

# Taupō Climate Action Group: Oral Submission

## PC38- Strategic Direction

### Introduction

I am here today as a representative of the Taupo Climate Action Group.

We are a local group who formed just under a year ago in September 2022. We have a current membership of approximately 40.

Our purpose is: *“To bring the people of the Taupō District together to advocate for urgent, strategic action on climate change within our district.”*

The Taupō Climate Action Group would like to thank the Council for the opportunity to comment on the draft District Plan changes.

### Submission Points

Our submission in regards to Plan Change 38, though brief, had several key points I would like to cover. These relate to four of the proposed strategic directions, and I will address these in numerical order:

- Strategic Direction 2 - Freshwater Quality / Te Mana O Te Wai
- Strategic Direction 3 - Urban Form and Development
- Strategic Direction 4 - Climate change
- Strategic Direction 6 - Natural environment values

We have reviewed the Section 42A report prepared by Mr. Rowan Sapsford, and will address relevant points from this report within this submission. For ease of reference we have numbered our oral submission points.

### Re: Strategic Direction 2- Freshwater Quality / Te Mana O Te Wa

1. Although not addressed in our initial submission, the Taupō Climate Action group would like to voice our support for the inclusion of the concept of Te Mana o te Wai within Strategic Direction 2. A healthy and functioning freshwater environment is integral to the human, environmental and economic health of our District.
2. In regard to the recommended amendments outlined in the S42A report, we support the inclusion of an introduction to the concept of Te Mana o te Wai within the preamble of Strategic Direction 2, and the proposed amendments to the policies.

### Re: Strategic Direction 3- Urban Form and Development

3. TCAG supports Strategic Direction 3 in principle and are particularly supportive of policies 12 and 13.

*2.3.3 Policy 12. Do not support subdivision development which will inappropriately affect heritage sites or areas of important natural and landscape values.*

*2.3.3 Policy 13. Ensure that new urban subdivision and land development is designed in a manner that enables effective and logical multi modal transportation links to the surrounding, including planned, urban areas.*

4. We also support the recommended amendments outlined in the S42A report, regarding the addition to Strategic Direction 3 of 2.3.2.

2. The district develops in a cohesive, compact and structured way that:

- “d. Supports emissions reduction through well-planned urban form, design and location; and”*

5. In our initial submission we sought objectives and policy to be included relating to preserving and enhancing biodiversity in the urban zones. In the S42A Report Mr. Sapsford concluded that this was covered in 2.3.2.7 and 2.6 of PC38.

We would like to highlight that including objectives and policies relating to preserving and enhancing biodiversity in urban areas would not only help mitigate and adapt to climate change for example through carbon sequestration, and attenuation of stormwater, but would also give effect to The **National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity Policy 14: Increased indigenous vegetation cover is promoted in both urban and nonurban environments**. It should be noted that the NPSIB sets a target of 10% indigenous vegetation cover for urban areas:

NPSIB Section 3.22 (3) Regional councils must: (a) set a target of at least 10% indigenous vegetation cover for any urban or nonurban environment that has less than 10% cover of indigenous vegetation; and

Therefore, we continue to seek that specific objectives and policies relating to preserving and enhancing biodiversity in urban areas are included in the strategic direction.

#### Re: Strategic Direction 4 – Climate Change

6. The Taupō Climate Action Group strongly supports the inclusion of Climate change as Strategic Direction 4 for the Taupō District Plan.
7. However, we believe that the objectives are not strong enough to drive low emissions development in our district. We feel that the direction is too focused on climate adaptation, and further emphasis on mitigation is required. Therefore, we seek an addition in first paragraph of preamble. “It is important that the District and its communities mitigate for and are able to adapt to the effects of climate change to be resilient and safe.”
8. We support the proposed amendment to Policy 3, that development must consider the infrastructure required to service development; as this takes into account potential emissions increases associated with longer commutes, and emissions from roading construction.

“3. Urban and built development must be designed in a manner which considers the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with that development, the ~~and~~ resulting land use and the infrastructure required to service that development”

9. We had multiple questions within our original submission around how this Strategic Direction will be implemented. On review of the S42A report, we accept the feedback of Mr. Sapsford that the strategic direction is not the place for outlining implementation methods, and that objectives, policies, rules and methods may need to be added to other chapters of the District Plan in order for this strategic direction to be effective and to provide clarity on what is actually required. We await further reviews of the District Plan chapters to provide this clarity.

#### Re: Strategic Direction 6 - Natural Environment Values

10. Geothermal Ecosystems: In our initial submission we sought the inclusion of specific recognition of our Districts' rare and unique geothermal ecosystems in the preamble to Strategic Direction 6. The Taupō District is one of the few Districts in the country where these critically endangered ecosystems are found. It should be noted that Geothermal Ecosystems have specific rules within the NPSIB, so recognising geothermal ecosystems within the strategic direction would give effect to the NPSIB.

We accept Mr. Sapsford's assessment in the S42A report that specific reference to Geothermal ecosystems would not materially change the scope or intent of Strategic Direction 6. However, if not specifically referenced in the strategic direction, we request that Geothermal Ecosystems are specifically referenced in the Natural Values section of the District Plan when this section is reviewed.

11. National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity: At the time of the S42A report, the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity had not been gazetted. Considering that the NPSIB now has been gazetted, Strategic Direction 6 should be further reviewed to give effect to the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity.

Strategic Direction 6 should state that indigenous biodiversity will be maintained across the District so there is at least no overall loss in indigenous biodiversity.

The wording of the section 2.6.3 Policies should give effect to the National Policy Statement for indigenous Biodiversity. The current suggested wording refers to “no more than minor adverse effects”. This is not compatible with no overall loss of indigenous biodiversity.

Therefore, these policies should be modified to refer to adverse effects being “avoided and managed” so that the overall state of indigenous biodiversity within the district is maintained or enhanced.

This concludes our submission.

Thank you for your time.