

STATEMENT OF BRENDON JOHN SHANKS ON BEHALF OF SOUTHERN LINK
PROPERTY LIMITED

6 OCTOBER 2026

1. INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

1.1 My full name is Brendon John Shanks. My qualifications and experience, and my role in the Southern Link Inland Port Project (**SLIP**) are set out in my Noise Assessment report dated 22 July 2026 provided to the Panel in response to Minute 3 (**Assessment**).

1.2 The Panel has provided a list of questions to Acoustic Engineering Services Limited in Minute 17, to which William Reeve (Panel Advisor) and then Jon Styles (for DCC) have responded. Minute 18 has asked for comments from White Robe Lodge (**WRL**) in relation to noise effects on their horse foaling operation, to which they have responded. In this statement I provide a response to specific matters within my areas of expertise contained in:

- (a) Minute 17;
- (b) Panel Appointed Acoustic Expert 1 Oct Response to Minute 17 (William Reeve);
- (c) Response to Minute 17 – Statement of expert evidence Jon Styles for DCC (Jon Styles); and
- (d) WRL response to Minute 18 (Karen Stewart).

Code of Conduct

1.3 I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in section 9 of the Environment Court Practice Note 2023 and have complied with it in preparing this evidence. I confirm that the issues addressed in this evidence are within my area of expertise, and I have not omitted material facts known to me that might alter or detract from my evidence.

2. RESPONSE TO MINUTE 17 QUESTION 8(a)

Question a: Is DCC condition 60B that there be no nighttime operations in Stage 1 no longer necessary in light of the applicant's proposed 40dB_{L_{Aeq}} noise limit at Stage 1 and 2.

- 2.1** A nighttime noise limit of 40 dB _{L_{Aeq}} is proposed by SLPL for Stages 1 and 2 at receivers that are more than 350m from the Industrial zone. 40 dB _{L_{Aeq}} is the permitted District Plan noise limit in this location. 45 dB _{L_{Aeq}} is proposed for Stage 3 only.
- 2.2** Receivers that are within 350m of the Industrial zone would have a nighttime noise limit of 45 dB _{L_{Aeq}}, across all three Stages. 45 dB _{L_{Aeq}} is the permitted District Plan noise limit in this location, which includes 273 Dukes Road North (being WRL).
- 2.3** I do not consider that a condition restricting all nighttime activity on the site is appropriate.
- 2.4** Mr Reeve considers that the condition is necessary to ensure the operation of the site “remains in accordance with the Application”. The SLIP Application does not include restricting all nighttime activity on the site during Stage 1.¹
- 2.5** The noise assessment has considered noise from the key noise generating activities associated with the site and has noted that these key noise generating activities are not proposed during the nighttime for Stage 1. However, I do not consider that it is appropriate to restrict activities that could occur that would comply with permitted activity noise limits for the site (e.g. activity contained in the warehouses) and would result in insignificant noise effects. That would impose restrictions on what the district plan anticipates as a permitted activity.
- 2.6** For example, Stage 1 activity may include infrequent truck arrivals just prior to and after the day-time period – for example 1-2 trucks a day between

¹ Refer to Section 2.27 of the substantive application document which describes the operational hours of the SLIP.

6am-7am and 1 truck less than once a week between 10pm-11pm. Trucks would pull onto the site, park up, and turn off their engines, until they are unloaded during daytime hours. This activity would comfortably comply with permitted nighttime noise limits and would be an insignificant change to the noise from existing noise generated by vehicles on Dukes Road North. In addition, noise from such activities does not rely on shielding from the Stage 2 warehouse buildings to comfortably comply with the permitted nighttime noise limits.

- 2.7 For these reasons, I do not consider the proposed condition to restrict all nighttime activities in Stage 1 reasonable or necessary.

3. **RESPONSE TO MINUTE 17 QUESTION 8 (b)**

Question b: Is DCC condition 60D (sequencing of the construction of the Stage 2 warehouses) no longer necessary in light of the applicant's proposed 40dB LAeq noise limit at Stage 1 and 2.

- 3.1 Mr Reeve correctly identifies that the dwelling at 273 Dukes Road North is the critical receiver that would benefit from shielding from the Stage 2 warehouses. As described above in paragraph 2.1, the permitted nighttime noise limit of 45 dB L_{Aeq} would apply at this receiver during Stages 1, 2 and 3. I agree with Mr Reeve that, to ensure compliance with the nighttime noise limit at this receiver, the Stage 2 warehouse buildings would need to be in place prior to the commencement of nighttime container stacking.

4. **RESPONSE TO MINUTE 17 QUESTION 8 (c)**

Question c: Is the Panel correct in our understanding that an increase in noise levels up to 3dB is unlikely to be perceived by sensitive receivers, but a 5dB increase would be clearly noticeable and may cause significant adverse health effects?

- 4.1 I agree with Mr Styles and Mr Reeve that a 3 dB increase is typically considered to be just perceptible or just noticeable when it occurs quickly but would be less noticeable if the increase occurred over a period of weeks. Similarly, a 5 dB increase would be clearly noticeable if it occurs quickly, but less so over a period of time.

- 4.2** I also agree that a 5 dB increase does not necessarily result in “significant adverse health effects”. As described by Mr Reeve and Mr Styles the absolute noise level is more relevant than the change in noise level in relation to health effects.
- 4.3** With respect to the proposed increase in noise limit at dwellings to the east of the SLIP in Stage 3 at dwellings that are more than 350m from the industrial zone, the proposed noise limit of 45 dB L_{Aeq} relates to a worst-case 15 minute period. Whereas the onset of health effects described in the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines² are based on a level of 45 dB L_{Aeq} for an 8 hour night-time period for an ongoing period. My predicted noise levels from noise modelling are based on a busy 15 minute period during the night-time. Operational noise from the SLIP is expected to be considerably lower than 45 dB L_{Aeq} over the 8 hour night-time period.
- 4.4** Based on this, I agree with Mr Reeve that the increase in noise limit from 40 to 45 dB L_{Aeq} in Stage 3 and at dwellings that are more than 350m from the Industrial zone would not be expected to cause significant adverse health effects and I consider that a night-time noise limit of 45 dB L_{Aeq} is reasonable for these receivers.

5. RESPONSE TO MINUTE 17 QUESTION 8 (d)

Question d: Based on your understanding of the applicant's operational noise modelling is 43dB $L_{Aeq(15min)}$ achievable at the notional boundaries East of the site at 345 Puddle Alley (owned by the applicant) or at 243 Puddle Alley?

- 5.1** The predicted noise levels from the noise modelling show compliance with 43 dB $L_{Aeq(15min)}$ during the nighttime at receivers to the east of the site that are not owned by the Applicant (including 243 Puddle Alley).
- 5.2** 245 Puddle Alley is owned by the applicant and therefore based on the proposed consent conditions, compliance with the noise limits at the notional boundary of the dwelling on this property is not required. I

² World Health Organization (WHO) Guideline Values for Community Noise (Berglund and Lindvall, 1999)

understand that SLPL has filed an affected approval form confirming that it accepts effects on 245 Puddle Alley.

6. RESPONSE TO MINUTE 17 QUESTION 8 (e)

Question e: Are there any practical difficulties for noise monitoring and compliance with operational noise limits if the Panel were to provide for an increase in noise levels, either 43dB $L_{Aeq(15min)}$ or 45dB $L_{Aeq(15min)}$ for the properties east of the SLIP (Puddle Alley) but retain 40 dB $L_{Aeq(15mins)}$ elsewhere for properties that are more than 350m from the Industrial Zone.

6.1 I do not consider that there are insurmountable issues with monitoring operational noise levels of 43 or 45 $L_{Aeq(15min)}$ for dwellings east of the SLIP and 40 dB $L_{Aeq(15min)}$ for dwellings further away. However, these noise limits would require attended monitoring to ensure that noise from other sources was excluded. This is typical for operational noise monitoring that is to show compliance with noise limits.

7. RESPONSE TO MINUTE 17 QUESTION 8 (f)

Question f: Is the noise mitigation for 273 Dukes Road North provided for in condition 71B, appropriate and reasonable regardless of whether the noise limit for Stage 3 at the notional boundary of 273 Dukes Road North is 40, 43 or 45dB $L_{Aeq(15min)}$ to address increased heavy vehicles road noise at Stage 1, 2 and 3, or just Stage 2 and 3, or just Stage 3?

7.1 As detailed in Section 2.2, the proposed night-time noise limit at 273 Dukes Road North is 45 dB $L_{Aeq(15min)}$ for all Stages as the dwelling is within 350m of the existing industrial zone, reflecting the existing permitted District Plan noise limits.

7.2 I do not consider that noise mitigation in the form of building envelope upgrades for the dwelling at 273 Dukes Road North is necessary. The predicted noise levels at 273 Dukes Road North can comply with the relevant district plan permitted noise limits from the operation of the site during all stages and in doing so, operational noise would be at a reasonable level that does not require further mitigation.

- 7.3** While noise from road traffic is likely to increase due to the SLIP operation, noise from use of public roads is specifically exempted from noise limits to avoid restricting activity. The predicted road traffic noise level with the additional vehicles from the SLIP operation is 59 dB $L_{Aeq(24\text{ hour})}$. As was noted in the Noise Joint Witness Statement, this is reasonably common at dwellings near roads in New Zealand.
- 7.4** I acknowledge that acoustic treatment to the dwelling at 273 Dukes Road North would reduce internal noise levels from all noise sources, including existing road traffic and aircraft. I note that the predicted noise level from road traffic at 273 Dukes Road North does not include potential for additional vehicles related to other sites. For example, an activity may be established in the existing industrial zone that generates significant heavy vehicle movements as part of a permitted activity. The resulting increase in road traffic noise would be outside the control of SLPL and highlights why mitigation of noise from the public road is not typically required in situations such as this.
- 7.5** Regardless, if mitigation is deemed necessary, an internal noise level of 40 dB $L_{Aeq(24\text{ hour})}$ in habitable spaces is commonly used for road traffic sources, and I consider that it is an appropriate criterion in relation to the traffic noise increase as a result of SLIP operations. Based on the predicted noise level of 59 dB $L_{Aeq(24\text{ hour})}$ a reduction of up to 19 decibels would be required at the most affected rooms facing towards Dukes Road North.
- 7.6** Achieving this noise reduction is likely to require windows to be closed in some spaces. It is typical to require mechanical ventilation to spaces where windows are required to be closed, to allow fresh air. Mr Styles has also recommended requirements to provide heating and cooling to such spaces³. I do not consider it appropriate to require a heating and cooling system because the primary function of the mechanical ventilation is to replace the fresh air that would be achieved from an open window or door.
- 7.7** The District Plan includes a performance requirement for mechanical ventilation for spaces where windows are required to be closed to achieve

³ Statement of expert evidence of Jon Styles for DCC, Section 6.13 (b)

adequate sound insulation⁴. This rule provides the following performance requirement:

"9.3.1 Acoustic Insulation

5. Rooms to which this acoustic insulation standard applies must be supplied with a positive supplementary source of ventilation that achieves a minimum of 7.5 Litres per second per person and does not compromise the acoustic insulation performance of the façade, to enable adequate ventilation when windows are closed."

- 7.8 I consider that this mechanical ventilation performance requirement is appropriate for habitable spaces where windows must be closed to achieve the internal noise criterion, if mitigation is considered necessary at 273 Dukes Road North.

8. **RESPONSE TO MINUTE 18 QUESTION 9**

In light of WRL concerns about animal welfare and staff safety in the event of sudden unpredictable sounds, what measures does WRL currently employ to protect horses (particularly Mare's (sic) and foals) from loud noises. For example, Mrs Stewart mentioned fireworks as a loud noise event at the Conditions Hearing, and the applicant's acoustic evidence refers to loud noise events such as boy racers, or rescue helicopter flights. What safety measures would WRL employ if for example the Council undertook roadworks on Dukes Road North along the WRL property boundary, or if hypothetically neighbours used chainsaws, hedge trimmers, etc to maintain or removed shelter belts or trees, or in the event of loud farm machinery or equipment during the breeding season?

- 8.1 White Robe Lodge (WRL) has commented that they are particularly concerned about "sudden noise" from industrial activity. The only sudden noise that I expect may occur on the site would be container drops due to poor handling. The frequency of such events is purely down to operator skill/behaviour. In my experience assessing noise from similar activity (e.g.

⁴ DCC Second Generation District Plan, Rule 9.3.1 Acoustic Insulation, part 5

Port Otago at Port Chalmers) significant noise events are infrequent. This has been discussed in the Noise Joint Witness Statement and addressed via the Operational Noise Management Plan.

8.2 Machinery and audible alarms on site would be adequately shielded by barriers and buildings (from Stage 2) such that, while noise may be audible, I do not expect the magnitude of noise would meet the “sudden noise” character. I do not consider that the location of the noise sources (ground based or airborne from the rescue helicopter or other aerodrome aircraft) is particularly relevant. However, it is likely that noise from aircraft has a build-up period that would alert horses to the event, rather than a sudden onset.

8.3 WRL considers that boy racer noise events are not an appropriate comparison. However, the reference to this noise source came from audio measured during monitoring near their site. Aggressive acceleration of vehicles from the rail crossing is the most likely cause of this. These are sudden events that already occur on the public road adjacent to the WRL site (illegal or otherwise).

8.4 The WRL land closest to the SLIP site is located in the 350m buffer zone around the existing Industrial zoned area. This includes a higher night-time 75 dB L_{Amax} limit than other rural land that indicates an expectation of higher noise events from industrial activity.

9. RESPONSE TO MINUTE 18 QUESTION 10/11

[10] The Noise Expert Joint Witness Statement includes a number of recommendations that the applicant may employ to reduce noise in the vicinity of the WRL foaling unit, including:

a) No tonal reverse alarms in Exchange 1

b) New hybrid and low noise plant to be prioritised at the northern end of the site.

c) Provisions in the Noise Management Plan to require active and ongoing engagement with WRL to understand the timing of sensitive operations of most concern and apply additional practicable measures to mitigate effects even where there is compliance with noise limits.

d) Possible limits on noisy activities on site likely to generate the 'surprise' elements of concern and prioritise low noise equipment such as straddles rather than reach stackers during sensitive periods

[11] If these measures, if practical from the SLIP operations perspective, were employed would this provide some comfort that sudden unpredictable noises may be reduced at the foaling unit?

9.1 I note that the potential mitigation measures b) and d) listed above are subject to operational practicability.

9.2 Based on my experience with this type of activity and the mitigation options available, I consider that the mitigation measures in the application represent the Best Practicable Option to avoid unreasonable noise. The other experts have agreed that the site design has carefully considered noise emissions to the WRL land and that minimising noise emissions has been an important design consideration (JWS Section 4.1).

9.3 The WRL land is in an area that currently receives some high noise events and as detailed above, is in an area that the District Plan has identified as likely to be exposed to noise from industrial activity. I do not consider that any additional management measures are required to address noise effects on the WRL land.

Dated: 6 October 2026



Brendon Shanks