

BEFORE INDEPENDENT HEARING COMMISSIONERS

IN THE MATTER OF the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER OF Proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1:
Waikato and Waipa River Catchment

**HEARING STATEMENT OF NICK KING
FOR NEW ZEALAND THOROUGHbred BREEDERS ASSOCIATION AND ORS
DATE 23 APRIL 2019
SUBMITTERS 72503, 73067, 73095, 82030, 81968, 81978, 81976**



New Zealand Thoroughbred Breeders' Association
9 Anzac Street
Cambridge 3434
New Zealand

Introduction

1. My full name is Nick King.
2. I have owned and operated the family run Brighthill Farm, Tauwhare Road for the last 22 years. This property is outside the Waikato and Waipa catchments of PC1. It is a successful Horse Breeding operation and has many clients from not only NZ but all around the world including England, Ireland ,France, UAE,and Australia.
3. Before operating Brighthill Farm I worked at many of the major farms around the world including Coolmore Stud in my native Ireland, Lex Stud in Japan, Brookdale Farm in USA, Baramul Stud in Australia and Cambridge Stud here in New Zealand.
4. I have spent over 15 years on committees and councils of New Zealand Thoroughbred Breeders Association (NZTBA). I have been president of the Waikato Branch of the NZTBA and also of the Stud Masters Branch and I am currently Vice President of the NZTBA.

Scope of Statement

5. I will provide information from my experience in the thoroughbred industry on horse property management including the running of our property Brighthill Farm.

Background

6. Brighthill Farm is a 270 acre stallion standing and horse breeding operation in Tauwhare, 15 mins out of Cambridge. The farm has been operating for 22 years and caters for both New Zealand and overseas horse breeders. The farm has successfully grown and developed in this time and prides itself on delivering a very high quality product to our clients. In the 2017-18 racing season we were the only farm to produce two Group One race winners in Australia from the one NZ farm.
7. A very important part of our business and indeed our point of difference internationally is to have a well maintained well farmed property with high quality pasture and land. I consider that the less pressure and better maintained the land and pasture are the better chance you have of producing better race horses.
8. Our core business is standing stallions and breeders then send us mares to get them in foal to our stallions. Our optimum number of stallions is 3 which is considered a small to medium size stallion farm in New Zealand.

Equine Farm Management

9. Below are some points to help give a picture of the scale of our operation and our level of impact on waterways.
 - a) Stocking Rates.
 - i) We have around 40 resident mares that are with us all year around and another 30 foals that are born from September to November and stay with their mothers up to around March when they are weaned. Most of these are then sold as yearlings at the sales at 14-15 months of age in the

following January. We also have approximately another 10 horses that are stallions, racehorses, spelling or teasers.

- ii) These numbers increase a lot in the spring as the mares come to visit the stallions but we are never forced to over stock as a lot of mares are “walk ins” only coming to the the stallions from outside farms for the mating only then return to the outside farm.
 - iii) This seasonal increase would on average see the numbers of mares on the farm peak for a short period of time to around 90. This seasonal peak comes late October early November and lasts around three weeks as we then see the mares returning to the breeders in foal. It is also helpful that this peak occurs around the biggest time for pasture growth.
- b) Pasture Management.
- i) As mentioned, pasture management is a very important part of our business. We annually soil test and apply fertiliser as a result of the tests to make sure we are applying only what we need so there is no over fertilising. It is important that we get this right as it affects the growth rates of our young racehorses and can have disastrous results in the production of athletic horses if we get it wrong. This is also the main reason little to no urea is used on horse breeding farms.
 - ii) Under sowing harrowing and topping are also used extensively to maintain and improve both the pasture and the land.
- c) Streams and Waterways.
- i) We have two streams that go directly through the farm but are all fenced to keep stock out and away from them. This is common practise on horse farms primarily from a safety point of view but also to enhance these areas visually on the farm.
- d) Other stock.
- i) We carry 25 head of yearling to two year old cattle on the farm they are used to graze through the paddocks after the horses which is very beneficial for weed and worm control. We never carry big heavy cattle that could potentially pug up wet ground.
- e) Stables and Yards.
- i) We have 22 boxes and five sand yards. These are used the most from November to January for yearling sales preparation. The rest of the year they are only used for things like weaning and bringing foals or yearlings into boxes so tha the farrier can trim their feet. They are sometimes used for health reasons if horses need confinement.
- f) Wet Weather Management.
- i) Because the wettest times of the year corresponds with the lowest stocking rates, we can manage the pasture well. We also make sure that the numbers per paddock at these times are low to avoid any pugging and pasture damage. Our business revolves on ensuring we supply our clients with good attractive well-maintained pasture in the paddocks.
- g) Waste Management.

- i) Our biggest waste management issue would involve our dung heaps. The bedding used in our boxes is shavings or fine wood chip which are 100% untreated. When the boxes are cleaned it will include dung along with the waste shavings and wood chip. The shaving and wood chip absorb any urine losses. We collect this in a confined area away from the waterways and over time this breaks down into a high-quality compost which we use on the farm or taken off farm in trailer loads for gardens etc. Because it is mostly wood chip and shavings there is very minimal run off from this.

Dated: 23 April 2019

Nick King

Address:

Bright Hill Farm
1352 Tauwhare Road
RD 7
Hamilton 3287