SUBMISSION

Submission: Carterton District Council - Rating Review 2026

To: submissions@cdc.govt.nz

Date: 23rd October 2026

Contact: James McDevitt, Head of Policy and Advocacy
Ia Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand
james@transporting.nz 021 220 3873

About Ia Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand

Ia Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand (Transporting New Zealand) is a national membership association representing the road freight transport industry. Our 1,200 members (with a combined fleet of 14,000 heavy vehicles) operate urban, rural and inter-regional commercial freight transport services throughout the country.

As the peak body and authoritative voice of the road freight sector, Transporting New Zealand helps trucking operators drive successful, safe, sustainable businesses. Our strategic priorities are:

- Providing one industry voice for advocacy
- Promoting the road freight transport industry
- Attracting talent and promoting workforce development
- Supporting our members and customers
- Sustainability, safety and responsible emissions reduction

New Zealand's road freight transport industry employs 33,000 people (1.2% of the total workforce), and has a gross annual turnover in the order of $6 billion. This is part of a wider transport sector that employs 108,000 people and contributes 4.8 percent of New Zealand's GDP. Road freight transport accounts for 93% of the total tonnage of freight moved in New Zealand (MoT National Freight Demands Study 2018).

Introduction

1. Carterton District Council is proposing a new targeted roading rate that would shift a significantly larger share of road funding costs onto farming and forestry properties based on estimated freight movements generated by those land uses.
2. We support the Council's Rating Review overall objectives of fairer and sustainable road funding as well-maintained local roads are critical to businesses and communities.

Freight tonnage is not a good proxy for road impact

3. The proposed model links a significant share of roading costs to the volume of freight generated by different land uses. This does not sufficiently reflect how road wear occurs. Actual pavement impact depends on several factors, including:
    a. axle loads and vehicle configuration;
    b. the number and length of trips;
    c. whether travel occurs on local roads or state highways;
    d. the standard and condition of the roads used; and
    e. vehicle loading and backhaul utilisation.
4. These factors can produce very different road impacts for the same freight tonnage. A rate based on estimated freight from primary production creates a false sense of accuracy and ignores the downstream freight task and associated roading costs.
5. Furthermore, on a per hectare per year basis truck movements for forestry are about half that of diary[1]. Which is unsurprising given plantation forests are harvested about every 28 years, while dairy farms produce and move product annually and throughout the year.
6. We are also concerned that the model concentrates costs where freight originates, potentially treating farmers and forestry owners as the primary sources of pressure on the network. Road funding should be apportioned across all users and beneficiaries of the network in proportion to the costs they impose.
7. We also note that a large increase in rates for primary land use in one district could also encourage production or processing to shift outside that district, resulting in longer freight journeys and greater pressure on the wider road network.

Response to the consultation questions

1. **Which rating option you prefer?** Neither. We support reform, but not the Council's preferred approach.

If Council decides to go with their preferred approach, do you agree with:

2a. Introducing a targeted roading rate: No. Freight tonnage is too crude a proxy for road impact and does not adequately account for axle loading, trip distance, road type, existing road user charges or the wider beneficiaries of freight movements.

2b. Rebalancing the rural differential from 0.8 to 1.0: No position.

ENDS

[1] The Forest Harvest