



Taupō District Council  
30 Tongariro Street,  
Taupō  
3330

11 August 2023

**Attention: Commissioners for Plan Changes 38 and 42 to the Taupō District Plan**

Dear Commissioners,

The Ministry of Education – Te Tāhuhu o Te Mātauranga ('the Ministry') lodged a submission with the Taupō District Council ('the Council') on Plan Change 38 and 42 on 3 March 2023, and provided a further submission on 5 April 2023 (submitter reference OS85). The Ministry has reviewed the s42A Officer Reports and has decided not to attend the hearing and requests that this letter be tabled for the hearing commissioner's consideration.

The Ministry's response in relation to its submission points and the recommendations in the s42A Officer's Report is set out below. The Ministry considers that, subject to the adoption of the s42A Reporting Officer's recommendations discussed in this letter, the Ministry's submission points can be considered adequately resolved.

***Plan Change 38 – Strategic Direction Chapter.***

The Ministry supported the Strategic Direction Chapter's opening statement, Objective 3, and Policy 5 as they recognised the need for development to be supported by 'additional infrastructure' (which includes schools) and how development must *demonstrate how social benefits to the community will be supported*. The Ministry is comfortable that these policy provisions enable the operation and establishment of educational facilities. The Ministry requested the retention of these provisions.

The Ministry lodged a further submission opposing Lines Company Limited's submission (submission point reference OS106.7) which requested that the text 'additional infrastructure' be removed from Policy 2.3.3. The Ministry's further submission sought to retain this wording as it is consistent with the National Policy Statement for Urban Development. The s42A Reporting Officer has recommended the Lines Company Limited's submission point be rejected and recommends the policy is retained as proposed. The Ministry supports this recommendation.

***Plan Change 42 – Rural Chapter***

The Ministry's submission sought amendments to the Rural Chapter to request that educational facilities are specifically enabled in the objectives and policies<sup>1</sup> and requested a restricted discretionary activity status for educational facilities. The s42A Reporting Officer rejected these submission points, as they were considered too specific and did not fit within the broader framework the objectives and policies were trying to achieve. The Ministry supports this recommendation as the s42A Reporting Officer has proposed additional amendments that enables educational facilities within the policy framework, these are discussed as follows.

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<sup>1</sup> The Ministry requested changes to Objectives 3b.2.6 and 3b.3.6 and Policies 3b.2.9 and 3b.3.9.

The s42A Reporting Officer proposed to make some amendments to the chapter's opening statement and Objective 3b.2.4 to recognise that non-rural activities can occur in the rural zone, provided they have a locational need to be there. These amendments are outlined below in [red](#).

### **Introduction description**

*It is important that all such activities do not affect the ability of the rural environment to function effectively, [recognising that some activities have specific locational or operational needs that must be accommodated](#).*

### **Objective 3b.2.4**

*Other activities Māori cultural activities, tourism activities, visitor accommodation, renewable electricity generation and transmission [\(including sub transmission\)](#) activities, [and other activities that have a locational need](#) are enabled in the General Rural Environment.*

The Ministry supports the inclusion of these amendments to recognise that sometimes certain activities, like a school, has a locational need to establish in the rural zone to support the existing rural communities there. We believe these changes are in line with the intent of the Ministry's submission and confirms if these amendments are adopted into the decision, the Ministry's submission points have been adequately resolved.

The Section 42A Reporting Officer also rejected the Ministry's request to have a restricted discretionary activity status for educational facilities as it does not fit in with their effects-based activity status framework. Council wants most activities to be measured against the general performance standards instead of having specific activity statuses for each activity. Schools would be a permitted activity, provided they can comply with the performance standards. Non-compliance with the standards means an educational facility would be considered discretionary. The Ministry is comfortable accepting the recommendation of the s42A Reporting Officer on this matter.

Again, the Ministry confirms if the s42A recommendations outlined in this letter are adopted, the Ministry's submission points have been adequately resolved. Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the District Plan.

### **Gemma Hayes**

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