

**BEFORE THE HEARING PANEL**

**IN THE MATTER** of the Resource Management Act 1991

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER** of a Notice of Requirement to alter a designation for the  
HCC Central City Reservoir – Ruakiwi Road

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF BRIAN CHARLES WHITE ON BEHALF OF  
HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL AS REQUIRING AUTHORITY**

**(Architecture)**

**Dated 19 December 2025**

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## INTRODUCTION

1. My full name is Brian Charles White.
2. I am a registered architect and director of Edwards White Architects Limited. I have the following qualification and experience relevant to the subject matter of this evidence:
  - a) Bachelor of Architecture (Honours);
  - b) Registered architect under the New Zealand Architects Registration Board;
  - c) Fellow member of the New Zealand Institute of Architects;
  - d) 31 years' experience in the practice of architecture; and
  - e) Relevant project examples include Victoria on the River, Hamilton Gardens Visitor Arrival Centre, and Te Kaaroro Nature Precinct.
3. I provide this evidence on behalf of Hamilton City Council (**HCC**) as the Requiring Authority (**RA**) which has issued the Notice of Requirement (**NOR**) for the Central City Reservoir – Ruakiwi Road (**Ruakiwi Reservoir Project** or **Project**).

## CODE OF CONDUCT

4. I am familiar with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses (Environment Court Practice Note 2023) and although I note this is a Council hearing, I agree to comply with this code. The evidence I will present is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying on information provided by another party. I have not knowingly omitted facts or information that might alter or detract from opinions I express.

**SCOPE OF EVIDENCE**

5. This statement of evidence covers the following architectural aspects of the proposed water reservoirs and valve chamber at Hamilton Lake Reserve:
  - a) Design Philosophy and Objectives;
  - b) Architectural Design Response;
  - c) Cultural and Community Integration;
  - d) Staging of Construction; and
  - e) Design Refinement.
6. This evidence outlines the architectural design response for the proposed new water reservoirs and associated valve chamber at Hamilton Lake Domain. It addresses the design philosophy, visual and contextual integration, public amenity enhancements, and cultural expression opportunities embedded in the proposal for the Ruakiwi Reservoir Project.
7. The evidence also discusses the rationale behind the staging of the reservoir construction and evaluates the architectural implications of this sequencing. The assessment is based on Architecture and Landscape Preliminary Design document prepared by Edwards White Architects Limited and BHW in NOR Appendix O2 – Landscape Appendices dated 25 July 2025.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

8. The architectural design for the proposed water infrastructure prioritises minimising visual impact, enhancing public access, and integrating cultural storytelling. Key design strategies include the compact massing of the reservoirs and valve chamber, the use of a slatted corten steel screen for functional and aesthetic purposes, and the creation of a public walkway that connects to the wider Hamilton Lake Domain path network. The design elevates the infrastructure from a purely utilitarian form to one with sculptural and community-oriented qualities.
9. The issues raised in the submissions of the neighbouring residents are addressed as follows:
  - a) **Visual and Heritage Integration:** The consolidated layout and use of a continuous steel louvre screen significantly reduce the visual dominance of the infrastructure and maintain the prominence of the existing heritage water tower.
  - b) **Public Amenity Enhancement:** The inclusion of an elevated walkway and improved path connections enhances recreational opportunities and strengthens community engagement with the site.
  - c) **Staging Strategy:** Constructing Reservoir 1 first is the most appropriate approach to minimise visual and physical impacts, delay tree removal, and maintain operational continuity during subsequent stages.
10. In addition, the design provides a robust framework for authentic cultural storytelling through materiality, patterning, and collaborative input from Mana Whenua.

11. I support the RA's proposed conditions which are appended to the evidence of Mr Dawson. In my professional opinion, the proposed conditions will ensure the Project delivers essential infrastructure while respecting the site's cultural, heritage, and community values.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Key Conclusions from Architectural Technical Assessment**

#### *Design Philosophy and Objectives*

12. The Design Philosophy and Objectives for the Ruakiwi Reservoir Project can be summarised into the following:
  - a) Minimising visual impact on the natural landscape, neighbouring properties, and adjacent heritage reservoir;
  - b) Enhancing public amenity and safety;
  - c) Providing opportunities for cultural expression and storytelling; and
  - d) Supporting the functional operation of the infrastructure.
13. The above driving design philosophy and objectives have been integrated through the Architectural Design Response.

#### *Architectural Design Response*

14. My starting point for the Ruakiwi Reservoir Project began at the point where the site had been selected under the Multi-Criteria Analysis process and the key technical engineering requirements within the site had been established as determined by the client brief / projected demands. This

included the following key fixed engineering parameters which informed the scale and form of the Project and its architectural response:

- a) Cylindrical reservoir design for its structural and hydrological efficiencies;
  - b) Fixed relative levels (**RL's**) for the lower and upper operating water levels within the reservoir and top of reservoir structures;
  - c) Diameter of the reservoirs, as determined by the RL's and the volume of water required;
  - d) The projected demand requirement for two reservoirs; one to be constructed as part of this Project, with provision in the overall design to accommodate a second reservoir of the same scale in a future stage; and
  - e) Valve chamber building alignment with Clarence Street for connection of major pipework running down Clarence Street.
15. The imagery below illustrates the structural arrangement of the engineering parameters prepared prior to our engagement, as presented during the first round of public consultation.



16. The spatial arrangement of the proposed reservoir and valve chamber, particularly their relationship to the existing historic water tower, was the first architectural consideration. This was guided by the need to respect the site's cultural heritage values, respond appropriately to the natural landform, and minimise visual and physical impacts on the surrounding landscape.
  
17. To achieve greater separation from the heritage-listed water tower, directional drilling techniques will be employed. This allows for a curved pipeline route along Clarence Street within the roading designation, diverting the pipe away from the tower rather than following a straight alignment along the street's centreline. This approach significantly reduces the potential for the new infrastructure to dominate the water tower. Repositioning the valve chamber is a critical factor in determining the final

layout of the reservoirs and enables a more sensitive integration of the new infrastructure into the site.



18. To minimise the overall footprint and visual impact of the proposed infrastructure within the reserve, the valve chamber and reservoirs have been consolidated into a single, cohesive architectural expression. This was achieved by positioning the three structural components as close together as practicable and enclosing them within a continuous vertical louvre corten steel screen. The screen provides aesthetic unity while delivering functional benefits.
19. Specifically, it removes the need for a separate security compound fence by creating secure working space between the structures, thereby maximising the area available for public use and enjoyment. In addition, the screen conceals operational elements and secondary services, such as exposed piping, cabling, and access equipment, behind a unified façade and supports Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (**CPTED**) principles.



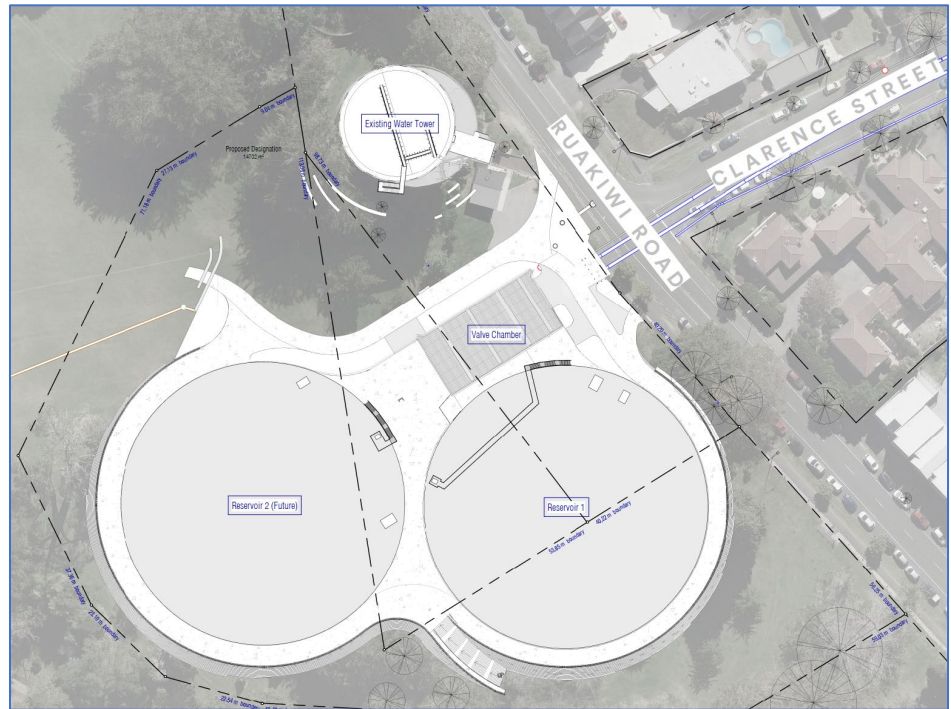
20. The proposal incorporates an elevated public access walkway around the reservoir, serving both functional and amenity purposes. Its primary role is to provide safe and efficient access for service and maintenance inspections along the reservoir perimeter, but it has also been designed to enhance public use of the reserve.
21. The walkway offers elevated views across the established tree canopy toward Hamilton Lake and the distant Maunga, contributing to the recreational and visual experience of the area. It also creates opportunities to connect and expand the existing path network within the wider Hamilton Lake Domain. From a design perspective, the inclusion of this walkway helps reduce the visual impact of the reservoirs and valve chamber by breaking down the overall mass into two distinct tiers, rather than presenting a single, visually dominant wall approximately 14 metres high at the lower end of the site.
22. In addition, the mass block wall will be constructed in two stages: the first includes the lower courses up to the level of the reservoir foundations to retain the construction platform, and the second completes the wall wrapping around the reservoir to support the elevated platform. This approach provides a permanent retaining structure for the construction platform rather than a temporary earth batter, which would extend further into the reserve and require the removal of additional existing trees.



### *Cultural and Community Integration*

23. The architectural design approach creates an opportunity for meaningful cultural partnership with local Mana Whenua by establishing a framework for integrating pattern, texture, colour variation, and storytelling into key elements of the Project. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of concrete mass block retaining walls for the elevated walkway around the reservoirs, which allow for subtle colour and texture variations to incorporate cultural patterns.
24. In addition, the proposed corten steel screen surrounding the reservoirs and valve chamber offers further scope for cultural expression. These concepts are being developed collaboratively with a local cultural artist, in consultation with Mana Whenua representatives, to ensure authenticity and alignment with cultural values.

### Staging of Construction



25. The location of the valve chamber is strictly determined by its alignment with the pipework along Clarence Street, leaving two logical positions for the 64-metre diameter reservoirs alongside it while following the existing natural contours. Of the two reservoirs, the one to the south of the valve chamber (**Reservoir 1**) provides a more consolidated initial footprint due to its proximity to the longer edge of the valve chamber.
26. Building Reservoir 1 first also allows mitigation planting to be established on the western side facing the lake. Alternatively, constructing the reservoir to the southwest (**Reservoir 2**) first would create an elongated form extending from the road to the top of the bank, resulting in a dominant wall that bisects the park landscape and creates a greater visual impact on the natural context.
27. In addition to its consolidated footprint, Reservoir 1's proximity to the valve chamber creates a larger enclosure between the two structures for associated services and maintenance, which can be accessed easily from

the façade facing the site vehicle entrance. This enclosure will also remain operational during the construction of the second reservoir, ensuring continuity of site operations throughout the second stage.

28. To minimise the extent of the designation for this Project, part of the footprint of Reservoir 2 is proposed to be used as the construction platform and laydown area for whichever reservoir is built first. With Reservoir 1 built first, construction can progress outward toward the platform, screening activities as it progresses from Ruakiwi Road and concentrating vehicle movements at the access point opposite Clarence Street. Additionally, when Reservoir 2 is constructed, its activities will be largely screened from local residents by Reservoir 1.
29. Conversely, if Reservoir 2 were built first, a large number of existing trees, including the mature macrocarpas within Reservoir 1's footprint would need to be removed to create the laydown area reducing the natural screening from trees.
30. For these reasons, we support staging the Project by building Reservoir 1 first and then Reservoir 2 second.

## **PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS**

31. The three submissions in opposition to the NOR raise three key concerns relevant to my discipline: the visual impact of the size and scale of the reservoirs (Ernest Needham, Glenda Morrissey and James and Jill McCulloch), the proposed staging of the reservoirs (Ernest Needham) and the impact of the proposed works on the existing heritage water tower (Ernest Needham and Glenda Morrissey). The combined architectural and landscape design response outlined in the preceding sections of my evidence and in Appendix O2 to the NOR addresses the concerns raised in the submissions regarding the size and scale of the reservoirs and how they

have been developed to integrate within the existing vegetated open space. In addition, the evidence of Mr Adrian Morton addresses how the landscaping will mitigate the bulk of the new buildings.

32. Mr Needham's submission queries why Reservoir 2, which is further away from his property is not being built first, noting that the need for a second reservoir is less clear. I have addressed this issue in paragraphs 26 to 30 above. The design supports constructing Reservoir 1 first. This approach minimises visual and physical impacts on the park landscape, allows mitigation planting to be established early, and ensures operational continuity during the second stage. Conversely, building Reservoir 2 first would create a more dominant initial visual impact.
33. Regarding the impact of the new reservoirs on the existing heritage tower, the architectural layout and design strategies aim to respect and protect the existing tower's visual integrity. Measures include repositioning the valve chamber and using directional drilling to divert pipelines away from the tower, consolidating structures within a continuous steel louvre screen to reduce visual dominance, and maintaining the tower's prominence as a landmark while integrating new infrastructure sensitively into the site. Mr Adam Wild addresses these submissions from an expert heritage perspective in his evidence.

#### **RELEVANT SECTION 42A REPORT COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS**

34. The recommended designation conditions align with the architectural strategies outlined in Appendix O2 and in my evidence. These include the requirements to minimise visual impact through consolidated massing and a continuous steel louvre screen, enhancing public amenity via elevated walkways and path connections, and integrating cultural expression in collaboration with Mana Whenua.

## RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO CONDITIONS

35. No new or modified conditions are recommended.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

36. In summary, based on my architectural assessment, the proposed design for the Ruakiwi Road Reservoir Project achieves a sensitive balance between functional requirements and the need to protect and enhance the cultural, visual, and community values of Hamilton Lake Domain. The design philosophy to minimise visual impact, respecting heritage, and integrate cultural expression has been embedded throughout the project proposal.
37. My key conclusions are as follows:
- a) **Visual and Heritage Integration:** The consolidated layout and use of a continuous steel louvre screen significantly reduce the visual dominance of the infrastructure and maintain the prominence of the existing heritage water tower.
  - b) **Public Amenity Enhancement:** The inclusion of an elevated walkway and improved path connections enhances recreational opportunities and strengthens community engagement with the site.
  - c) **Cultural Partnership:** The design provides a robust framework for authentic cultural storytelling through materiality, patterning, and collaborative input from Mana Whenua.
  - d) **Staging Strategy:** Constructing Reservoir 1 first is the most appropriate approach to minimise visual and physical impacts, delay

tree removal, and maintain operational continuity during subsequent stages.

38. In my professional opinion, these measures will ensure the project delivers essential infrastructure while respecting the site's cultural, heritage, and community values.

**Brian Charles White**

**19 December 2025**