rules will have consequential effects on all zones.

- (b) **Supports** express provision in the Timaru District Plan for relocated buildings as a permitted activity in all zones where building activities are provided for as a permitted activity, with performance standards and criteria (see attached Schedules);
- (c) **Supports** express provision in the Timaru District Plan for demolition of non-heritage buildings as a permitted activity in all zones where building activities are provided for as a permitted activity;
- (d) **Supports** Council retaining a degree of control over relocated buildings through the use of performance/permitted activity standard.
- (e) **Challenges** the position in the RELO chapter of the PDP that relocated buildings need to have controlled activity status in order to manage the amenity effects of a relocated building while being reinstated. There are more administratively efficient ways to address these matters while using the controls that have been demonstrated to work in other locations around the country.
- (f) **Acknowledges** the submission by the Port company and notes that the Association's submission does not seek to override port specific activities – its focus is on the general residential and rural zones.

4.2 This evidence addresses:

- (a) The sequence of relocation of buildings;
- (b) Pre-Inspection/Reinstatement report;
- (c) Controls in other districts.
- (d) Signal the relief sought – refer Schedule 1 and 2.

5. **Sequence of Relocation of Buildings**

5.1 In the Industry we refer to *removal* (from a site), *relocation* (to a site) and *re-siting* (within a site). The process and sequence of relocation is largely the same whether the building is a dwelling, or a non-habitable building (as in the Commercial Zone context).

5.2 The shifting of a typical building (both its removal, and the relocation) involves a series of steps, typically in this order:

- (a) Land purchase for the destination (relocation) site.
- (b) Building purchase. The building will have either been purchased privately or from a relocation company.
- (c) Building consent obtained to relocate to the new location.
- (d) Disconnection of services from the removal site (power, phone, gas, water, drainage).
- (e) Removal of the building to its new site (or storage location) which may involve:
- (f) Possible temporary structural bracing.
- (g) Possible cutting of the building into sections, depending on the size of the building.
- (h) Possible removal or partial roof removal (which requires tarpaulins).
- (i) Loading onto the transporter.
- (j) Securing to the transporter, lighting if night travel applicable.
- (k) Road transport requirements for over dimension loads, including:
 - Uplifting of any necessary approvals from roading authorities, NZTA, Police, telecom, power companies, rail, any other utility companies.
 - Compliance with Vehicle Dimensions and Mass Land Transport Rule 2016). The rule covers the requirements for dimension and mass limits for heavy truck and trailer combinations to be operated on roads.
- (l) Placement of the building on the new site in its correct position in accordance with the building consent.
- (m) Unloading onto house/building jacks.
- (n) Installing foundations.
- (o) Placement of the building onto foundations.

- (p) Re-joining building sections, reinstatement of the roof, replacement of doors, windows, ceilings removed (as necessary).
- (q) Upgrading of ceiling or floor insulation (as necessary).
- (r) Connection of services (water, power, gas if available).
- (s) Installation of base boards, steps, decks and landings.
- (t) Any necessary remedial works, painting and decoration etc. (some can be done prior to relocation).
- (u) Driveway, fencing, footpath, garaging, and landscaping of the site.
- (v) Code of compliance certificate obtained under the Building Act 2004.

5.3 Time issues are important to both the removal, and the relocation. To be financially viable any project has to be done in a reasonable time frame.

5.4 Regardless of the size of the relocation job, a house mover will aim to do the removal and the relocation in the same movement. This is so that we don't have to end up storing the building in another site, or at a storage yard, and can shift it direct from the removal site to its final destination site.

5.5 If the building has to be stored between its removal from one site, and its relocation to another, then there is added cost and risk. There is added risk of damage from the rain or wind, particularly if the roof has been removed. There is added cost because there will be double handling.

5.6 If there is a delay at the relocation site caused by the need for a resource consent, or a hold-up in obtaining neighbours approvals, then this will increase the likelihood that the building may need to be stored, and increase the price.

5.7 In the ideal situation, foundations can be installed in one day, and the house or building lowered onto those foundations the next day. This assumes the building has shifted in one piece and has not had to be cut into pieces due to width restrictions.

5.8 If the building is large, has an irregular shape, or is wider than what the transport route will allow, then it is more likely that the building will need to be cut and shifted in sections, and then joined at the relocation/destination

site. The building relocation company will join the sections of the building together on site.

- 5.9 Generally, the aim will be to get the building to the section around daybreak. The roof may have been lowered and covered with tarpaulins. Ideally neighbours will have been informed that the building is coming. This initial impact can be unexpected for neighbours. It can trigger calls to Councils. However, this is a temporary effect. Typically, within a number of days the building will have been placed on a new foundation, re-joined and the roof reinstated. Because of the risk of weather damage there is a strong incentive to have the roof reattached and the building closed in quickly. At this point the process will be a lot quicker than the average construction in situ.
- 5.10 With the building on site, and weathertight, owners generally do the finishing work themselves, although if the building needs re-roofing or a structural alteration a Licenced Building Practitioner will be involved. Owners often redecorate the inside of the building themselves and also add value and save money by fitting the base boards, steps, decks, and completing any necessary external remedial works including painting if needed. Then comes the driveway, fencing, footpaths, garaging, and landscaping of the site.
- 5.11 Even allowing for a building being moved in sections, there is an obvious potential time advantage compared to in situ construction. My experience is that relocation will generally involve far less overall construction disturbance to the neighbourhood than the typical on-site construction of a new dwelling.
- 5.12 While the initial relocation to a site is typically more machinery intensive than construction of a new dwelling, the benefit is that the project can be substantially quicker. Any remedial or refurbishment work can begin on the home straight away (or even beforehand).
- 5.13 These time benefits also apply to prefabricated or transportable new dwellings, which are becoming more common. With a transportable new dwelling work at the factory can commence ahead of the issue of building consent for the destination site and there are lower on-site labour costs.
- 5.14 The Association and its members consider that there are also community benefits with building relocation, including reuse of the existing housing stock (both within a District and outside of it) and providing for peoples housing needs.

- 5.15 A typical relocated building can weigh anywhere between 15-70 tonnes. A typical 30–40-year-old wooden construction three-bedroom family house will weigh approximately 25 tonnes. Assuming each building relocated is 25 tonne, the Association estimates building relocation is the third biggest recycling industry nationally (by weight) after metals and paper. The diversity of the materials re-cycled is large. If a building is demolished, and landfilled, then only certain products are suitable for being recycled. In contrast, if a building is relocated nearly everything will be reused.

6. Pre-Inspection/ Reinstatement Report

- 6.1 A key aspect of the Association's contention that relocated buildings can be suitably managed with permitted activity status, is through the use of permitted activity standards including a pre-inspection/reinstatement report (a suggested template for which is attached to the Association's submission).
- 6.2 Further to the proposed standards for controlled activity status in the PDP, the report details in advance what reinstatement and upgrade work that needs to be completed by the building owner within with 12 month timeframe. I consider that this is a key addition to gaining compliance with the outcome of a new building being reinstated into the new location.
- 6.3 Some Councils have adopted (or adapted) the Association's pre-inspection report and have published their own version (for example, Hastings District, Queenstown Lakes District).
- 6.4 The extra requirement of the pre-inspection report acts as a balance, and means that the extra cost and administration required to get a resource consent under controlled activity status is not required.

7. Other territorial authorities in New Zealand

- 7.1 Relocation of buildings is now typically a permitted activity in most Council areas around New Zealand. Many have specific performance controls to control reinstatement within specific time frame – while an equal number have no specific controls aside from those on a new built in-situ building.
- 7.2 Because our members shift buildings both within and between districts the Association seeks a general standardisation in approach unless there is a compelling reason to depart from this for local environmental reasons.

- 7.3 There are other Council's that have within the last few years seen the benefits of promoting the use of relocatable buildings as a cost-effective way to provide housing and utility buildings by adopting permitted activity status for those applications that meet the required standards. Areas that have moved from a more restrictive regime to allowing permitted activity status include New Plymouth and Central Hawkes Bay.
- 7.4 I encourage the Hearings Panel to consider the benefits of the Timaru District Plan adopting similar planning controls for your area.

Dated: 5 July 2024

Jonathan Bhana-Thomson

Chief Executive, New Zealand Heavy Haulage Association

SCHEDULE 1: suggested drafting by House Movers following *New Zealand Heavy Haulage Association Inc v The Central Otago District Council* (Environment Court, C45/2004)

insert permitted activity standards (or to same or similar effect):

- a. *Any relocated building intended for use as a dwelling must have previously been designed, built and used as a dwelling.*
- b. *A building pre-inspection report shall accompany the application for a building consent for the destination site. That report is to identify all reinstatement works that are to be completed to the exterior of the building.*
- c. *The building shall be located on permanent foundations approved by building consent, no later than 2 months of the building being moved to the site.*
- d. *All other reinstatement work required by the building inspection report and the building consent to reinstate the exterior of any relocated dwelling shall be completed within 12 months of the building being delivered to the site. Without limiting (c) (above) reinstatement work is to include connections to all infrastructure services and closing in and ventilation of the foundations.*
- e. *The proposed owner of the relocated building must certify to the Council that the reinstatement work will be completed within the 12-month period.*

SCHEDULE 2:

Relocated building pre-inspection report (which may either be a non-statutory form, or prescribed in the plan, or to similar effect).

Schedule 2 - proposed form of pre-inspection report



Building Pre-Inspection Report for Relocation

*New Location Address
Region*

For: *Council Name*

Date of report

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1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Introduction

This Building Pre-Inspection report accurately records the external condition of the *dwelling house/garage/ancillary building* to be relocated and to establish all reinstatement works required to the exterior of the building after relocation to a workmanlike standard and to achieve a tidy appearance to meet requirements of the District Plan .

Limited inspection of the interior has been undertaken for the purpose of the Report.

The Report confirms whether the building is considered Safe and Sanitary.

The Report also identifies site-specific requirements including but not limited to the requirement for; the construction of the new foundations, new retaining walls, service connections, water and sewerage treatment (if applicable).

The Report must be read in conjunction with the condition table and photographs provided, which assist in providing a representation of the condition of the premises prior to the commencement of the relocation.

The Report has been prepared by *Name of Company Name* as per our instruction/agreement dated _____ on behalf of our clients *Name*

1.2 Applicants Contact Details

Applicant:	<i>Applicant (clients) name</i>
Contact address:	<i>Contact address</i>
Telephone:	
Email:	
Any Additional information:	

Agent:	<i>Authorised agent</i>
Contact address:	<i>Contact address</i>
Telephone:	
Email:	
Any Additional information:	

1.3 Building details

Type of building	<i>Dwelling house, garage, ancillary building</i>
Approximate age of building:	<i>Provide date range i.e. 1940-1950</i>
Brief Description:	<i>Number of storeys, approximate size, roof, walls, floor construction, additional features</i>
Proposed site address:	<i>Address of the intended site of the relocated building</i>
Site address where the building was inspected:	<i>Address...</i>
Proposed Use of Building	<i>Dwelling house, residential garage, ancillary</i>
Previous Use of the Building	<i>Relocated building must have been previously designed, built and used as a dwelling (Except previously used garage and ancillary buildings)</i>
Inspection Dates & Weather:	<i>Date and weather at the time of inspection</i>
Inspection by:	<i>Name of inspector</i>
Other persons present:	<i>Name of other parties present</i>
Building Consent Status	<i>Has Building Consent documentation been prepared for the relocation works.</i>

1.4 Reporting Conditions

This Report has been prepared under the following conditions of engagement:

- The survey is based on a visual inspection only; therefore it is not possible to guarantee that all concealed areas containing defects will be accessible (floor voids, roof voids, etc). No intrusive investigation will therefore be undertaken.
- Signs of water ingress will be searched for during the completion of the survey, however the Report cannot warrant that the building is free from water penetration, from defective roofing, cladding, rainwater goods, rising damp or the like unless evident at the time of our visual survey.
- Only areas where safe access is possible have been inspected.
- The Report is provided for the use of the client identified in section 1.1 and the council and may not be used by others without written permission. The writer of this report accepts no liability to third parties who may act on the report.
- This Report must be read in conjunction with photograph and condition tables provided.
- This Report is for the purposes of the District Plan. The Report also requires a safe and sanitary declaration for the purposes of the Building Act 2004.

1.5 Exclusions

This report **does not** include comment about the following:

- a) The structure of the building unless otherwise commented upon;
- b) The surrounding neighbourhood;
- c) The value of the property;
- d) Illegal Works; and
- e) Internal condition of the building unless otherwise commented upon.

Additionally, no search has been made of:

- f) Local Authority rates;
- g) Government Valuation; or
- h) LIM or PIM reports.

1.6 Definitions

The following defines the condition comments of the elements surveyed:

- Good: Items that have suffered minimal weathering, wear or decay and are free from any visual defects.
- Reasonable: Items that have worn through 'normal' use and weathering, and is in commensurate condition to the building age and use.
- Poor: Items that are worn, decayed or weathered either due to the age, abnormal use or lack of maintenance.

1.7 Areas Accessed



Example:

The external envelope of the subject building viewed from ground floor level and where safely accessed by ladder from ground level.



Internally, our inspection was limited to those parts of the buildings that could be safely accessed and a head and shoulders inspection of the roof space.

Access was gained into the subfloor space....

2.0 MANDATORY CONDITION TABLE

RMA 1991 – Mandatory External Reinstatement					
Item	Construction Element	Description	Condition	Required Upgrades & Comments	Photograph
1	Roof	<i>Corrugated iron/fibre cement sheet, concrete tile, metal tile, butynol membrane, other</i>	<i>Good/Reasonable/ Poor</i>	<i>None/ Repaint/ Re-roof etc</i>	 <p><i>Insert multiple photographs if/as required under any of the below sub-headings.</i></p>
2	Spouting and Downpipes	<i>PVC, metal, butynol membrane, other</i>	<i>Good/Reasonable/ Poor</i>	<i>None/ Repaint/ Replace etc</i> <i>Example: Repair all timber fascias, barges as well as rainwater goods to ensure surface moisture discharges into new Council approved outlet at new site location.</i>	

2.0 MANDATORY CONDITION TABLE

RMA 1991 – Mandatory External Reinstatement					
Item	Construction Element	Description	Condition	Required Upgrades & Comments	Photograph
3	Wall Cladding	<i>Fibre cement weatherboard/sheet, timber weatherboard, Board and batten, metal sidings, other</i>	<i>Good/Reasonable/Poor</i>	<i>None/ Repaint/ Replace etc</i>	
4	Foundation cladding	<i>NA</i>	<i>NA</i>	<i>Foundation cladding is to be installed as specified in the Building Consent</i>	
5	Window and Door Joinery	<i>Powder coated aluminium, timber, steel, single glazed, double glazed</i>	<i>Good/Reasonable/Poor</i>	<i>None/ Install new joinery/Repair and redecorate existing joinery</i> <i>Example: Repair and repaint window and door joinery. Replace all broken glass immediately after relocation.</i>	

3.0 BUILDING ACT REQUIREMENTS

This Report is for purposes required by the District Plan. It is not a report to address matters required by the Building Act.

A building consent is required for the relocation of this building and all subsequent works as a consequence. The building work must be designed and undertaken by Licensed Building Practitioners with the appropriate category of licence (certain homeowner exemptions may apply). This Pre-inspection Report must be submitted to council with an application for building consent.

The building consent documents must be provided to council along with the appropriate fees and proof of ownership (Certificate of Title less than 3 months old or sale and purchase agreement for the proposed site).

The site specifics must be appropriately designed to include foundations, considering, layout, sizing, position, bracing, ventilation, access etc.

4.1 SAFE AND SANITARY

Comment is required.

Licensed Building Practitioner MUST give a declaration regarding whether the building is/isn't Safe and Sanitary.

Note:

If the building is not considered safe and sanitary then give reasons. (example: evidence of leaky building)

4.2 HEALTH & SAFETY

Set out below is a description of the health and safety concerns identified.

Example:

Building materials identified are suspected to contain asbestos. This includes, but not limited to fibre cement claddings, vinyl flooring and soffit linings. Asbestos is relatively safe when encapsulated, but is dangerous to health when fibres become air borne. This can occur when the building materials are damaged or become degraded.

No specialist laboratory testing has been carried out to confirm the presence or absence of asbestos or any other material hazardous to health. All comments are based upon a visual inspection only.

It is recommended that a specialist asbestos surveyor be instructed to identify the risks present.

5.0 ESTIMATE OF COSTS OF EXTERNAL REINSTATEMENT WORKS

The estimate of costs of external reinstatement works is the sum of [*to insert*]

Note:

Allow a contingency sum for any damage in transit

“Reinstatement Works” means the extent of the work required to the exterior of the Relocated Building as specified in the Building Pre-Inspection Report for the purposes of the District Plan. The exterior reinstatement works will not include matters regulated by the building legislation or connection to foundations; but may include matters required by the District Plan for work to be undertaken and completed to the exterior of the building to a workmanlike standard and to achieve a tidy appearance, including, without limitation:

- (a) Repair of broken windows and window frames;*
- (b) Repair of rotten weatherboards or other damaged wall cladding;*
- (c) Necessary replacement or repair of roof materials;*
- (d) Cleaning and/or painting of the exterior where necessary e.g. roof, walls, window frames etc;*
- (e) Repair of transit damage; and/or*
- (f) Replacement and painting of baseboards or other foundation cladding.*

6.0 LICENSED BUILDING PRACTITIONER SIGNATURE

I, certify that the information provided is true and correct and that the building described above appears to have applied with the relevant Building Regulations at the time of its construction, and (if a dwelling) the building has been previously designed, built and used as a dwelling (Except previously used garage and ancillary buildings).

Author

Peer Reviewer

Signed:

If undertaken/available

Qualifications *LBP Category, BOINZ, RICS, NZIBS, ANZIA etc*

For and On Behalf of *Company Name*

Address

Inspectors business address

Telephone

Telephone business number

Email

Email business address

7.0 OWNER DECLARATION

As a requirement of the [insert council name] District Plan/Resource Consent, I/we _____ CERTIFY that I/we will ensure that within 12 months from the building being delivered to site the buildings external reinstatement, insulation, heating, infrastructure, closing in, ventilation of foundations, and connections to services (mains or private) will be completed.

I acknowledge that failure to complete any mandatory work identified in 2.0 'Mandatory Condition Table' relating to the reinstatement of the building may lead to council taking enforcement action under the Building Act 2004, or Resource Management Act 1991, including by way of a notice to fix, infringement notice, abatement notice, enforcement order, or prosecution.

Signed:..... (PRINT).....

Owner

Signed:..... (PRINT).....

Owner

Signed:..... (PRINT).....

Owner



Elevation description i.e. Front Elevation

Elevation description i.e. Rear Elevation

Elevation description

Elevation description

Elevation description

Elevation description

<i>Elevation description</i>	<i>Elevation description</i>	<i>Elevation description</i>
<i>Elevation description</i>	<i>Elevation description</i>	<i>Elevation description</i>

Additional Comments and Notes