

Before the SmartGrowth Hearings Panel

IN THE MATTER

of the Draft SmartGrowth Strategy 2023

AND

IN THE MATTER

A submission by JWL Investment Trust

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF AARON COLLIER
FOR JWL INVESTMENT TRUST (SUBMITTER 88)
4 December 2023**

1. Qualifications and Experience

- 1.1 My full name is Aaron Mark Collier.
- 1.2 I am a Consultant Planner and a Director of Collier Consultants Limited. Prior to establishing Collier Consultants in 2019 I was a Principal and Technical Director of Aurecon.
- 1.3 My qualifications are Masters' degree with Honours and a Post Graduate Diploma in Resources and Environmental Planning from the University of Waikato. I am a full member of the New Zealand Planning Institute (NZPI).
- 1.4 I was asked by the JWL Investment Trust (JWL) in November 2023 to assist with preparing their submission on the Draft Strategy.
- 1.5 I have 28 years' experience working as a Local Authority and Consultant Planner. My predominant experience has been in the area of plan policy development and land use planning. I was involved in the original Smartgrowth Strategy and subsequent updates to the strategy. I have provided planning evidence and advice in relation to a number of second-generation District Plans, including those for the Taupo, Tauranga, Rotorua, Thames-Coromandel, Western Bay of Plenty and Waikato Districts as well as the Auckland Unitary Plan. I was heavily involved in Council hearings and subsequent appeal processes for a number of these Plans.
- 1.6 More recently I have been involved in a number of Intensification Planning Instrument Plan Changes (IPIs) introducing changes under the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2021 to set new medium density residential standards (MDRS) and make other amendments that are set to change the future of housing development. My work includes submissions, expert conferencing and hearings on changes to the Hamilton City, Waikato District, and Western Bay of Plenty District Plans. I have also been involved in changes to the Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement (RPS) as part of Change No.6 to the RPS which introduces amendments to the RPS as required under the NPS-UD.
- 1.7 I am familiar with JWLs land at the Gate Pa Town Centre, having previously prepared two plan changes and numerous resource consents for the site over the last 15+ years.
- 1.8 I regularly present evidence as an expert planning witness at other Council hearings the Environment Court, High Court and Boards of Enquiry.
- 1.9 I confirm I have read the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses contained in the Environment Court of New Zealand Practice Note 2023. In particular, unless I state otherwise, this evidence is within my sphere of expertise, and I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I express.

2. Scope of Evidence

- 2.1 JWL's submission relates to the status of the Gate Pa Town Centre identified in the Draft SmartGrowth Strategy. The Centre is missing from the list of town Centres identified in the Strategy, and is at odds with the Te Papa Spatial Plan.

3. Gate Pa Town Centre and the Te Papa Spatial Plan

- 3.1 The Gate Pa Centre is a successful retail Centre located in the central part of Tauranga on the eastern side of the Cameron Road corridor between Gate Pa and Tauranga Hospital.
- 3.2 The Gate Pa Town Centre is described in detail in the Council's spatial plan¹ for Te Papa, and is identified as a Town Centre in the Spatial Plan. A key action of the Spatial Plan is to allow for provision for higher density (up to 6 story's) within a walkable distance of Gate Pa Town Centre². The spatial plan notes that for Pukehinahina/Gate Pa, this will provide a greater choice of housing and employment opportunities for people of all ages and abilities and an increase in provision of market housing, social housing and affordable housing and living options³.
- 3.3 JWL submitted on Plan Change 33 to the Tauranga City Plan supporting the 27m building height in and around the Gate Pa Town Centre, which is identified both in the Te Papa Spatial Plan and in Plan Change 33 for significant residential intensification. JWL have also sought through Plan Change 33 that the Gate Pa Town Centre (as recognised in the Spatial Plan) is also incorporated into the City Plan. The Centre is currently recognised as a Large Format Centre under the City Plan's Hierarchy of centres removed under Plan Change 33). This Large Format Centre status no longer exists under the National Planning Standards.
- 3.4 Under the Spatial plan, a new transport hub is proposed within the Gate Pa Centre/hospital and an action for TCC is to develop a gateway to the town Centre and a rapid transit stop along Cameron Road⁴.
- 3.5 Unlike other areas, Gate Pa is fortunate to have this Spatial Plan. However, it is important that Gate Pa is reflected as an appropriate Town Centre through the SmartGrowth Strategy. The SmartGrowth Strategy is therefore at odds with the recent Spatial Plan which sets the blueprint and foundation for Gate Pa for the next 50 years.
- 3.6 Based on the Spatial Plan, the Gate Pa Town Centre offers significant opportunity for further commercial and residential development and in particular housing

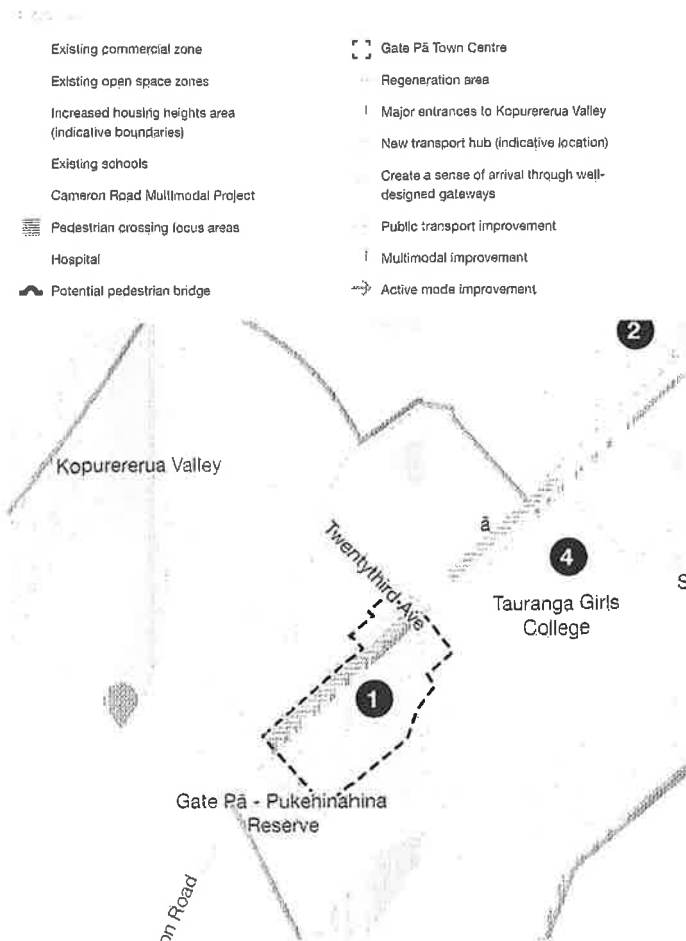
¹ The Te Papa Spatial plan was adopted by TCC in September 2020, and JWL were active participants in the Spatial Plan process.

² See page 44 of the Te Papa Spatial Plan.

³ See pages 45-47 of the Te Papa Spatial Plan.

⁴ See page 44 of the Te Papa Spatial Plan.

regeneration. This is anticipated to occur in conjunction with the public transport upgrades which are a key component of the spatial plan. The spatial extent of the Town Centre is almost entirely dominated by JWLs land and is shown in Figure 1 below:



1 Gate Pā town centre

- Improve design and amenity to create an attractive and safe environment that encourages people to stay longer. Consider as part of the Tauranga City Plan review of commercial centres.
- Develop rapid transit bus stops along Cameron Road.
- Develop a green corridor connection from the Gate Pā/Pukehinahina town centre to Merivale.
- Improve visual and physical connection of Gate Pā Reserve and include historic and cultural references.
- Provide opportunity for mixed-use residential/commercial developments in commercial areas in the future that support local community needs.

Figure 1: Gate Pa Centre (Te Papa Spatial Plan)

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 The Gate Pa Town Centre has recently been through a spatial plan exercise which is not acknowledged through TCCs approach to the Centre under Plan Change 33. The future role of the Centre needs to be considered in light of both the spatial plan

and the Centre's future economic role and should be included in the SmartGrowth Strategy as a Town Centre so as not to conflict with the Te Papa Spatial Plan.

I would be happy to answer any questions the Commissioners may have.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Collier', written in a cursive style.

Aaron Collier
Planner
4 December 2023