

**Speaking Notes for Elizabeth Williams, Te Papa Atawhai Department of Conservation.**

**Proposed Timaru District Plan, Hearing Stream F: Other District Wide Matters, 1 May 2025**

Kia Ora, my name is Elizabeth (Liz) Williams, and I am a RM Planner at *Te Papa Atawhai*, the Department of Conservation. Thank you for hearing me today.

The following points provide a summary of my evidence and address additional points that have arisen since my evidence was filed.

- The D-G lodged a number of submission points on the topics covered in Hearing Stream F and the district wide matters including Activities on the Surface of Water, Light and the Coastal Environment.

*Activities on the Surface of Water*

- I am generally supportive of the approach taken in the ASW provisions, and the changes recommended in the s42A Report including adding temporal restrictions for the recreational use of motorised craft which limits this activity to the period outside of the bird breeding season. This is supported by Dr Lagrue's evidence, noting that motorised craft, and the access to the rivers they provide, has the potential to cause significant disturbance to braided river specialist birds during bird breeding season.
- In my evidence, I recommend further amendments to ASW-R4(Ōrāri River), R5 (Ōpihi River) and R6 (Pureora/Pareora River) to better align with the bird breeding season as described in Dr Lagrue's evidence, so that recreational motorised craft use is limited to the period from February to July (inclusive) and not permitted during bird breeding season i.e from August to January (inclusive). I note the statement of evidence submitted from the Jet Boat NZ Association and, that based on feedback provided by Jim Jolly, JBNZ now support a temporal restriction for the rivers covered by these rules R4, R5 and R6. The timeframe proposed by JBNZ still differs to that recommended in my evidence, which is based on Dr Lagrue's evidence, and I defer to Dr Lagrue's comments on this today.
- Rule ASW-R3 applies to the Rangitata River. The rule contains two parts: Rule ASW-R3(1) applies to the Upper Rangitata and Rule ASW-R3(2) applies to the lower Rangitata River. As noted in my evidence there is an inconsistency in the plan rules for the Rangitata River (ASW-R3) compared to the rules for the other identified rivers

(ASW-R4,R5 & R6), in that there is **no temporal restriction for the bird breeding season**. Mr Lagrue's evidence highlights the importance of the Rangitata River as habitat for a number of threatened and at-risk indigenous bird species (para 23, page 7).

- In my evidence, I have undertaken a planning assessment of the higher order planning documents, and other relevant provisions of the proposed Plan. In my opinion, amendments to Rule ASW-R3 to add a temporal restriction for bird breeding season for the length of the Rangitata River would better align with the objective and policies for the ASW chapter, and also with the planning framework in the higher order documents outlined in my evidence. Currently, and in light of the evidence of Dr Lagrue, I consider there is a gap in the Plan for protecting the habitat of the identified bird species under the current proposed rule ASW-R3.
- I have, however, acknowledged in my evidence that there are consistency issues with Ashburton District Plan provisions that have the potential to create enforcement issues if amendments to ASW-R3 are made, given that the central line of the river is the boundary between the two districts.
- If the Panel agrees that there is scope, I recommend that a temporal restriction relating to the bird breeding season is included in ASW-R3. However, I recognise that the consistency issues identified with the Ashburton District Plan would need to be considered . If the Panel, consider that there is not scope to make the suggested amendments and/or does not think the amendments should be made on the merits due to consistency/enforcement issues, then this remains an outstanding issue in the Plan that could be subject to a future review. As set out in my evidence, ideally any future review should be undertaken in conjunction with the Ashburton District Council and relevant stakeholders.

#### *Light Chapter and Bat Protection Habitat Area provisions*

- For the proposed Light provisions, I support the s42A Officer's recommendation to include light controls that apply to the Bat Protection Area (BPA). Mr Waugh confirms in his evidence that artificial light can adversely affect long tailed bats including behavioural changes and habitat.
- Based on the evidence of Mr Waugh, I propose further amendments to the proposed provisions including to require that lighting is not only shielded but directed

downwards and to include a specific lux level limit that applies to sites during dawn and dusk within the BPA (during dawn and dusk) that are located within the General Rural Zone, Open Space and Recreation Zones to minimise adverse effects of artificial light on long-tailed bats. As outlined in my evidence, I acknowledge that if the Panel considers it appropriate, further drafting of the standard would be needed in regard to this proposed amendment.

#### *Coastal Environment Chapter*

- For the Coastal Environment (CE), the D-Gs submission contained limited points related to provisions covered by this topic. In relation to the D-Gs further submission points, I agree with the approach recommended in the s42A Officer's report. In particular, I support the amendment to the introduction of the CE chapter to clarify that the coastal environment is also managed by other chapters within the PDP.

I am happy to take any questions.