

Hon Todd McClay

Minister of Agriculture
Minister of Forestry
Minister for Trade and Investment
Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs



Hon Chris Bishop
Minister for Infrastructure
By email: infrastructure.portfolio@parliament.govt.nz

TM010694 | AM26-0751

Dear Minister Bishop,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the FTAA-2606-1249 'The Rest' Project (the Project) application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024, as part of my responsibilities as Minister of Agriculture. My comments on this application are outlined below.

I am generally supportive of the referral of this project, 'The Rest'. Subject to the applicant providing appropriate evidence through the substantive application process, the Project appears to have the potential to deliver regional benefits.

I would like to highlight the proposed agriculture education institute, which includes student and staff accommodation and support facilities for practical activities. I am supportive of the promotion and increased availability of primary industry education. This benefits the wider primary sector through workforce development, innovation, and knowledge-sharing. I would like to learn more about student size, subjects and levels this agricultural education institute may cover.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback. I look forward to learning about the outcome of this application in due course.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Todd McClay'.

Hon Todd McClay
Minister of Agriculture



Minister of Conservation
Minister for Māori Crown Relations
Minister for Māori Development
Minister for Whānau Ora
Associate Minister of Housing

05 AUG 2026

Hon. Chris Bishop
Minister for Infrastructure
infrastructure.portfolio@parliament.govt.nz
Parliament Buildings
Private Bag 18041
WELLINGTON 6160

Tēnā koe Hon. Bishop

Thank you for your invitation to comment on the fast-track application for the proposed mixed-use development, 'The Rest', at Tauwhare in Waikato District.

Waikato District is projected to continue experiencing strong population growth and increasing demand for housing. The district, like many parts of New Zealand, is also experiencing an ageing population. Development of the scale proposed would contribute to meeting future housing demand while providing additional housing and accommodation options for older residents.

A range of matters are likely to be raised by local authorities. These can be considered if the project proceeds to the detailed assessment stage. They include the site's location outside identified growth areas, development on highly productive land, and natural hazard and geotechnical considerations, including acid sulphate soils, flooding, liquefaction and elevated groundwater conditions.

The proposal will also require further consideration of infrastructure and servicing arrangements. Assessment will be needed of wastewater servicing options, drinking water supply capacity, and stormwater effects on the Waikato Central drainage scheme. Transport impacts, public transport accessibility, and any reliance on infrastructure and services across local authority boundaries are also likely to be relevant matters for consideration.

These are significant issues, but they can be addressed by the Expert Panel, including through seeking comment from relevant local authorities. Accordingly, I have no objection from the housing portfolio perspective to the project being referred to the next stage.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Mauriora,

Hon Tama Potaka
Associate Minister of Housing

Hon Tama Potaka

Minister of Conservation
Minister for Māori Crown Relations
Minister for Māori Development
Minister for Whānau Ora
Associate Minister of Housing



By email: infrastructure.portfolio@parliament.govt.nz

Tēnā koe Minister Bishop,

Invitation to comment on The Rest project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

Thank you for the invitation to comment on The Rest project under section 17 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024.

I have considered the application and its alignment with my portfolios as Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti and Minister for Māori Development.

I support the application progressing and I encourage the applicant and the panel to have due regard to:

- relevant Treaty settlement legislation and instruments; and
- any feedback received from relevant Māori groups, as set out in the Treaty settlements and other obligations (Section 18) report.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Tama Whaitiri Potaka'.

Hon Tama Potaka

Te Minita mō Te Arawhiti me Te Minita Whanaketanga Māori
Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti and Minister for Māori Development

Hon Nicola Willis

Minister of Finance
Minister for Economic Growth
Minister for Social Investment



27 July 2026

Hon Chris Bishop
Minister for Infrastructure
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

REQ- 0036665

Dear Chris

Thank you for the opportunity to comment under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 on the referral applications for Out of Scope [redacted]
[redacted] The Rest (FTAA-2606-1249), Out of Scope [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]
[redacted].

I am providing these comments in my capacity as Minister for Economic Growth. They focus on whether each application is likely to deliver significant economic benefits under section 22(2)(a)(iv) of the Act, based on the information provided by the applicants. The quantitative estimates below are drawn from economic assessments prepared for the applicants.

Out of Scope

[Redacted content]

Out of Scope



The Rest, FTAA-2606-1249

The application is for a comprehensively planned mixed-use development across approximately 55 hectares at Tauwhare in the Waikato District. It would provide an agricultural education institute, approximately 36 rural-residential lots, a retirement village with around 125 independent living villas and 30 care suites, a neighbourhood commercial centre, storage and farming and equipment-hire facilities, open space, roading, and three-waters infrastructure.

According to the economic assessment provided by the applicant, total development costs are estimated at \$201 million. Over a five-year development period, the proposal is estimated to contribute \$122 million to GDP, comprising \$33 million in direct effects and \$89 million in indirect effects. It is also estimated to generate approximately \$71 million in wages and salaries and support approximately 830 FTE-years of employment. The assessment expresses this as 166 FTEs in each year of the assumed development period, comprising 48 direct and 118 indirect FTEs.

Once fully operational, the commercial, care, and agricultural education activities are estimated to support employment for approximately 107 people, equivalent to 88 ongoing FTEs, and generate approximately \$10.3 million in annual GDP and \$6.2 million in annual wages and salaries. The 88 FTEs comprise 44 in commercial activities, 25 at the care facility, and 19 at the agricultural education institute.

The wider benefits would be primarily regional. The proposal would provide approximately 125 retirement living villas, 30 care suites, and 35 net additional rural-residential dwellings in the Waikato District, increasing accommodation and aged-care capacity where the applicant's assessment identifies an existing supply shortfall. The agricultural education institute may also support regional workforce development and primary-sector skills formation.

On this basis, the proposal may deliver significant regional economic benefits under section 22(2)(a)(iv) of the Act, particularly through construction activity and ongoing employment across its commercial, care, and agricultural education components. It may also be relevant to section 22(2)(a)(iii), as the proposed rural-residential dwellings and retirement living units would increase housing and accommodation choice in the Waikato District.

Out of Scope



Out of Scope

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicola Willis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Nicola Willis
Minister for Economic Growth

Your written comments on a project under the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024

Project name	The Rest project
---------------------	------------------

Before the due date, for assistance on how to respond or about this template or with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

All sections of this form with an asterisk (*) must be completed.

1. Contact Details			
Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.			
*Portfolio	Seniors		
*First name	Hon Casey		
*Last name	Costello		
Contact person (if different from above)			
*Contact phone number	s 9(2)(a) [REDACTED]	Alternative	
*Email	[REDACTED] s 9(2)(a)		

2. Please provide your comments on this application
My comments are attached below.

Minister's signoff



Hon Casey Costello
Minister for Seniors

Date 23/7/2026

Hon Casey Costello

Minister of Customs
Minister for Seniors
Associate Minister of Health
Associate Minister of Immigration
Associate Minister of Police



Hon Chris Bishop
Minister for Infrastructure
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Fast-track Approvals Act referral application: The Rest project, FTAA-2606-1249

Dear Chris,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment as Minister for Seniors on this application for referral under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act).

I have considered whether this application is likely to 'increase the supply of housing, address housing needs, or contribute to a well-functioning urban environment (within the meaning of policy 1 of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020)', under s22(2)(a)(iii) of the Act, based on the information provided in the application. I will leave it to you and other relevant Ministers to assess the other criteria.

The following aspects of the project are likely to meet this criterion:

- the construction of a retirement village with approximately 125 independent living villa units and 30 integrated care facility suites, and
- a rural residential development with approximately 36 lots.

Based on this information, the project is suitable for referral to the fast-track process. If the application is referred, I would welcome the opportunity to comment on the project in more detail.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Hon Casey Costello, consisting of a large 'C' followed by a stylized 'K' and a horizontal line.

Hon Casey Costello
Minister for Seniors

Your written comments on a project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

Project name	The Rest
--------------	----------

Before the due date, for assistance on how to respond or about this template or with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

All sections of this form with an asterisk (*) must be completed.

1. Contact Details			
Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.			
Organisation name	Director-General of Conservation Statutory delegations are in place for the Department of Conservation (DOC / the Department) to provide commentary on behalf of the D-G.		
*First name	Shawn		
*Last name	Gardner		
Postal address			
*Contact phone number	s 9(2)(a)	Alternative	
*Email	Fast-track@doc.govt.nz ;		

2. Please provide your comments on this application

If you need more space, please attach additional pages. Please include your name, page numbers and the project name on the additional pages.

Note: All comments will be made available to the public and the applicant when the Ministry for the Environment proactively releases advice provided to the Minister for the Environment.

Manager's signoff



Linda Kirk

Fast Track Applications Manager

29 July 2026

Director-General of Conservation s17 comments

Project name	The Rest
Applicant name	Shannon Leigh Trust
Application number	FTAA-2606-1249
Project summary details	The Project is for mixed use subdivision and development, comprising: • An agricultural education institute; • A retirement village (approximately 125 villas and 30 integrated care facility suites, and supporting facilities); • Approximately 36 rural residential lots (ranging from around 2,500 to 3,500 m²); • A commercial centre including amenities and services; • Storage units; • Open space, roading and three waters infrastructure. The project area is approximately 55.27 hectares at 1073, 1171 and 1185 Tauwhare Road, Tauwhare, Waikato District. The applicant seeks the following approvals through the Fast-track approvals process to authorise the Project: • Resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991; • Wildlife Act Authority under the Wildlife Act 1953.

1 Overview of comments

1.1 Applicant Engagement

- 1.1.1 As the project includes an approval under a specified Act for which the Director-General of Conservation is the administering agency (being the Wildlife Act 1953), the applicant was required to notify DOC and allow 20 working days to respond before lodging the referral application in accordance with section 11 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the 'FTAA' or the 'Act').
- 1.1.2 In relation to this application, DOC has had the following engagement with the applicant:
- 1.1.3 The applicant first contacted DOC on the 22nd of January 2026;
- 1.1.4 A meeting occurred with the applicant on the 12th of February 2026;

- 1.1.5 DOC provided a pre-lodgement consultation summary on the 13th of March 2026. This summary does not appear to have been included in the referral application documents.

1.2 Conservation Approvals

- 1.2.1 The referral application states that the Project will require approval under the Wildlife Act 1953 for the salvage and relocation of lizards.

1.3 Conclusion

- 1.3.1 In conclusion, DOC is not aware of any reason the Project should not be referred.

2 Criteria for Minister's decision on referral application

Sections 21 and 22 of the FTAA set out matters to be considered by the Minister in determining whether a referral application should be accepted.

Comments below are targeted to provisions where DOC has specific interests or information relevant to the Minister's decision.

2.1 Criteria for declining a referral application

- 2.1.1 Section 21 sets out the criteria for the Minister for declining a referral application. DOC has considered these criteria and provides comments in the table below.

Section	Criteria	Comments
21(3)(b)	Does the project involve an ineligible activity	DOC has considered section 5(1) (f), (h), (i), (j) and (k) of the Act. DOC has not identified any aspect of the project that would be ineligible under these sections.
21(3)(c)	Is there adequate information to inform a decision	With respect to the approvals identified in the referral application for which DOC is the administering agency, DOC considers the information is adequate in terms of a referral decision. Based on the information provided, there are a number of artificial and modified watercourses on the site, as well as the possible presence of wetlands. The applicant has not indicated a need to obtain any freshwater fisheries approvals. The applicant should be aware of the requirements under the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations. The information requirements for Complex Freshwater Fisheries Approval is specified in clause 3 of Schedule 9 of the Act. This project will need to address this information requirement if Complex Freshwater Fisheries Approvals are needed.
21(4)	Are there any other reasons to decline the application?	Based on the information available, DOC has not identified any reason why the Project should not be referred.

Section	Criteria	Comments
21(5)(a)	Is the project inconsistent with: • a Treaty settlement; • Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019; • Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011.	Based on the information available, DOC has not identified any inconsistency with any relevant Treaty settlement or other obligations.
21(5)(b)	Would it be more appropriate to deal with the proposed approvals under another Act(s)	Based on the information available, DOC has not identified any reason why the Project should not be dealt with under the FTAA.
21(5)(c)	Would the project have significant adverse effects on the environment	Based on our knowledge of the existing environment and species expected to occur on the site, our understanding of the Project, and our experience of the kinds of design measures and conditions that could be implemented, DOC considers that once more detailed information is available, it would be possible to achieve a project with the imposition of conditions (that are appropriate, enforceable, include best management practice, and apply the relevant ecological management plans, as and where required), that does not have significant adverse effects on the environment.
21(5)(d)	Does the applicant(s) have a poor compliance history under a specified Act	DOC has not identified any issues with the applicant's compliance history.
21(5)(g)	Would a substantive application have any competing applications	Based on the information available, DOC has not identified any competing applications in respect of conservation approvals.

2.2 Criteria for accepting a referral application

2.2.1 Section 22 sets out the criteria for the Minister for accepting a referral application.

2.2.2 DOC has considered these criteria and has provided comments in the table below:

Section	Criteria	Comments
22(1)(b)(i)	Would referring the project to the fast-track process facilitate the project, including in a way that is more timely and cost-effective than under normal processes?	Wildlife Act Approvals would generally take approximately three to four months to process, which is not significantly longer than the FTAA process is expected to take. However, there may be benefits for the Applicant in terms of consideration being combined with RMA approvals (rather than being advanced through separate processes) and given the different decision-making framework under the FTAA.
22(2)(a)(ix)	Will this project address significant environmental issues?	No
22(2)(a)(x)	Is the project consistent with local or regional planning document, including spatial strategies?	The following DOC Statutory Planning documents are relevant to the Project: • Conservation General Policy (2005); • Waikato Conservation Management Strategy 2014 At a high level, no inconsistency with these documents has been identified, but the Project will need to consider them if it proceeds to a substantive application. Consideration should be given to: • The relevant provisions in Te Ture Whaimana, with respect to streams which are tributaries of the Waikato River; • Maintaining and restoring the ecological integrity of relevant ecosystems and habitat types; • Conserving any Threatened or At-Risk species to ensure their persistence; • Protecting freshwater fish habitat, fish passage, and the maintenance of habitat connectivity and water quality of any waterway.
22(b)	Any other matters the Minister may consider as relevant?	No

3 Matters for the Minister to specify (s27)

3.1.1 None identified



Linda Kirk
Fast Track Applications Manager

Date: 29 July 2026

Acting pursuant to delegated authority on behalf of the Director-General of Conservation.

Note: A copy of the Instrument of Delegation may be inspected at the Director-General's office at Conservation House Whare Kaupapa Atawhai, 18/32 Manners Street, Wellington 6011

Your written comments on a project under the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024

Project name	The Rest - Reference FTAA-2606 -1249
---------------------	--------------------------------------

Before the due date, for assistance on how to respond or about this template or with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

All sections of this form with an asterisk (*) must be completed.

1. Contact Details			
Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.			
Organisation name (if relevant)	Waikato District Council		
*First name	Donna		
*Last name	Tracey		
Postal address	Private Bag 544, Ngaruawahia 3742		
*Contact phone number	0800 492 452	Alternative	s 9(2)(a)
*Email	s 9(2)(a)		

2. Please provide your comments on this application
If you need more space, please attach additional pages. Please include your name, page numbers and the project name on the additional pages.

Note: All comments will be made available to the public and the applicant when the Ministry for the Environment proactively releases advice provided to the Minister for the Environment.

Managers signoff



Craig Hobbs

Chief Executive

Date 3 August 2026

3 August 2026

Stephanie Frame
Manager, Fast-track Operations
Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions, and Transport (MCERT)
referral@fasttrack.govt.nz

Dear Stephanie Frame

FAST-TRACK PROPOSAL: The Rest - Reference FTAA-2606 -1249

Thank you for inviting Waikato District Council (WDC) under section 17(1)(a) of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) to provide written comments on the Referral Application for The Rest.

Please find attached the Councils response and general comments regarding the proposed subject site.

Should you have any queries regarding the content of this document please contact Donna Tracey, Cross Boundary Growth Manager
(s 9(2)(a) ).

Kind Regards



Craig Hobbs
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
WAIKATO DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mandatory Comments

Council, under section 17(3) of the Act advises on the following matter:

Any applications that have been lodged with the Council that would be a competing application or applications if a substantive application for the project were lodged. If no such applications exist, please provide written confirmation.

No such applications exist for the properties identified in the referral application.

General Comments

Council, under subsection (17)(3)(b), provides other comments advising on the following matters:

1. The Rest project site is located within the Waikato District on Tauwhare Road and is currently zoned for rural purposes. The proposal therefore sits outside areas previously identified for urban development through current strategic planning documents (including the Future Proof Strategy, the Waikato Regional Policy Statement, and Waikato 2070).
2. IAWAI is the Water Council-Controlled Organisation (CCO) responsible for water services across the Waikato District and Hamilton City. As a result, all Fast-track applications with implications for water infrastructure or services are now required to engage directly with IAWAI as the relevant water service provider.
3. WDC notes that IAWAI was not invited to comment on this Fast-track referral application. To address this, WDC has engaged with IAWAI to obtain some high-level input on water, wastewater and stormwater servicing matters based on the information provided in the referral application. However, WDC considers IAWAI to be the appropriate authority to assess and comment on the capacity, operation, upgrading and management of water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure that may be affected by, or required to service, the proposed development. Given its statutory responsibilities WDC recommends that IAWAI be recognised as an affected and interested party and be invited to provide comments on any subsequent substantive application.
4. Tauwhare is a small rural settlement with limited services. This means a retirement village in this location may need to rely on nearby centres such as Cambridge or Hamilton for some day-to-day and essential services. Under section

22 (2)(iii) this is relevant when considering whether the proposal supports a well-functioning urban environment under the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020.

5. Recent analysis undertaken through the Future Proof Retirement Living Report (October 2025)¹ highlights that demand for retirement living can be accommodated within a range of locations, including existing urban areas and established settlements with access to services and community infrastructure, including access to advanced care as required to support ageing in place. This provides useful context for considering how the future residents in the proposed retirement village have accessibility, access to services and the long-term community outcomes.

6. The site includes highly productive land (Land Use Capability Class 1 and 2 soils), so the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land 2022 applies to the proposal. The effects of losing this land would need to be assessed. Development in this location may also affect how infrastructure is provided and what it costs to maintain over time, especially when capacity already exists in urban areas.

7. The site has known natural hazard issues include flooding, liquefaction, and rising groundwater because of the high water table.

8. The presence of peat soils remains a challenge in parts of our district. Further assessment will be needed to understand how potential effects, including subsidence and construction constraints, are managed through design and development approaches.

9. Waikato Regional Council's information indicates a high probability of acid sulphate soils across much of the site. This highlights the need for appropriate investigation and management approaches to address potential environmental and infrastructure effects.

10. The site connects directly to Tauwhare Road, which is classified as a Secondary Collector within the One Network Road Classification. The existing transport environment is rural in nature, which provides context for access, safety, and network integration considerations.

¹ [Future Proof Retirement Living Report October 2025](#)

11. An Integrated Transport Assessment (ITA) will be important to understand anticipated traffic impacts including access requirements, trip generation and the effects on the surrounding transport network. Given the wide range of proposed land uses activities proposed, the ITA should consider the variety of uses and the different trip patterns across peak and interpeak periods, including weekends and event-based activity.

12. Public transport service arrangements and stop locations are not currently provided to the area and certainty in the future will be driven by demand and not guaranteed. WDC suggests the need for further engagement with WRC and public transport operators.

13. There is currently no wastewater network servicing the site this highlights the need for early discussions with IAWAI and detailed consideration of how wastewater servicing would be achieved.

14. While there is an existing water supply scheme in the area, it is not designed to service development of this scale and intensity. The current network operates under restricted flow conditions, which limits capacity, including for firefighting requirements. This highlights the need for early discussions with IAWAI and detailed consideration of how water servicing would be achieved.

15. Early engagement with Waikato Regional Council on surface and groundwater matters will be important to identify and manage risks such as allocation limits, groundwater effects, and discharge considerations.

16. The site is located within the Waikato Central drainage scheme. Any development will need to ensure that existing levels of service within the scheme are maintained.

17. Stormwater management and design requirements should be determined in consultation with IAWAI, with appropriate regard to the objectives and outcomes of Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato and the wider health and wellbeing of the Waikato River catchment.

18. Where stormwater assets are proposed to be vested consideration by IAWAI will be given to lifecycle costs and maintenance requirements to ensure long-term sustainability.

19. The proposed change in land use from rural to urban-scale development has the potential to affect adjoining landowners and the wider area through matters

such as reverse sensitivity, visual change, traffic, lighting, noise, and construction effects.

20. The substantive application should also address the potential for existing and ongoing rural activities and environmental conditions in the surrounding area to affect the amenity, health, and wellbeing of future urban residents, and demonstrate how these interfaces and reverse sensitivity matters will be appropriately managed.

Your written comments on a project under the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024

Project name	The Rest, Tauwhare
---------------------	--------------------

Before the due date, for assistance on how to respond or about this template or with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

All sections of this form with an asterisk (*) must be completed.

1. Contact Details			
Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.			
Organisation name (if relevant)	Waikato Regional Council		
*First name	Michelle		
*Last name	White		
Postal address	Private Bag 3038 Waikato Mail Centre Hamilton 3240		
*Contact phone number	s 9(2)(a)	Alternative	
*Email	s 9(2)(a)		

2. Please provide your comments on this application
Waikato Regional Council (WRC) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on this application referral under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act). We note that the referral application is high-level and does not provide sufficient information to provide detailed feedback at this stage. The application indicates that detailed assessments will be provided at the substantive application stage, should the referral be accepted. The comments outlined below are grouped into three sections and respond to the following matters: • Matters under section 17(3)(a) of the Act that a local authority must provide comment on (PART A); • An invitation for WRC to consider if the “project may involve an ineligible activity (as defined in section 5 of the Act)” and if “any of the reasons to decline (under section 21(5) of the Act) a referral application may be applicable to this application” (PART B); • Additional comments, under section 17(3)(b) of the Act, relevant to the proposal (PART C).

Insert Fast-track logo

PART A – SECTION 17(3)(a)

Are there any applications that have been lodged with the Council that would be a competing application or applications if a substantive application for the project were lodged?

As of the date of this response, WRC is not aware of any competing applications.

Are there any existing resource consents issued where sections 124C(1)(c) or 165ZI of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) could apply, if the project were to be applied for as a resource consent under the RMA?

WRC can confirm that as of the date of this response, there are no competing applications or existing resource consents to which section 124C(1)(c) of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) would apply if the approvals sought were to be applied for as a resource consent under that Act.

Further, WRC can confirm that 165ZI of the RMA does not apply because the proposed project is not located in the common marine and coastal area in accordance with the Waikato Regional Coastal Plan (proposed or operative).

PART B – SECTION 5 and 21(5)

Does the project involve an ineligible activity (as defined in section 5 of the Act)?

WRC does not consider that the proposal involves an ineligible activity.

Are any of the reasons to decline (under section 21(5) of the Act) a referral application applicable?

WRC considers that the proposal may be more appropriately addressed under another Act or Acts, for the reasons outlined below.

PART C – SECTION 17(3)(b)

Section 22

WRC provides the following comments to assist the Minister's consideration of the matters set out in section 22(2) of the Act.

Regional significance and economic benefits

The application's primary justification, and its principal basis for meeting section 22 of the Act, is the significant regional benefits expected from the establishment of an agri-education institute. However, the scale and nature of the benefits are difficult to assess at this stage, given the limited information, particularly regarding the intended provider, operational model, programme offerings, and evidence of demand.

WRC considers that the significance of the proposed economic benefits should be assessed in the context of the site's location within an unserved rural area that is physically separated from

existing urban areas. In this regard, it is unclear whether the scale of the anticipated benefits is sufficient to justify the establishment of a substantial mixed-use development in a location that lacks integration with established urban infrastructure and services.

Alignment with local or regional planning documents

WRC considers that the project is inconsistent with criterion (x) under section 22(2)(a) of the Act relating to regional or local planning documents.

The Future Proof Strategy¹ (2024) is a 30-year growth management and implementation plan for the Hamilton, Waipā, Waikato and Matamata-Piako sub-region and is the Future Development Strategy for the sub-region. The Strategy aims to manage growth in a staged and coordinated manner. It has a compact and concentrated approach to growth, with future development focused in and around key growth areas that are identified on the Future Proof settlement pattern. The settlement pattern is embedded in the Waikato Regional Policy Statement (WRPS).

The proposed site is not identified for future growth in either the Future Proof Strategy or the Waikato District Growth and Economic Development Strategy² (2070). WRC also considers that the proposal does not meet the 'out of sequence and unanticipated developments' criteria (APP13) of the WRPS.

Any substantive application should address how the project is consistent with these documents.

Housing supply

Although the site is within Waikato District, it forms part of a wider sub-regional housing market that also includes Hamilton City and Waipā District.

The latest Housing Development Capacity Assessment³ (HBA; 2023) that supports the Future Proof Strategy, indicates a projected surplus of housing capacity in Waikato and Waipā districts and Hamilton City in the medium to long-term (2026 to 2052). This demonstrates that demand is already adequately provided for.

There are also significant areas of housing proposed as part of other fast-track projects listed in Schedule 2 of the Act and applications that have been referred under the Act around the periphery of Hamilton (please refer to Attachment 1 which shows the current and proposed fast-track projects around Hamilton).

Collectively, listed and referred projects around the periphery of Hamilton (excluding this project) propose a total of approximately 394.5ha of additional residential land. Given that the Future Proof Strategy already provides sufficient housing supply for 30 plus years, there is a risk that further residential developments will merely redistribute housing demand. This also has cumulative impacts in relation to infrastructure and servicing.

¹ Our strategic direction | Future Proof

² waikato-2070.pdf

³ FINAL Residential HBA - December 2023

Insert Fast-track logo

Any substantive application should address whether there is demand for retirement living and rural residential in this location, in the short, medium and long term.

Well-functioning urban environment

WRC considers that the proposal does not align with the creation of a 'well-functioning urban environment' as defined by the National Policy Statement for Urban Development (NPS-UD). The area is already well served by established towns and centres, with Hamilton City approximately 20 minutes away, Cambridge and Morrinsville each around 15 minutes away, and Matamata around 30 minutes away. Given the proximity and accessibility of these existing urban centres, WRC does not consider there is a demonstrated need for an additional centre in this location.

If the proposal were to proceed, while some facilities are proposed to be provided on-site for residents and visitors, most essential services would still need to be accessed in the surrounding urban centres identified above. In the absence of public transport services or connected walking and cycling networks linking the site to these centres, residents and visitors would be largely reliant on private vehicles to meet their daily needs.

The project proposes a mix of education, retirement living, rural residential, commercial, and light industrial activities. In our view, it is not evident that these activities are complementary or that, collectively, they would contribute to a well-functioning urban environment.

Any substantive application should provide further information demonstrating the suitability of the location and how the proposal would contribute to a well-functioning urban environment.

Waikato Regional Policy Statement

High class soils and highly productive land

The site meets the definition of 'high-class soils' under the WRPS and 'highly productive land' under the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land (NPS-HPL). Regional-scale NZLRI mapping classifies approximately 99% of the site as LUC Class 1 and 2 land, while a property-scale survey identified 77% as LUC Class 1 and 2. This variation reflects the greater detail of property-scale mapping; however, it is important to note that highly productive land under the NPS-HPL is determined using regional-scale mapping – meaning for this proposal 99% of the site is classified as highly productive land.

We also note that the LUC Classification Assessment appears to assess productive capacity against the most intensive and highest-value land use scenarios, such as year-round continuous cropping or extensive horticulture. Land classified as LUC Class 1 or 2 is considered HPL and is subject to the NPS-HPL regardless of its suitability for the most intensive forms of production. The fact that a particular area may not be well suited to year-round continuous cropping does not mean it lacks productive potential or cannot support viable and profitable primary production activities, such as dairy farming or other agricultural land uses.

Any substantive application will need to address the relevant provisions of the WRPS and NPS-HPL to ensure high class soils and highly productive land are protected from inappropriate use and development.

Ecology

We note that a detailed Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA) was not provided as part of the referral application. While, a high-level Ecological Memorandum was provided, it does not contain sufficient information to adequately assess the proposal's ecological effects.

The Memorandum identifies several areas of potential natural inland wetlands. While these are likely to be of relatively low ecological value, given their small size, fragmented nature, and exotic vegetation, they nevertheless retain ecological values that should be identified, assessed and accounted for.

We recommend that any further assessment include the following information:

- A detailed assessment and delineation of any wetlands present on site, and their ecological values, including how the proposal will avoid the loss of natural inland wetlands, protect their values, and promote their restoration consistent with Policy 6 of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM).
- An assessment of whether the proposal relies on any of the exceptions to the loss of wetland extent or values provided for under Section 3.22 of the NPS-FM.
- Details of any wetlands proposed to be lost or impacted by the proposal.
- Details of any proposed wetland restoration, enhancement, or creation, particularly where these are intended to offset or compensate for the loss of wetland extent or values.

Land drainage and flooding

The proposed site is located within the Waikato Central Drainage Scheme (Waitakaruru drainage network), managed by WRC. Any future development or change in land use will need to:

- Maintain the existing Land Drainage Level of Service (LOS), which is designed to remove water from pasture within three days following a storm event up to the 10-year return period to prevent pasture die off. Given the nature of the proposed development, a higher urban drainage level of service may be required.
- Retain access to drains for ongoing maintenance by WRC.
- Provide drainage easements that remain clear for maintenance access.
- Assess potential upstream and downstream effect such as ponding, flooding and erosion.
- Manage increased stormwater runoff from additional impervious surfaces, likely requiring on-site stormwater attenuation.

While the site is not within the current Regional Scale Flood Hazard layer in the Waikato Regional Hazards Portal, there is the potential for flood hazards on site. The Regional Scale Flood Hazard layer is a Natural Hazard Information Hierarchy Tier 4 layer and is only indicative and should not be used solely to determine flood hazard susceptibility. Preliminary 'Work in Progress' flood modelling does show some flood hazard susceptibility for the proposed development site.

Further assessments are recommended to inform the consent processes, including:

- A comprehensive flood hazard and stormwater assessment to address any existing and potential future flood hazards on the site, and to determine suitable building sites and minimum floor levels.

Insert Fast-track logo

- Assessment of the proposed development against the WRPS and National Policy Statement for Natural Hazards.

Transport

The proposal is anticipated to generate approximately 450 peak-hour vehicle trips and includes a mix of residential, retirement, educational, commercial, and storage activities. It will introduce a substantial resident, employee, student and visitor population to a location where transport options are currently limited and are likely to remain heavily reliant on private vehicle travel.

We note that a detailed Integrated Transport Assessment (ITA) was not provided as part of the referral application. While a high-level Transport Memorandum has been provided, it does not contain sufficient information to adequately assess the proposal's transport effects.

Should the proposal progress to the substantive application stage, we recommend that further assessment be undertaken, including a public transport feasibility assessment, undertaken in collaboration with Waikato Regional Council.

Other relevant considerations

In addition to the above comments, we highlight the following points for consideration. These must be addressed in any subsequent substantive application to enable a more detailed review.

Contaminated land and acid sulphate soils

We note that the information provided does not enable a comprehensive assessment of potential contaminated land and acid sulphate soil risks. While a desktop-based Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) has been completed, it does not confirm the presence, extent, and nature of any contamination. We support the preparation of a Contaminated Site Management Plan (CSMP) and Acid Sulphate Soils (ASS) investigation as part of any substantive application.

The PSI identified several HAIL activities across the site, including livestock dip/spray operations, agrichemical storage and use, fuel storage, and potential asbestos-containing materials. These activities are considered consistent with the site's historical pastoral farming use. The CSMP should include a targeted investigation of these areas to determine the extent of contamination and appropriate management measures prior to earthworks.

The PSI also identified a high probability of acid sulphate soils over much of the site, based on WRC's ASS probability layer. Given the scale of the proposed earthworks, disturbance of ASS could generate acidic drainage and mobilise metals. Risks are heightened by the site's hydrogeological setting (shallow groundwater, drainage scheme, modified watercourses and potential wetlands), which could provide pathways for contaminants or acidic drainage to affect groundwater and surface water.

Stormwater

We note the information provided on stormwater management is conceptual and at a high-level. We acknowledge that relevant WRC guidelines have been referenced, and that concept plans incorporate wetland ponds and low impact designs such as grass swales and rain gardens to treat stormwater.

Water supply

Potable water will be required to service the proposed rural residential, commercial, retirement village and agri-education institute. We understand that connecting to a district council water supply network is not an option – therefore the project will rely on rainfall runoff harvesting and an on-site groundwater supply.

Further detailed design work, including a hydrogeological assessment, will be required as part of any substantive application to assess and manage the potential effects.

The site is located within the Hamilton Basin – South groundwater management level area. Based on the current allocation level, we consider there is likely to be sufficient allocation to support a groundwater take consent for the proposed development, as currently understood. The groundwater that would be tapped is ultimately hydraulically connected to the mainstem Piako River and thus needs to be, and is, accounted for in the WRC surface water allocation system.

The application correctly notes that a number of consents will be required in terms of regional council matters, including a s14 water permit. Consents will be required to:

- Construct a bore or bores.
- Take groundwater via a bore or bores.
- Take surface water via a rainfall runoff harvesting approach.
- Divert water within the site in terms of water management during and after construction.

Additionally, consent may be required to dam water in ponds situated in off-stream areas.

Wastewater

The applicant advises there is no district council wastewater infrastructure available in the locality for wastewater connection. Therefore, it is proposed to split the development into distinct areas for wastewater treatment and disposal.

The rural residential and commercial areas will utilise private on-lot wastewater treatment and disposal systems. Discharges to ground from such systems may be permitted under the Waikato Regional Plan if they comply with the relevant permitted activity rules.

The retirement village and agri-educational Institute area will utilise a mix of centralised wastewater treatment systems and on-lot systems. The centralised wastewater treatment systems will require detailed designs supported by an assessment of effects of discharging treated wastewater to ground as part of the substantive application to support a discharge consent application under the discretionary rule 3.5.7.7.

Earthworks

An appropriately detailed Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (ESCP) will be required to accompany any earthworks consent application. Earthworks should be carried out in accordance with best practice, and with appropriate erosion and sediment control measures.

WRC recommends that earthworks are undertaken during the summer earthworks season to reduce the potential for the discharge of sediment into receiving waters.

Insert Fast-track logo

Summary of Issues for Waikato Regional Council

Given the site's location is within an unserviced rural area that is physically separated from existing urban areas, the regional benefits have not been demonstrated to justify the establishment of a substantial mixed-use development in a location that lacks integration with established urban infrastructure and services. The proposal:

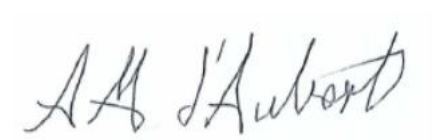
1. Is not identified for future growth in either the Future Proof Strategy or the Waikato District Growth and Economic Development Strategy⁴ (2070).
2. Is out of sequence and does not meet the unanticipated developments' criteria (APP13) of the WRPS.
3. Does not demonstrate that it is a well-functioning urban environment as per the National Policy Statement for Urban Development (NPS-UD).

If this proposal is referred, then within the substantive application WRC requests the proposal details the following matters:

1. Demonstrates how the proposal meets the WRPS and Future Proof Strategy or the Waikato District Growth and Economic Development Strategy⁵ (2070);
2. Demonstrates demand for retirement living and rural residential in this location, in the short, medium and long term;
3. Provision of detailed design drawings of the final design of the stormwater system(s);
4. Provision of a Flood Hazard assessment;
5. A detailed Integrated Transport Assessment;
6. A detailed Contaminated Site Management Plan (CSMP) and Acid Sulphate Soils (ASS) investigation;
7. A detailed assessment of the relevant provisions of the WRPS and NPS-HPL in relation to High Class Soils;
8. A detailed Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA);
9. Details of the proposed water supply, wastewater treatment and discharge systems, and if they are standalone proposals – who will operate, maintain and manage the systems;
10. Whilst WRC has undertaken a preliminary assessment of potential consent requirements based on the initial documentation, confirmation is required to detail the exact consents sought for each activity e.g. exact consents associated with the final stormwater design, the proposed water take and wastewater options, earthworks and any ancillary consents e.g. dewatering consents, structures within waterways;
11. Conditions of consent commensurate with the level of effects of each activity for which consent is sought.

Note: All comments will be made available to the public and the applicant when the Ministry for the Environment proactively releases advice provided to the Minister for the Environment.

Managers signoff

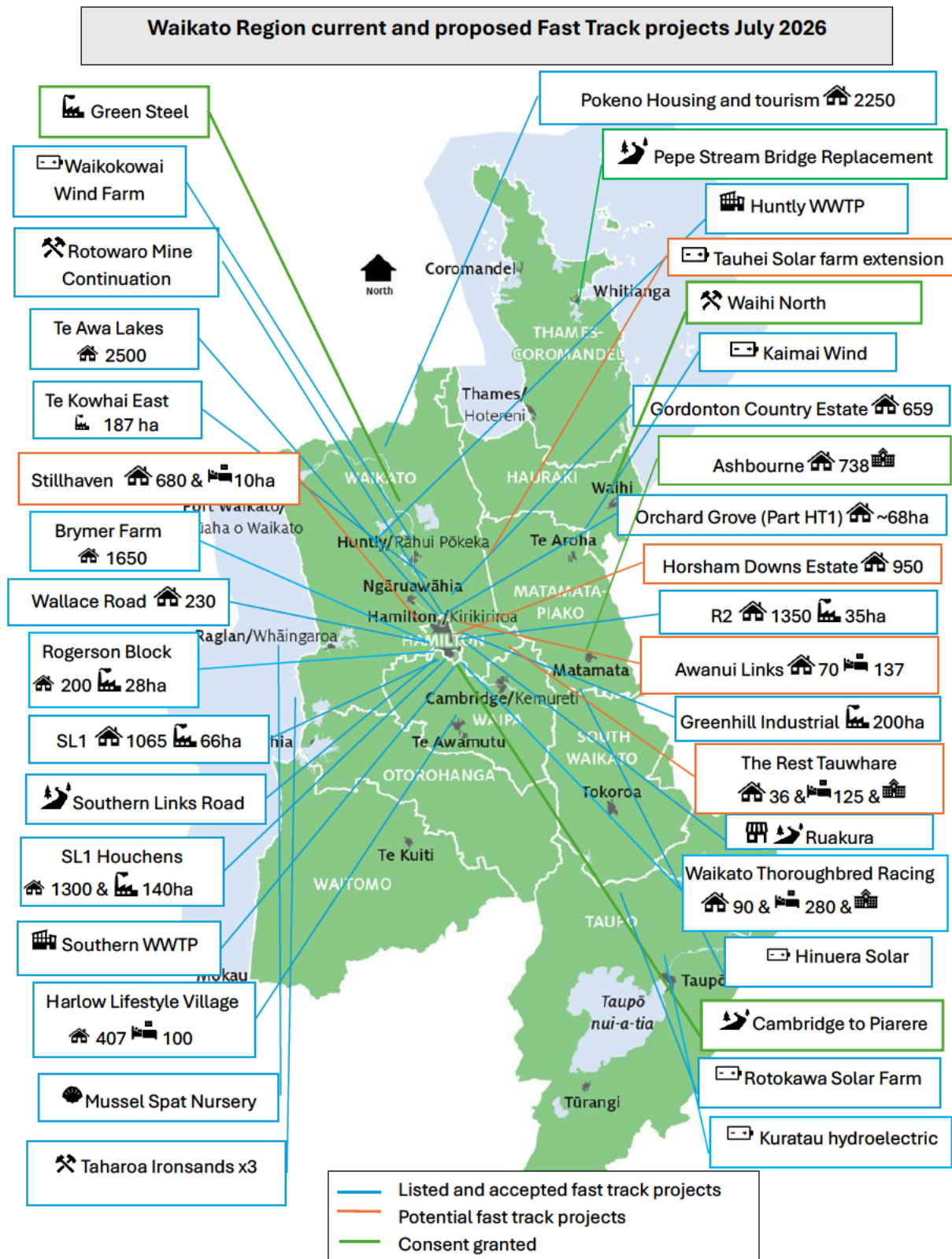
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AM d'Aubert', is written on a light blue background.

AnaMaria d'Aubert

Date 30 July 2026

Insert Fast-track logo

Attachment 1



Your written comments on a project under the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024

Project name	FTAA-2606-1249 The Rest
---------------------	-------------------------

Before the due date, for assistance on how to respond or about this template or with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

All sections of this form with an asterisk (*) must be completed.

1. Contact Details			
Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.			
Organisation name (if relevant)	NZ Transport Agency (NZTA)		
*First name	Nicola		
*Last name	Foran		
Postal address			
*Contact phone number		Alternative	
*Email	environmentalplanning@nzta.govt.nz		

2. Please provide your comments on this application
NZTA thanks the Minister for the opportunity to comment on the referral of this application into the fast track approvals process. NZTA has had no prior engagement with Shannon Leigh Trust (the Applicant) or Barker & Associates Limited (B&A, the Agent) on this application. NZTA has, however, been identified as one of the key transport stakeholders for this application alongside Hamilton City Council. As per the matters set out in the invitation to comment, NZTA provides the following commentary: <u>Transport Memorandum</u> The Transport Memorandum prepared for the application does not refer to the state highway network that is a minimum of approximately 4km from the site and consists of State Highways (SHs) 1, 1B, 21, and 26. The proposal is also expected to generate 450 vehicle movements per peak hour (vpvh) onto the surrounding road network. As part of any substantive application, NZTA would need to see a revised version of the Transport Memorandum or a full Integrated Transport Assessment (ITA) assessing and including the following matters:

Insert Fast-track logo

- The potential impacts on the intersections and interchanges with SHs 1, 1B, 21, and 26 within the vicinity of the site and how these will be managed. The SH26/Platt Road intersection in particular is identified by NZTA to be the most direct route between the site and Hamilton and has a relatively high recorded crash rate; with two serious, five minor and four non-injury crashes occurring within the last ten years (2016-2025).
- Detailed intersection traffic modelling at the nearest intersections and interchanges with SHs 1, 1B, 21, and 26 to the site to determine whether these will have the capacity to accommodate the proposal or further upgrades to these intersections and interchanges are required.

NZTA will need to be consulted as part of any future substantive application; particularly if any upgrades to the nearest intersections and interchanges with the state highway are required.

Overall, based on the information provided, NZTA has no concerns with this proposal, The Rest, being referred into the fast track approvals process. NZTA would welcome the opportunity to provide comments on any substantive application in due course.

Note: All comments will be made available to the public and the applicant when the Ministry for the Environment proactively releases advice provided to the Minister for the Environment.

Managers signoff



Nicola Foran

Date 16/10/2026