

BEFORE THE HEARING PANEL APPOINTED BY THE CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

Under the	Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA or Act)
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In the matter of	Proposed Plan Change 19 to the Christchurch City Council: Marshs Road Industrial
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Statement of Evidence of Dr Leigh Bull for Christchurch International Airport Limited

9 October 2026

INTRODUCTION

- 1 My full name is Leigh Sandra Bull.
- 2 I am the Director of BlueGreen Ecology Limited, an ecological consultancy established in April 2023. My core work area is in avifauna. I am experienced in preparing assessments of ecological effects on terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and oceanic avifauna, as well as avifauna monitoring programmes, habitat surveys and restoration plans. Prior to my current role, I was working as a Senior Ecologist at Boffa Miskell Limited (*BML*) for approximately 16 years and was an Associate Partner and then Partner from 2018 to 2023.
- 3 I hold the qualifications of a Doctor of Philosophy (Ecology and Biodiversity), Master of Science (First Class Honours, Ecology) and Bachelor of Science (Zoology) from Victoria University of Wellington. Both my post-graduate qualifications / research topics were in the field of Ornithology (birds).
- 4 I have approximately 19 years' professional experience advising on avifauna matters. I have worked on a number of major infrastructure development projects throughout New Zealand including airports, wind farms, Roads of National Significance, coastal share pathways, solar farms, Port and marina developments.
- 5 I have worked on the following airport projects:
 - (a) Advising Christchurch International Airport Ltd (CIAL) with respect to land-use management and bird strike risk issues, including:
 - (i) Providing expert evidence on this matter for the Selwyn and Waimakariri District Plan review hearings;
 - (ii) Preparation of avifauna monitoring guidelines for CIAL off-airport sites;
 - (iii) Reviewing resource consent applications which include stormwater measures and are located within the Birdstrike Management Area (BSMA) as identified in the Christchurch District Plan (CDP). The purpose of such reviews is to identify if the stormwater basin design align with the specific standards outlined in Chapter 6.7.4.3 (Activity status tables - Birdstrike Management Areas) of the CDP;
 - (iv) Preparation of guidance notes with respect to balancing biodiversity and the risk of bird strike; and

- (v) Providing advice regarding the potential impacts of the Kōwhai Park solar farm on avifauna.
 - (b) Preparation of an avifauna effects assessment and expert evidence for Nelson Airport (NAL) with respect to seeking variation to its designations to extend its main runway.
 - (c) Advising Hawkes Bay Airport with regard to their Wildlife Hazard Management Plan and Species Action Plans to assist with bird strike, as well as assessing the potential effects of their proposed solar farm on avifauna.
- 6 Also of relevance to these proceedings is my extensive experience working at wind farm developments. To date I have been the avifauna expert advising on the development of 10 wind farms in New Zealand. For such projects this involves collecting and analysing data on avifauna habitats, populations and movements across the wind farm site and wider landscape in order to understand the collision risks.
- 7 My professional memberships include:
- (a) The Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand; and
 - (b) The New Zealand Ornithological Society.
- 8 I served in a voluntary role as the Editor of Notornis, the Ornithological Society of New Zealand's peer-reviewed scientific journal, from 2016 to 2018.
- 9 I am a Certified Environmental Practitioner (Ecology Specialist) with the Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand and am bound by the Institute's code of ethics.
- 10 I have been engaged by Christchurch International Airport Limited (CIAL) to provide avifauna bird strike evidence on Private Plan Change 19 (PC19), Marshs Road Industrial. My evidence addresses the bird strike implications of the proposed industrial rezoning and the provisions sought by CIAL. I am authorised to present this evidence on its behalf.
- 11 In the preparation of this evidence, I have reviewed the following documents:
- (a) the Council's section 42A report and recommended provisions;
 - (b) the plan change proponent's planning (Mr Kim McCracken) and avifauna (Ms Elizabeth Civil) evidence dated 2 October 2026; and

- (c) the Christchurch District Plan.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- 12 While this is not an Environment Court hearing I have read and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses in the Environment Court Practice Note 2023. This evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying on material produced by another person. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express.

SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 13 I have been asked by CIAL to provide expert comment in regard to:
- (a) The risk of bird strike associated with the proposed Plan Change 19 (PC19); and
 - (b) Potential planning provisions that may act to decrease that risk of bird strike.

BIRD STRIKE – PC19

- 14 I am in agreement with much of Ms Civil's assessment of the risk of bird strike associated with the proposed Plan Change 19 as outlined in her evidence. She states at Paragraph 95:

"The potential for PC19 and future industrial development to increase bird strike risk to CIAL aircraft operations, depends on whether future zone permitted activities, building design and Site operations create bird-attracting resources or features that result in persistent or large aggregations of aviation-relevant species and associated movements in relation to CIAL. Future development should avoid creating conditions that support regular or large aggregations of birds through the management of readily available food resources, waste, feeding opportunities or suitable perching and roosting structures. I recommend that these matters are appropriately considered through the planning mechanisms identified through planning and legal advice".

- 15 Also, at Paragraph 96 she states:

"... The proposed rezoning to IGZ and IHZ represents a small incremental change within an established industrial environment, although it would provide for a broader range of industrial activities than the existing RUFZ. There is therefore potential for a secondary bird strike pathway if future development provides suitable food sources or facilitates persistent

feeding, roosting or congregation of flocking species, resulting in repeated movements between feeding and roosting areas. The significance of this pathway would depend on the species involved, the number of birds using the Site, the size and persistence of any aggregation, potential cumulative changes within the wider airport environment, and the frequency and direction of associated movements in relation to CIAL.”

- 16 Thus, Ms Civil acknowledges that there is the potential for an increase in bird strike risk associated with PC19, but that these matters could be addressed through planning mechanisms. I also agree with Ms Civil on this approach, and to that end I worked with CIAL’s planning expert (Mr Ryan Brosnahan) to prepare a set of draft provisions which including activity specific standards for activities that could occur within IGZ and IHZ and which have been identified (including by Ms Civil) as having the potential to increase the risk of bird strike.

CONCLUSION

- 17 As identified by Ms Civil, and to which I agree, some of the activities permitted by the proposed rezoning to IGZ and IHZ do have the potential to increase the risk of bird strike.
- 18 However, the provisions (to be presented by Mr Brosnahan) address the concerns I have regarding the potential bird strike risk.

Dated this 9th day of October 2026



Dr Leigh Bull

On behalf of Christchurch International Airport Limited