

BEFORE THE HEARING PANEL

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of Proposed Plan Change 8 to the Operative Rotorua District Plan

**SUPPLEMENTARY STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF PAULA CATHERINE MEREDITH
ON BEHALF OF ROTORUA LAKES COUNCIL
(Overland Flowpath Rule Implementation)
Dated 5 June 2026**

TOMPKINS | WAKE

Wendy Embling (Wendy.Embling@tompkinswake.co.nz)

1105 Arawa Street
PO Box 248
Rotorua 3040
New Zealand

Ph: (07) 347 9466
tompkinswake.com

Introduction

1. My full name is Paula Catherine Meredith and I am the Land Development Engineering Manager at Rotorua Lakes Council. I have held this position for the last seven years.
2. My qualifications and experience are set out in my Statement of Evidence dated 13 March 2026 (**Primary Evidence**). I repeat the confirmation in my Primary Evidence that I have read and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses.
3. I respond to questions raised by the Hearings Panel in relation to the identification of overland flowpaths and the benefits of proposed rule NH-R5 in the context of other provisions within, and external to, the District Plan.

How Overland Flowpaths are identified

4. Council's Land Development team, for which I am the manager, already considers overland flowpaths, stormwater disposal and potential effects on neighbouring properties arising from the changes to ground levels and flowpaths as part of its review of building consent and subdivision consent applications. For building consent applications, we review topographical data and flood hazard mapping to identify whether a site is affected by overland flowpaths. We also review the Council property file to see if there is any historical information about flooding issues on the property. For subdivision applications, we undertake a site visit to assess whether existing or proposed structures, including retaining walls, may have an impact on the modelled flowpaths. As the flood mapping information continues to improve, we intend to make greater use of GIS tools to help indicate the likely location of overland flowpaths.

5. I accept that it may not be straightforward for members of the public to identify where overland flowpaths are located without reference to Council maps and information. However, the Land Development team's role in screening applications is to identify potential natural hazard matters that should be addressed when building and/or developing a site.
6. I note that proposed Rule NH-R5 focuses on changes to the entry and exit points of an overland flowpath, protecting the capacity of the overland flowpath, and protecting any adjacent properties from changes that may adversely affect their properties. I consider the current title of the rule to be potentially misleading and that an alternative title, such as "Changes to Overland Flowpaths", would better reflect the intent of the rule, along with a corresponding amendment to the 'where' clause (e.g. "A ~~The~~ building or structure that results in....")

Clarification of the benefits of the Overland Flowpath rule

7. The Hearings Panel sought clarification of the benefits of proposed Rule NH-R5, noting that provisions of the plan already enable consideration of overland flowpaths.
8. I agree that there are already mechanisms to enable consideration and protection of overland flowpaths, both inside and outside of the District Plan. The Land Development team, in its consideration of building and resource consent applications, already makes use of:
 - (a) The natural hazard provisions of the Building Act 2004, which enable Council to consider the worsening of flooding on other properties.

- (b) Section 106 of the Resource Management Act 1991, which allows Council to refuse subdivision consent in areas subject to significant natural hazards, including flooding.
 - (c) The requirement for risk assessments of buildings in higher flood hazard areas under NH-R4, along with associated policies and matters of discretion, which refer to overland flowpaths.
9. In my view, the primary benefit of Rule NH-R5, along with the related performance standards for earthworks, is to clarify landowners' obligations and provide an additional avenue for enforcement, particularly in the situation of activities, such as landscaping, fencing and minor ground alterations, that are not considered as part of a subdivision or building consent and can create adverse effects for neighbouring properties. Rule NH-R5 provides a targeted and practical mechanism focused on protecting flowpath function—particularly entry and exit points and overall capacity—without requiring precise delineation of flowpath boundaries and complements existing tools under the Building Act, Resource Management Act, and other plan provisions.

Conclusion

10. In conclusion, Rule NH-R5 and the associated earthworks standards are a useful addition to the planning framework. They strengthen the Council's ability to manage flood risk by addressing gaps in existing controls and enabling enforcement where informal or minor works alter overland flowpaths.

11. Retaining NH-R5 supports the broader PC 8 approach of managing natural hazards using effects-based provisions informed by up-to-date information, rather than relying solely on fixed mapped overlays.

Paula Catherine Meredith
Dated 5 June 2026