BEFORE THE WESTLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

IN THE MATTER OF APPLICATION FOR SECTION 127 VARIATION TO RESOURCE CONSENT – Variation to land use resource consent 220119 to amend conditions 1, 2, 4, 5, 16 and 18on land legally described as Lot 2 DP 577153 to allow for the commercial use of a building within the Rural Zone (ODP) and General Rural Zone (PDP), located at 240 Taramakau Highway, Kumara Junction

APPLICANT BM Loader, c/- Scoped Planning and Design Limited

MINUTE N0.5 OF INDEPENDENT COMMISSIONER – TRANSPORT EXPERT OPINION

DATED 14 OCTOBER 2025

1. In preparation for the rescheduled November hearing the application, assessments, addendum and expert reports have been reviewed.
2. There are some differences in transport expert opinion.
3. It is preferable that these differences are resolved prior to, or at the hearing.
    - If the applicant and Council intend to undertake expert caucusing prior to the hearing the below items should be included and reported back on.
    - If the submitters intend to call transport experts, that they advise Council so that their expert can be included. I note submitters are not required to engage experts but may do so if they wish.
    - If the parties do not intend to undertake expert caucusing, it is preferable that the applicant give these items further consideration, and respond to them with a further addendum, or at the hearing. Council will be provided with the opportunity to consider and respond to these matters.

VEHICLE MOVEMENT CALCULATIONS

4. The Integrated Transport Assessment, appended to the original variation application states:

Weddings & Events

18. Novo Group is aware of survey data for the Lansdowne Function Centre in Tai Tapu (collected in relation to a proposal to establish a new function centre at 122 Old Tai Tapu Road in December 2007). This data indicated an average function size of 72 people and an average passenger per vehicle ratio of five people. This ratio is high due to the large number of guests arriving and departing using modes other than private vehicles (e.g., charted coaches, etc.), as the site has vehicle parking for larger vehicles.

19. In addition, Novo Group is aware of parking survey data from the Skydale Function Centre in Harewood, Christchurch. This was undertaken between December 2011 and January 2012 and included six weddings and one corporate function[1]. The data indicated:

    - A range of 2.97 to 4.57 people per vehicle; and
    - an average of 3.28 people per vehicle.

20. The higher end of the car occupancy data suggests that a coach or minibus would have been used for larger scale events, which is not unreasonable. This may have also accounted for taxi use, which is likely to be less prevalent at Melody Hall.

21. Given the above data is from an urban events centre and a rural events centre with coach parking, a lower car occupancy of approximately 3.0 people per car for guests and single occupant car travel for staff has been adopted for events at Melody Hall.

22. The site occupancy of Melody Hall is constrained by the number of parking spaces available at the facility, noting there is no overflow parking area, and no spillover parking is allowed on Greymouth Kumara Tramway. As such, three event size scenarios have been considered to determine the number of occupants the site can accommodate. These scenarios are as follows:

    - Small scale: 10–50 guests
    - Medium Scale: 51–100 guests
    - Large scale: 101–150 guests

23. The Request for Information (RFI) response by Scoped Planning and Design (dated 13 May 2024) suggested that at the maximum occupancy of the building, based on the Building Code requirements, 194 guests and six staff members would be present. On this basis, a staff to guest ratio of 3.0% has been assumed for events. **Table 2** summarises the estimated traffic generation for the three event size scenarios.

Table 2. Summary of traffic generation for various wedding event scenarios.

Occupancy	Peak Hour Traffic Generation (veh/h)	Daily Traffic Generation (veh/d)
10 to 50 guests and up to 2 Staff	5 to 19	10 to 38
51 to 100 guests and up to 3 Staff	20 to 36	40 to 72
101 to 150 guests and up to 5 Staff	39 to 55	78 to 110

24. Based on the above scenarios, the site could readily accommodate an event of up to 105 guests and three staff members[2]. It is noted that additional vehicle movements would occur outside of the main event for setting up and packing down of the venue; however, these are unlikely to add more than 20 additional vehicle trips. This results in an overall traffic generation of 96 vehicles.

25. To provide more flexibility for events over 105 guests, it is recommended that a condition be placed on the consent which requires:

> *For any event hosting more than 105 guests, the event organiser must agree to a Transport Management Plan (TMP) that must include, but is not limited to, the following elements:*
>
> *(1) A requirement for minibuses to transport guests to and from the event (noting there is no space available on-site to accommodate coach parking);*
>
> *(2) Allocation of on-site parking spaces to minibus drop-off and pick-up;*
>
> *(3) Communication to guests advising them not to drive to the event, as minibus services will be provided;*
>
> *(4) Communication to guests advising them of the minibus schedule, pick-up and drop-off points, and any other relevant details.*
>
> *Advice Note: The Council may seek confirmation that a Transport Management Plan is being implemented when required and monitoring of occupancy is being undertaken. Furthermore, Council may request evidence that the adjacent road network is not being used to accommodate parking associated with this activity and seek to vary the Conditions if issues are arising.*

Community Facility

26. Community events and gatherings do not require employed staff, as these events are put on by members of the community. Traffic generation rates vary considerably depending on the nature of the activity; however, a ratio of 2.5 people per vehicle is usually adopted in urban areas. On this basis, a

[2] 105 guests / 3 people per vehicle = 35 guest cars. These 35 guest cars plus 3 staff cars = 38 cars, which is the capacity of the proposed car park.

lower occupancy rate of 2.0 people per vehicle has been adopted, due to the rural location of Melody Hall, meaning fewer people are likely to walk or cycling compared to an urban area.

27. The maximum occupancy of the site for community events and gatherings will be 76 people. This equates to a peak hour generation of 38 vehicles per hour and a daily traffic generation of 76 vehicles per day. In addition to this, the set-up/pack-up of events will likely result in some additional vehicle movements from individuals already in attendance. Again, this is considered to add no more than 20 additional vehicle trips.

28. The TRICS database provides traffic generation data for comparable-sized community centre developments (refer to **Appendix 2** for the relevant dataset). The estimated daily trip rate is 12.081 trips per day per 100m^2. The area of the building is approximately 706m^2; therefore, the corresponding daily traffic volume is 85 vehicles per day. This suggests that the above assumptions are suitable.

Overall Generation

29. Depending on the nature of the community use, it is possible that more than one activity could be held daily at Melody Hall. Considering the pack up and set-up time of each activity and assuming full occupancy of the activity, it is broadly considered that one activity could be held in the morning, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Therefore, three activities could occur on any given day of operation. Based on the set-up and pack down required for weddings and events, and given there is only one building at Melody Hall, it is assumed that no other events would occur at the site when a wedding is held.

30. The worst-case traffic generation scenario for a wedding results in an overall traffic generation of 96 vehicles and the worst-case traffic generation scenario for community activities (three in one day) results in an overall traffic generation of 288 vehicle trips per day. Therefore, three community activities at maximum occupancy have been considered in this assessment, although this is an unlikely scenario particularly given the survey data suggests a typical maximum of 85 vehicles per day.

31. Melody Hall operates Thursday to Sunday, and on public holidays (where not restricted by alternative national requirements). The proposed operating hours on Thursday and Friday suggest that most events will occur outside of the traditional peak hours on the surrounding road network, as indicated by the closest telemetry site profile[3].

32. Whilst the peak hour traffic generation of events is generally centralised around the start and finish times, some vehicles on-site will have assisted in the set-up or pack down of the event, meaning their arrival will be prior to the majority of event attendees and their departure will be after the majority of event attendees. In addition to this, attendee arrival times are generally spread over a period prior to the start time and after the finish time, due to various factors when arriving and socialising following events (i.e., the 38 vehicles will not arrive/depart all at once).

33. Finally, based on current operational data, it is not anticipated that community activities would regularly achieve this maximum occupancy, and it is also noted that weddings will be infrequent events. Therefore, the sites operation for the majority of time will be lower.

5. The planner summarises that:

> 6.9 Overall, adverse effects upon the transport network are anticipated as likely to be less than minor as the activity will serve existing users of the hall. The increase in the number of events which may be held each year will not result in a notable impact upon the transport network as the site will be utilised to serve the existing community as a function space, it will not be likely to be frequently utilised as a destination or attraction for tourism functions. The transport network has been designed to accommodate these forms of activities, including the traffic generation associated with them.

6. Further information was provided in response to the Councils s.92 request.

> **Access, Parling and Vehicle Movements**
>
> ***1.*** *Please provide further clarification regarding the number of vehicle movements that will occur as a result of the proposed activity.*
>
> It is intended that a maximum of 38 car parks will be available on site for users of the hall. This is an increase of 22 as compared to that originally approved. The Melody Hall building consent 230002 allows for a maximum of 200 occupants pursuant to the Building Code as a design occupant load, however it is unlikely that this level of occupancy will occur. It is intended that events to be hosted at the hall will include small community events, weddings, and gatherings. Based on the above, it is anticipated that a maximum of 90 vehicle movements per day will occur per large event, with a standard event expectation of 10 to 40 vehicle movements.

7. The Council Planners s.42a report details

47. The hall's maximum occupancy is 200 people, and the applicant proposes 38 on-site car parks. Based on standard assumptions of 2 people per vehicle, this equates to 76 vehicle movements per event (arrivals and departures), or approximately 304 vehicle movements per week, and up to 15,808 movements per year. This represents a substantial increase compared to the approximately 160 vehicle movements per year estimated under RC220119.

48. While actual use may vary, the application must be assessed on the basis of the full extent of activity enabled by the proposed variation, as no restrictions on frequency or capacity have been proposed. This approach ensures that the potential effects of peak traffic volumes and associated safety implications are properly assessed, particularly given the site's rural context and proximity to State Highway 6 (SH6). If granted, Council would have limited ability to control the intensity of use beyond the conditions imposed.

8. Further amendment to the proposed variation occurs through the addendum, with the Applicants planner conclusion being:

Transport Effects:

The following Appendix 2 includes an addendum to the original Integrated Transport Assessment dated 7 October 2024. This addendum dated 18 July 2025 includes a more in depth assessment of the activity upon the local road network, including effects upon the affected parties' properties and the intersection with Kahikatea Place. This report has concluded that effects upon the local road network and the affected parties will be less than minor with respect to traffic. Overall, no adverse effects are anticipated with respect to safety, efficiency and accessibility within the local road network. No new transportation conditions have been recommended as a result of this addendum. Please see Appendix 2 for conclusive detail.

9. The detail in Appendix 2 explains:

Assessment of Transport Effects

Traffic Generation

9. As outlined in the ITA, trip generation for events at Melody Hall is primarily influenced by guest numbers, the event type, and the availability of on-site parking, which is limited to 38 spaces. Based on data from comparable urban and rural event centres, an average car occupancy of approximately 3.0 guests per vehicle has been adopted, along with single-occupant travel for staff. This is specific to the wedding and events scenario, which was considered to be the worst-case scenario in terms of traffic generation.

10. Using these assumptions, estimated peak hour traffic generation ranges from 5 to 55 vehicle movements per hour, with daily traffic volumes reaching up to 110 vehicles per day depending on the event size. The worst-case scenario (as a wedding including setup and pack-down) is expected to generate approximately 96 vehicle movements. While it is theoretically possible for up to three community events to occur in a single day, generating a combined total of up to 288 vehicle movements, such occurrences are expected to be rare given the proposed annual cap of 30 events, as listed in the consent conditions, and the low likelihood of full occupancy.

11. Most events are anticipated to take place outside of traditional commuter peak periods, further minimising potential disruption to the surrounding network. It is also relevant to note that existing traffic volumes on the surrounding local roads is low, with Kahikatea Place and Greymouth-Kumara Tramway carrying approximately 10 and 50 vehicles per day, respectively.

10. The application has evolved iteratively, the addendum application seeks:

2. The building may be used for community and private events, which may include the use of staff or contractors (up to six at any one time) to support the operation of those events. The site must not be used for ongoing retail activity or commercial operations not otherwise authorised by this consent.

3. A maximum of 150 guests and a maximum of six (6) staff may be accommodated on site at any one time.

5. The building must be used for a maximum of 30 events per year, excluding civil defence related activities. A written record of each event, including the date, duration, and nature of the activity, shall be maintained by the consent holder and made available to Council upon request for monitoring purposes. The use of the building for civil defence purposes will not be included in the definition of an event for the purpose of this resource consent.

7. The building may be used for community events on no more than four (4) days per week, limited to Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and public holidays. A written record of each event, including the date, duration, and nature of the activity, shall be maintained by the consent holder and made available to Council upon request for monitoring purposes.

8.2 For any event hosting more than 105 guests, the event organiser must agree to a Transport Management Plan (TMP) that must include, but is not limited to, the following elements: (Beverley Loader 240 Taramakau Highway, Kumara Junction novogroup. co.nz)

11. Can the applicant clarify **the annual total number of vehicle movements now proposed including their calculations including car occupancy assumptions**.
12. The cycle and pedestrian network are included in Table 1., but there does not appear to be consideration of them in the assessments. **Can the applicant confirm if this is the case. If they have not been assessed, expert opinion on the impact of the traffic generation on these components of the network is requested. Further commentary from the Applicants planner is welcome.**

Table 1. Summary of Greymouth-Kumara Tramway and Taramakau Highway road characteristics.

Key Feature	Greymouth-Kumara Tramway	Taramakau Highway (State Highway 6)
Road Classification	Local Road	State Highway
Cross-Section Description	6.3m wide carriageway	6.8m wide carriageway and 0.5m wide sealed shoulders on both sides
Traffic Volumes (veh/d)	50 (Mobile Road, 2023)	4,232 (NZTA, 2022)
Speed (km/h)	100	100
Pedestrian and Cycling Infrastructure	None available	Shared-use path from Greymouth-Kumara Tramway north.
Public Transport	None available	None available

13. On receipt of this clarification and comment, **the Councils Planner, with Mr Karl Jackson Transport Manager are asked for their further comment** on section 49.

49. Council's Transportation Manager, Mr Karl Jackson, reviewed the proposal and raised concerns regarding the scale of increased vehicle movements and the implications for road safety. Although access to the site is via Greymouth-Kumara Tramway, the local intersection with SH6 is nearby and presents visibility limitations. The access route is also part of the West Coast Wilderness Trail and frequently used by cyclists and pedestrians, further elevating potential traffic conflict.

Any reports and evidence should be provided to the Council electronically by email to kate.fleming@westlanddc.govt.nz. Hard copies of the evidence should be provided on request. All evidence and information will be made available at www.westlanddc.govt.nz.

Edith Bretherton

Independent Hearing Commissioner

Date: 14 October 2025