

**BEFORE THE PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL**

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*In The Matter Of*

Resource Management Act  
1991 and a Plan Change under  
Schedule 1

*And In The Matter Of*

Plan Change 23 to the  
Palmerston North District Plan

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**STATEMENT OF WARREN COLLETT**

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1. My full name is **Warren Leslie Collett**. I am the general manager of the Manawatu Golf Club Incorporated. I was appointed in March 2017. Prior to that I was the manager of the North Shore Golf Club in Auckland for nine years.
  
2. I have 20 years golf management experience. I am currently completing a business management diploma to become a world certified club manager. As part of my study I consider health and safety, environment, agronomy, and financial management of clubs critical to the business. As a result of my studies and my previous history I have an extensive network within the golf industry.
  
3. I am enjoying my work with the Manawatu Golf Course and I have to say that it is a very busy and active club. I want to set out some of the important statistics that reveal what an important social, culture and economic institution the Manawatu Golf Club is in Palmerston North. The key data is:
  - (a) Approximately 32,000 rounds of golf are played each year at the Manawatu Golf Course.
  - (b) 6,000 rounds are from affiliated members from clubs throughout New Zealand. The Manawatu Golf Course is therefore a significant driver for tourism within Palmerston North.
  - (c) 25,000 rounds are solely member rounds showing the strong commitment to the Club by all members. This illustrates well the importance of this as a recreational institution in Palmerston North.
  - (d) 1,000 golfers play corporate tournaments.

- (e) The breakdown between Summer (October/March) and Winter, (April/ September) is 13,000 and 12,000 respectively. This shows the Club is active throughout the year.
  - (f) The Club has an annual turnover of \$2.6m with the food and beverage turnover being \$1.3m.
  - (g) Approximately 40,000 visitors come to the Club to utilise the facilities for functions outside the usual golfing activity.
  - (h) The Club has 982 members across all categories.
  - (i) The Manawatu Golf Club employs 21 full time staff and 14 part time staff.
  - (j) The Club hosted the NZPGA Championship in March 2017 and will again host the event in February 2018 bringing additional visitors and revenue to the region.
4. I am not particularly familiar with resource management and the intricacies of plan changes. As a result of my interactions with Council, staff and with the developer's representative, Vanessa Thompson I have significant concerns about the difference in expectations between the golf club and the developer and how these are managed or not managed by the Plan Change. As a result of these concerns the Manawatu Golf Club engaged professional advice.
5. The Manawatu Golf Course shares a long boundary with the subject site. As a significant institution within the community I find it surprising that there was no consultation in the preparation of the Plan Change. Since filing the Club's submission there have been some further interactions with the Palmerston North City Council staff that I will describe briefly in this evidence. Unfortunately, it seems that the

planning framework had been decided by that stage. That makes it difficult to have meaningful discussion where the Club's preferences are also addressed in an independent way by the community representative which is the Council. A key goal of the Golf Club is to maintain its park-like surroundings and boundaries and to maintain safety without having to change the architecture of the golf course in a way that may compromise its aesthetic and competition values. The Club's experts address safety, operational capability and park like aesthetics.

6. In relation to operational capability I would like to point out that mowing and rolling of the fairways and greens is a daily activity of the golf course. Green-keeping staff require full access to the entire course from 7.00 am. The Club's machinery includes diesel and petrol operated mowers and tractors. The keeping of the golf course in an optimal condition means that these activities cannot be constrained. The Club wants to be able to be satisfied that any future residents fully understand the nature of the operations of the golf course. Simply addressing the concern by attenuating noise internally in residences is not sufficient. My experience shows that people's sensitivity varies and their willingness to complain also varies. If the relevant legal mechanisms are in place to ensure that these expectations are clarified at the outset then the prospect of future problems is avoided.
7. In relation to safety the Club has commissioned its expert, Tommy Cushnahan. He outlines the safety concerns. As a manager I agree with him that these safety concerns are real and they have to be factored into the overall design of the development.
8. In relation to aesthetics the Club members appreciate the golf course is a tranquil place where there is a sense of enclosure and a park - like feel. The members of the Club do not want to see a situation where

they are overlooked by rows of individual houses or multi-unit housing that detracts from this overall park-like experience.

9. The developer's representative, Vanessa Thompson has on a number of occasions pushed for removal of existing trees on the common boundary.
10. In a recent email from Ms Thompson dated 6 November 2017 the owner of the Hokowhitu Campus proposed the following:
  1. *All trees that are deemed hazardous to be identified with hazard tape and subsequently removed. For clarification we have produced attached aerial which depicts the identified trees and by whom these were identified by; and*
  2. *Any trees that straddle both properties to be considered on their individual merits and either removed or trimmed.*
  3. *All foliage on this side of the boundary which offers no aesthetic or practical purpose to be removed.*
11. An email from Mr Murphy , City Planner dated 8 November 2017 stated that the Council will not in its evidence be recommending protecting boundary trees and said:

*We received legal opinion regarding relationship between the Property Law Act and the RMA/District Plan which will be attached to the Planning Evidence.*
12. It seems therefore that the issue of boundary planting and management of the interface has been placed in the "too hard" basket and the parties are left without direction of the District Plan to manage that interface without any landscape controls. This is unsatisfactory to the Manawatu Golf Club.

Warren Collett