

## SUBMISSION ON PUBLICLY NOTIFIED RESOURCE CONSENTS

My name is Tracey Lee McLeod.

I **OPPOSE** the extension of consents for the use of seven motels (listed below) as contracted emergency housing through to 15 December 2025.

LU24-010186	Alpin Motel	16 Sala Street
LU24-010187	Apollo Hotel	7 Tyron Street
LU24-010188	Ascot on Fenton	247 Fenton Street and 12 Toko Street
LU24-010189	Geneva Motor Lodge	299 Fenton Street
LU24-010190	Lake Rotorua Motel	131 Lake Road
LU24-010191	Pohutu Lodge Motel	3 Meade Street
LU24-010192	Rotovegas Motel	149-251 Fenton Street/14-16 Toko Street and 8A,8B and 10B Toko Street

As a member of Restore Rotorua, I have been actively involved in regularly writing commentary including the Homeless Timeline and collating various statistical analysis. Inspiration has come from the Daily Post articles and feedback from CBD business owners who have witnessed criminal and offensive behaviour from homeless people.

### Beautiful City

Rotorua once used to be a jewel in the tourism crown of New Zealand. It used to enter and win Beautiful city awards.

Now it is littered with supermarket trolleys left on the main street, as the homeless people steal the trolleys to cart their groceries back to the emergency housing motels.

As a Tidy Kiwi Volunteer Award recipient, I have noticed a huge increase in litter in the streets within proximity to the emergency motels and have regularly collected litter and supermarket trolleys, these last three years, since the motels have been occupied from out of town homeless, who do not share the same pride as the city's long-time residents.

### MHUD admission about crime and motel suitability for whanau

In the Stuff article dated 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2023, the headline read; Ministry admits Rotorua MSD motels did spike crime.

Housing homeless people in Rotorua motels did lead to a rise in crime and anti-social behaviour, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has finally admitted.

The admission was contained in a 39 page report entitled "an evaluation of whanau experiences of living in contracted emergency housing in Rotorua."

A revelation welcomed by those who raised alarms about the practice.

It included an increase in crime and disruptive and intimidating behaviour in and around Fenton Street, which the public directly attributed to the increase in emergency housing accommodation.

Rotorua MP Todd McClay said the people of Rotorua were owed an apology from the government in the wake of the MHUD admission and also called for a definite date for the end of motel use for homeless people.

It was the first official recognition of the link between MSD motels and anti-social behaviour in Rotorua.

MHUD admitted that motel living is “not suited to all whanau and not a long-term living option.”

That report was released in 2023, so if motel living is not beneficial for those staying in the emergency motels, then why extend it for another year from 2024 to the end of 2025?

### History of conditions and effects of emergency motels

11/1/2022 – Rotorua’s Golden Glow Motel fire accidental, authorities say. No one was injured in the fire, however a Golden Glow motel emergency housing resident described having to flee her room as fire ripped through the floor above her.

21/2/2022 – Police enquiries into Grand Treasure fire continue. FENZ (Fire & Emergency NZ) crews were called to a structure at the Grand Treasure Hotel on Pukuatua Street about 12.50am on Saturday.

7/6/2022 – Rotorua emergency housing: The Four Canoes Hotel fire report is a damning assessment. Death or injury was likely at Rotorua’s emergency housing facility if a fire broke out.

16/7/2022 – Rotorua emergency housing motel fire: Manager described as ‘hero.’ A fire started in an upstairs unit at Rotovegas Motel on Fenton Street about 4.30pm on Saturday.

In RNZ’s article in September 2022; Emergency housing crisis is damaging Rotorua’s tourism reputation.

An investigation by TVNZ’s Sunday programme has raised serious concerns about the treatment and well-being of tenants living in motels and hotels for emergency housing. It revealed appalling scenes of intimidation, violence, misery, and crime in emergency housing in Rotorua.

6/9/2022 – Newstalk ZB Heather due Pleiss-Allan: After watching the Sunday programme on emergency housing disaster in Rotorua, I’m convinced Rotorua will not recover from this.

Bryce Edwards: The scandal of the \$1.2 billion emergency housing programme has become most visible in Rotorua using people as a commodity.

7/9/2022 – Human Rights Commission inquiries into Rotorua emergency housing. Wants to speak to those living in emergency housing and transitional housing to form part of their housing inquiry.

Claims ex-prisoners recently released, are relocated to Rotorua emergency housing motels. Uncertainty over how many are on home detention, bail in MSD motels.

17/9/2022 – A “distressing” report has revealed crime and police callouts around the emergency housing in Rotorua have risen significantly over the past three years.

28/9/2022 – More people living in emergency housing for longer, some for up to 2 years.

9/10/2022 – New Rotorua Mayor Tania Tapsell talks to Q & A about the big issues including motels. Buildings need to be fit for purpose, but being used for what they’re consented to be. Motels should be short term accommodation for up to 28 days, but they’re being used as residential dwellings.

22/10/2022 – Rotorua tourism report: negative perceptions blamed for \$17M loss in tourism spending in three months. Rotorua could lose \$92M of visitors spending over 12 months. Visitors were “conflating crime alongside social issues such as homelessness in emergency housing.”

Rotorua is a “ghost town” due to emergency housing crisis. A hearing before three independent commissioners started on Monday, hearing submissions.

10/11/2022 – Government says it “may have” paid for relocation to emergency motels. It says it is possible it has paid for out-of-town people to move to Rotorua for emergency housing but says it does not “actively relocate” people. Rotorua MP Todd McClay says the phrasing is “spin”.

12/11/2022 – Mayor calls for more police to deal with emergency housing crime.

20/11/2022 – Longest stay in emergency housing stretches over 3 years, with more than 1000 staying over a year. It comes as a Human Rights Commissioner prepares to release his findings of a massive housing enquiry.

24/11/2022 – Frustration over the delay in defining emergency housing. Council have been waiting for MBIE to provide wording on a definition of emergency housing.

9/12/2022 – Housing Accord signed. The main focus is to reduce the use of Emergency Housing in Rotorua to near zero as soon as possible.

9/12/2022 – Call for urgent stocktake of gang members in emergency motels. Government won’t report how many gang members in emergency motels.

13/12/2022 – Police Minister Chris Hipkins said that Rotorua police force had increased by 20 since the homeless crisis started, however, Rotorua’s numbers have risen by just four staff members since an influx of homeless people living in the city’s motels.

15/12/2022 – Commissioners release decision on 13 contracted emergency housing motels. “Granted 13 Rotorua motels resource consent to operate emergency housing for two years with a range of conditions”.

Serious and ongoing breaches of human rights in emergency housing. The Human Rights Commission review said that emergency housing was often not safe, secure, clean, dry or in good repair and failed decency standards. The government’s exclusion of emergency housing from the Residential Tenancies Act protections was a “serious and ongoing breach” and people were being evicted into homelessness by accommodation providers not subject to accountability that honoured the Treaty of Waitangi.

17/12/2022 – Rental investigation: Tenants offered other accommodation after an investigation began into living conditions at the property. Premises do not have consent for its current use, says MBIE. Visions of a Helping Hand, which sublet the property, has offered tenants alternative accommodation at a “similar rent in a similar location.”

31/12/2022 – Mongrel Mob gang member allegedly attacked with weapons at Rotorua government-contracted Union Victoria emergency motel.

16/2/2023 – Moving in a positive direction. Council’s review of what it’s delivered in the first 100 days “We now have an exit strategy for emergency housing. A comprehensive Council regulatory approach to motels being used for emergency housing is under way to ensure things cannot go back to how they were.

27/2/2023 – New Zealand’s Human Rights Commission will voice grave concerns about children and teens in emergency housing to the United Nations in Geneva. Human Rights Commission Chief Commissioner said he expected the UN’s finding would be a “global public embarrassment to the United Nations in Geneva.”

27/1/2023 – A Rotorua trust (Visions of a Helping Hand Trust) contracted by the government to provide wrap-around services to emergency housing clients has more than tripled its revenue to \$12.37M in one year.

24/3/2023 - A government commissioned evaluation into its pilot homelessness solution in Rotorua, including an interview with 11 whanau, wanted freezers, ovens and laundry facilities improved in contracted emergency motels.

15/4/2023 – There is a variance between the MHUD Temporary Housing Dashboard and the Council’s RotoruaNZ dashboard.

9/5/2023 – Chief Human Rights Commissioner Paul Hunt said the motels being used for emergency accommodation were “crammed”, weren’t safe for many of the tenants and children and weren’t fit for long term residency.

Renting to MSD has become a “get rich quick scheme” for many moteliers according to National’s housing spokesperson, Chris Bishop. Hundreds of motels have collected million-dollar pay cheques from the government.

2/6/2023 – Mayor Tania Tapsell calls for urgent action to ensure – long-term accommodation buildings are safe after Loafers Lodge fire in Wellington on May 16, which claimed five lives.

7/6/2023 – Jenny Peace from Restore Rotorua talks about emergency housing motel issues on Fenton Street. People are fighting in the street, a woman smashing cars and windows with a metal baseball bat and people peeing on office windows. Peace said that there are still reports of people hanging around houses and regular break-ins, as well as bikes being stolen off bike racks on cars parked in the area. Lobby group Restore Rotorua is compiling a complaints register, which includes examples above, to present to a community liaison group formed as part of the government’s emergency housing conditions.

9/6/2023 – Bay of Plenty emergency housing motels have not had fire safety inspections for almost a year, after they asked for stab-proof vests and did not get them.

9/6/2023 – Rotorua Lakes Council’s response to a media enquiry displays on its website; Building Warrant of Fitness expiry dates for contracted emergency house providers as at 9<sup>th</sup> June 2023;

Union Victoria Motel expires 29<sup>th</sup> June 2023

Ascot on Fenton expires 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023

Rotovegas expires on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023

New Castle Lodge expires 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Emerald Spa expires 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023

13/6/2023 – Fire alarms subject to “malicious” tampering, smoke stop doors missing and “trickling” hoses for fighting fires. These are some of what fire inspectors and investigations have been finding at government –subsidised emergency housing providers in the Bay of Plenty. After one caught fire, firefighters faced off against aggressive dogs and aggressive occupants. These high risk examples came to light during RNZ inquiries, spurred by the fatal Loafers Lodge fire in May, into the safety risks at housing vulnerable people.

14/6/2023 – Stabbing at emergency motel. A man has critical injuries after allegedly being stabbed at Rotorua’s Awyon Motel last night.

19/6/2023 – MBIE released its determination 2023/017 “changing use” in relation to a building that was used for emergency housing, where previously it had been used as tourist accommodation. Changing from “sleeping accommodation” to “sleeping residential” resulted in more onerous Building Code requirements. Should an owner propose to change the use of a building, they need to give written notice to the Council and provide information on how the building will comply with the Building Act 2004.

31/7/2023 – New data reluctantly released by Police shows a “crime explosion” at Rotorua emergency motels. Police cited privacy reasons and commercial interests as to why they wouldn’t release the crime data, but 18 months after staff requested it, the Ombudsman ruled police must.

16/8/2023 – Glenholme under siege again. An “angry” Glenholme resident fears Rotorua is “under siege again” from what she believes are more issues stemming from some people in homeless motels – including crime, begging and people sleeping in doorways. Carolyne Hall is one of eight people in the Holland Street area to have their cars broken into overnight on Monday August 7.

17/8/2023 – Rotorua Seventh Day Adventist School makes its case to stop its neighbour’s building higher. Human poo, dog faeces, used sanitary pads, are not something primary school students need to discover on their playground. “We were operating in Rotorua before motels were.” Then emergency motels moved into the neighbourhood. Fenton Court Motel which is used for emergency housing, sat close to the school’s fence line.

9/9/2023 – National party unveils its housing policy, vows to end emergency housing in Rotorua within 2 years if elected.

Rotorua Mum “trapped in motel” can’t have all her kids stay overnight due to occupancy rates, as the room limit is 4. This is their fifth motel room since becoming homeless on April 16, when her landlord of two years moved back in.

10/9/2023 – Newshub News Fix report; Rotorua Mayor is happy someone is paying attention to the city’s homelessness problem with National’s housing policy announcement. She says the motels brought a barrage of problems to the city. Whether it was social or economic impact, crime rates went up as well, we’re very keen to not only see a rapid reduction and hopefully a sinking lid, but actually see them end.

14/9/2023 – Government drops 2 of the 13 contracts after a “marked decline” in people needing help.

23/9/2023 – 13 year olds are prostituting themselves to feed their P habits, a social services provider says. Rotorua’s Police Area Commander Herby Ngawhika said his staff told him methamphetamine now appeared easier to get than cannabis. A Leader of an agency, who did not want to be identified due to the risk of breaching client trust, said there were nicknames for some emergency housing motels where it was common knowledge drug dealing occurred.

16/11/2023 – Hastings Council’s strategy cuts numbers in emergency housing by 77%. It’s more than just housing, it’s a kaupapa approach. MHUD was looking to achieve the same success with place-based housing strategies in a bid to move thousands of people out of motels and off the public waiting list. So why not Rotorua?

30/11/2023 – A fire allowed to burn for hours, a door with four locks, holes in wall and scattered rubbish at Spa Lodge Motel.

11/1/2024 – Tourism Minister Matt Doocey meets Rotorua Mayor Tania Tapsell for a mountain bike ride in Redwood Forest. Their discussions were about; even as the number of motels are greatly reduced with emergency housing, there’s the perception and the reputational brand damage that its done to Rotorua. Feedback from local tourist operators was that improving perception and promoting what the city had to offer were key.

14/2/2024 – MSD declines to answer an Official Information Act request as to how many out of town homeless were moved to Rotorua emergency housing motels since the election in November 2023. The refusals to answer the request prompted Dr Reynold Macpherson, Chairman of Rotorua District Residents and Ratepayers to lodge the request with the Ombudsman.

25/4/2024 – Rotorua Councillor Conan O’Brien, says government agencies, have “taken us for fools” over the city’s controversial emergency housing motels. Its comes after MHUD plans were revealed last week to keep contracting 10 motels to house homeless people despite election promises to end this within 2 years.

Rotorua Mayor Tania Tapsell & Rotorua MP Todd McClay were shocked and disappointed.

No application had yet been received and Tapsell said she would meet with McClay about the subject on Thursday “even though it was ‘Anzac Day’, as it was of an urgent nature”.

30/4/2024 – Beehive Press release – Ending emergency housing motels in Rotorua. Associate Minister of Housing Tama Potaka says the government remains committed to ending the long-term use of contracted emergency housing motels in Rotorua by the end of 2025.

Chief Executives for the Ministry of Housing & Urban Development and Rotorua Lakes Council will work on a plan to achieve that, including ensuring that there are fewer contracted emergency housing motels being re-consented than at present and curtailing the use of emergency housing by people coming from outside the district.

10/5/2024 – Real estate agents: Rotorua’s “misery mile” has derailed house prices in the city.

When all this public housing and housing shortage and homelessness came up – we had been seeing migration out of the bigger cities, (to Rotorua) but then the tap started turning off.

What hurt Rotorua was the public imagery of the homeless people and people living in motels. Serious problems didn’t last too long after locals spoke out, but the perception of Rotorua as a problem city has lingered with out-of-town buyers.

National publicity around the city’s motels being used as emergency accommodation and social housing had caused reputational damage and negatively impacted the property market – Beth Millard – Bayleys Branch Manager Rotorua.

Rotorua’s Fenton Street which was once known as the “Golden Mile” as the tourist accommodation gateway entrance to the city, transitioned into “MSD Mile” and now “Misery Mile” shows the degradation of the main street.

#### MHUD’s Temporary Housing Dashboard statistics

In the Daily Post article on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2024, it stated as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 there were 186 units required to accommodate 174 households in emergency housing motels.

If we apply a percentage to the households – its 107%, essentially another 7% extra units are requirement to accommodate the larger families, who need more than one unit per household.

With the attached projection, based on the MHUD Temporary Dashboard reduction pattern, it is projected 27 households will exist at the end of the resource consent application period as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025.

Those 27.6 households consist of 76.2 adults and 238.5 children, which means that all the families have now grown to 11.4 members in each family, (applying a simple ratio methodology) as opposed to the 2.62 ratio as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

Apply the same percentage of 107% to the remaining 27 households, it is projected 29 units are required for motel emergency housing.

That is one motel.

However the dashboard figures don’t add up.

Transitional housing is hardly reducing at all.

The total number of motels looks great at reducing on paper.....but when we apply the same historical reduction ratios – we end up with negative six motels to house 314.7 people consisting of 27.6 households.

In October 2022 there were 381 children in emergency motel accommodation. This has only reduced by 75 as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 to 306. In contrast the 498 adults have reduced to 276, which is a 222 reduction during the same period. These statistics don’t correlate with the household number reduction, and appear to

fabricate the ongoing need for continued emergency housing motels, based on the inflated large number of children needing housing.

These monthly dashboards are being used to base important decisions upon. They need to be accurate.

MHUD and MSD have been clever about reducing some numbers on paper, but can they be relied upon to reduce the number of people in emergency housing motels in the next year?

Why did the homeless people exiting emergency housing reduce faster in the first year by 38.6%, to October 2023, and then slow down to only 18.6% to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024?

Will MSD actually stop relocating people from other parts of New Zealand?

Will MSD or MHUD close Te Pokapu, or stop issuing MSD grants, which is the triage centre for out of town homeless people?

These last two acts would reduce the number of motel units required, without any need for analysis of bogus dashboards or extension of resource consents for continued use of motels as emergency housing.

Tracey McLeod

# ROTORUA TEMPORARY HOUSING DASHBOARD - MHUD - Reduction Analysis 8.8.24

collated by Tracey McLeod - Advocate & Analyst

Month	Total	CEH	EH- SNG	Transitional	COVID-19	Adults	Children	SNG, CEH, HUD										
	Households							Contracted &										
	Temporary							Transitional										
	housing							Motels										
Oct-22	435	180	213	15	27	498	381	45										
Nov-22	408	-27	198	18	168	-45	15	0	27	0	468	-30	372	-9	42	-3		
Dec-22	* ICH 354	353	-55	176	-22	138	-30	15	0	24	-3	411	-57	321	-51	33	-9	
Jan-23	348	345	-8	177	1	129	-9	15	0	24	0	402	-9	321	0	33	0	
Feb-23	375	30	195	18	141	12	15	0	24	0	438	36	330	9	32	-1		
Mar-23	381	6	195	0	147	6	15	0	24	0	450	12	345	15	30	-2		
Apr-23	339	-42	186	-9	120	-27	12	-3	21	-3	390	-60	306	-39	30	0		
May-23	327	324	-15	180	-6	114	-6	9	-3	21	0	378	-12	312	6	28	-2	
Jun-23	327	324	0	189	9	105	-9	9	0	21	0	378	0	312	0	27	-1	
Jul-23	315	-12	186	-3	102	-3	9	0	18	-3	375	-3	324	12	25	-2		
Aug-23	288	291	-24	165	-21	93	-9	15	6	18	0	342	-33	306	-18	22	-3	
Sep-23	297	294	3	168	3	93	0	15	0	18	0	351	9	315	9	22	0	
Oct-23	270	-24	168	0	69	-24	15	0	18	0	324	-27	294	-21	21	-1		
Annual reduction		-168		-12		-144		0		-9		-174		-87		-24		
Average monthly reduction		-14		-1.00		-12		0		-0.75		-14.50		-7.25		-2		
Nov-23	*HUDCM	258	-12	159	-9	63	-6	18	3	18	0	297	-27	291	-3	21	0	
Dec-23		246	252	-6	165	6	54	-9	18	0	15	-3	291	-6	288	-3	20	-1
Jan-24		249	255	3	162	-3	60	6	18	0	15	0	297	6	297	9	19	-1
Feb-24		249	-6	177	15	48	-12	15	-3	9	-6	300	3	324	27	18	-1	
Mar-24		252	255	6	189	12	39	-9	15	0	12	3	306	6	327	3	18	0
Apr-24		255	0	192	3	36	-3	15	0	12	0	306	0	345	18	18	0	
May-24		243	-12	183	-9	39	3	15	0	6	-6	300	-6	327	-18	17	-1	
Jun-24		222	-21	174	-9	30	-9	12	-3	6	0	276	-24	306	-21	16	-1	
YTD reduction		-48		6		-39		-3		-12		-48		12		-5		



Average monthly reduction	-4	0.5	-3.25	-0.25	-1	-4	1	-0.417
Overall Total reduction	-216	-6	-183	-0.25	-21.00	-222	-75	-24.417
Projected reduction (July 2024 to December 2025)	-194.4	-5.4	-164.7	-0.225	-18.9	-199.8	-67.5	-21.975
<b>Projected Balance at 31/12/2025</b>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>168.6</b>	<b>-134.7</b>	<b>11.775</b>	<b>-12.9</b>	<b>76.2</b>	<b>238.5</b>	<b>-5.98</b>

\* Independent Commissioner Hearing Decision

\* COVID-19 changed to Housing & Urban Development Contracted Motels

\* **MHUD errors in reports - use red figure as being correct**

4 - Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant  
 10 - Contracted Emergency Housing  
 1 - Housing Urban & Development contracted  
 1 - Transitional

Summary of analysis

\* As at July 2024 in Daily Post - there are 549 people staying in 186 units - units divided into people - 2.95 ratio  
 (174 households x 107% = 186 units)

\* Projected balance at 31/12/2025 based on track record - 314.7 people divided by 2.95 ratio would still require 106 units  
 (3 motels would still be required for the capacity of 106 units)

\* As at October 2022, 435 households consisted of 498 adults and 381 children = 879 people - 2.02 ratio

\* As at June 2024, 222 households consisted of 276 adults and 306 children = 582 people - 2.62 ratio

\* Overall reduction of 216 households, only resulted in a reduction of 222 adults and 75 children = 297 people - 1.37 ratio  
 (Suggests MHUD record keeping of number of adults and children does not correlate with number of households)  
 (Adults reduced by 44.5% between October 2022 and June 2024, Children reduced by only 19.6%)

\* Projected balance at 31/12/2025 based on track record 27.6 households consist of 314.7 people - 11.4 ratio  
 (Suggests MHUD record keeping of number of adults and children does not correlate with number of households)  
 (27.6 households x 107% = 29 units)

\* Note the households reduced at a faster rate in the first year at 38.6%, as opposed to the second year at 18.6%

\* Note Transitional Housing is not reducing