

To: Expert Consenting Panel - Ashbourne
From: Katherine Hu & Cam Wallace – Barker & Associates Limited
Date: 18 November 2025
Re: Ashbourne Fast Track Consent Application – Urban Design Response to Comments

Tēnā Koe,

This Memo has been prepared in response to the comments received from the invited parties identified under s53(2) of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024. The matters raised include a number of queries and recommendations relating to urban design, including those set out in the Urban Design Evidence prepared by Ian Munro, dated 11 November 2025.

The purpose of this Memo is to summarise the Applicant's responses to the related comments and to outline the resulting changes and clarifications made to the proposal, including adjustments to the urban design drawings, Development Controls, and the Residential Design Guideline. The responses focus on matters that relate directly to the design and functioning of the development and on amendments made to address specific issues raised through the consultation process. The key urban design-related changes include:

- Introducing a new road connection along the southern boundary as an extension of Road 13, providing an additional link to the south (should further urban expansion eventuate).
- Providing planting buffers up to 2m wide along the boundaries adjoining the Eldonwood area and the southern boundary, and a 3m wide along the interface with properties on Highgrove Ave. These landscape buffers will be implemented by the developer following relevant earthwork stages and maintained via consent notice.
- Applying a 5m Building Line Restriction (BLR) to proposed residential lots along the southern boundary (72 / 72B Hinuera Road) and to proposed lots adjoining properties accessed via Highgrove Ave.
- Applying a 5m BLR to specific lots adjoining properties at 4 and 7 Chestnut Lane (Lot 44 DP 386534 and Lot 47 DP 393306), and 26 and 32 Eldonwood Drive (Lot 26 DP 386534 and Lot 28 DP 386534).
- Removing all formed pedestrian connections to Eldonwood Drive and Highgrove Avenue (Lots 3030 and 3031) in response to consultation and feedback from landowners in these areas. However, a future connection remains possible via the proposed drainage reserve through to Eldonwood Drive should this be possible;
- Commitment to the implementation of the commercial node and withdrawal of a residential alternative in this location.
- A commitment to the implementation of no-complaint covenants for surrounding rural activities, including the neighbouring organic farm.
- Amending the Residential Design Guideline to clearly distinguish between Core Controls that establish an approved building envelope as well as those guidelines which are of a discretionary nature and require flexibility to allow for design solutions that respond to the unique characteristics

of each lot. In addition, clarification on the process and implementation has been provided and the relationship with the Typology Plans.

- Approval is also being specifically sought for the Typology Plans as they are proposed to apply to each relevant lot. The Design Guidelines will apply in the event a future developer seeks to implement their own design or vary the Typology Plans.

This memo should be read in conjunction with the relevant appendices.

1.0 Response to Identified Changes in UD Evidence

The table below summarises the identified changes within the paragraph 14.3 of the Urban Design Evidence prepared by Ian Munro on behalf of Matamata Piako District Council, dated 11 November 2025.

Ref	Identified Changes as per Evidence	B&A Response
(a)	Except for the external boundaries east of the Peakedale Drive axis and the vacant balance lot west of the retirement village, allotments adjoining the Site's external boundaries should be in the range of 1,200m ² – 1,800m ² (average 1,500m ²), including a minimum 8m boundary setback, and minimum 3m side yard setback. The retirement village already proposes sufficient setbacks from the relevant external boundary and between buildings in this regard.	<p>The majority of proposed lot sizes, ranging from approximately 500m²–700m², are consistent with typical densities across Matmata, including the adjacent Peakedale Drive and Hampton Terrace subdivisions. This development comprises lot sizes ranging 476 – 880m². Such lot sizes are not considered to represent an overly intensive pattern of development. We also note that lot size alone is only one method of potentially addressing the perceived bulk and intensity of development. To address this, the proposal has been amended to incorporate a minimum 5m deep Building Line Restriction along external boundaries in combination with 2–3m wide planted landscape buffers. Actual building setbacks may also be greater than this noting that the Core Controls also require generous minimum outdoor living areas of up to 60m² with a minimum dimension of 6m and limit building coverage to 45% for lots around the periphery of the development. In addition a maximum building height of 8m (plus a 1m allowance for sloping roof forms) has been established as a Core Control helping to further limit the scale of potential building forms at a second storey. This will provide appropriate separation, visual relief and a softened rural-edge interface. These measures collectively are considered sufficient to achieve the intended mitigation without requiring changes to the proposed lot sizes.</p> <p>No BLR is proposed for the lots adjoining 1 Chestnut Lane (Lot 43 DP 399306). This reflects the much larger lot size and the existing dwelling being set back approximately 64m and 28m from</p>

		<p>the shared boundary, providing substantial separation in its current form.</p> <p>Similarly, for the lots adjoining 36 and 40 Eldonwood Drive (Lot 36 DP 399306 and Lot 40 DP 399306), no BLR is proposed. In this location, the existing 4m wide walkway already provides meaningful separation between properties. When combined with the 1.5m rear setback controls (a minimum separation of 5.5m), these distances are considered sufficient to achieve the intended screening, amenity, and visual mitigation without requiring a 5m BLR.</p> <p>A proposed boundary treatment summary plan showing the abovementioned amendments is provided in Appendix 1.</p>
(b)	<p>Except for the balance lot west of the retirement village, and including the eastern side of the retirement village, all rear yard setbacks should be densely landscaped for a minimum depth of 4m from the external Site boundary, and on all external side and rear Site boundaries a solid, minimum 1.5m height boundary fence should be provided</p>	<p>A planting buffer up to 2m will be provided along the common boundaries with Eldonwood and along the southern boundary, and a 3m planting buffer will be provided along common boundaries with Highgrove area. While a 2m width is generally adequate to achieve two planting rows at 1.2m spacings and to create a denser and more natural screen, delivering the intended amenity and screening. The wider 3m buffer at Highgrove has been adopted in response to submitter feedback and earlier discussions with the landowner. Perceptually, once landscaping is established, the difference in a 2m, 3m or 4m landscape buffer is considered to be negligible. It is considered that these landscape buffer will achieve an appropriate level of visual mitigation and a softened boundary condition. We also note that the proposed BLR' will also apply in addition to the landscaped buffer. Boundary fences between 1.5m and 1.8m in height will also now be provided to all of the residential lots adjoining the external boundaries.</p>
(c)	<p>The commercial node should be developed, including if only initially in-part, as soon as it is possible for the developer to do so after the commencement of development on the Site.</p>	<p>There is currently no intention to advance the commercial node (Lot 1002) earlier than the staging proposed, being Stage 4. Commercial viability in a greenfield location typically depends on achieving a sufficient local population base and establishing strong movement and access connections, including to establish the link to Peakedale Drive and the wider residential area. On this basis, no change to the staging or design drawings is proposed.</p>

(d)	<p>A pedestrian/cycle linkage to Highgrove Avenue in the vicinity of Lots 383 and 384 should be provided. This, and the separate pedestrian/cycle link proposed to Eldonwood Drive, should have a minimum 6m width space; be subject to the boundary / fencing controls that are proposed to apply along street frontages; and include suitable lighting to enable night-time use.</p>	<p>While we do not disagree with Mr Munro's recommendation, no pedestrian or cycle connection to Highgrove Avenue is proposed. We understand that this reflects the outcomes of direct neighbour consultation.</p> <p>In relation to Eldonwood Drive, the Stage 1A stormwater pond lot (Lot 4001) includes sufficient space to future-proof a potential pedestrian connection; however, no formed pathway is proposed as part of this application. This approach is consistent with Maven's updated plans.</p> <p>Changes have been incorporated into the relevant drawings included in Appendix 2.</p>
(e) – (g)	<p>An additional public road link should be provided generally along the southern retirement village/Greenway boundary connecting the balance lot to Road 7 at Lot 371 ("Road 7 connection").</p> <p>The balance lot should be subject to a consent notice or similar requiring that, if and when developed and if other than for a retirement village extension, the Road 7 connection described above should be continued through the balance lot to Station Road.</p> <p>The Road 7 connection should be held as balance land on the retirement village site until such time as the balance lot is developed. If the balance lot is developed as a retirement village extension, then the requirement for the Road 7 connection will cease to apply and the land can be additionally subject to retirement village development. But if the balance lot is developed other than as a retirement village extension, the road shall be formed and vested in Council at that time.</p>	<p>No additional public road connections are proposed. The balance lot will retain its Rural Zone status and continue to be used for rural activities. Whilst vehicular connection to Road 7 is not proposed, we note that a public shared path is included along the Greenway as part of this application, providing an accessible walking and cycling link for the balance lot to the wider development (including commercial node) should these be redeveloped for urban uses at a future date. The lot also maintains vehicular access to Station Road, which will continue to function as its primary access.</p> <p>Should the balance lot be developed in future, the appropriateness or specific need of a vehicular connection from the balance lot will be assessed at the time of that development and may impact what can ultimately be realised. The current application does not preclude that future consideration.</p>
(h)	<p>Road 10 (adjacent to Lots 173 and 174) and Road 13 (adjacent to Lot 46) should be continued to the Site's southern boundary.</p>	<p>We accept that future urbanisation south of the site is a reasonable proposition to make (albeit highly uncertain and more likely in the longer term due to existing legislative constraints). As such, an additional connection is provided via Road 13, which forms a logical extension of Peakedale Drive and provides a clear, direct link to the existing residential areas of Matamata as well as the proposed Ashbourne Neighbourhood.</p>

		Changes have been incorporated into the relevant drawings included in Appendix 2.
(i)	The conditions and design guidelines should be clarified and made clearer, along with the role and purpose of the residential dwelling typology plans.	<p>The Residential Design Guideline is being updated to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core (Development) Controls that will be secured as consent conditions and will define the maximum permitted building envelope for each lot. • The Residential Design Guideline will incorporate all Core Controls to avoid ambiguity. • A private covenant will be used to implement/manage the Residential Design Guideline. <p>Typology Plans will be approved with the consent, enabling lot owners to build in accordance with those plans. Any variation from typology plans will be required to comply with the Core Controls (unless a s127 variation is sought) and will be subject to Design Review Panel oversight.</p> <p>The Residential Design Guideline will clearly establish the difference between the Core Controls and discretionary guidelines, the later are required to respond to varying site contexts that will exist across the neighbourhood or may change based on market preferences (e.g. materiality).</p> <p>Overall, the intent is to remove ambiguity, establish clear processes / requirements for developers, designers and Council.</p>
(j)	No water tanks, accessory buildings other than garages in accordance with the design guidelines, or other utilities should be permitted in front of or in between buildings and any public road or private road / accessway (this excludes utilities that are operationally required and located within the road reserve space)	We agree with this recommendation. The Residential Design Guideline will be updated to ensure no water tanks, non-garage accessory buildings, or above-ground utilities are permitted in front yards or located between buildings and the road / accessway (excluding necessary utilities located within the road reserve).

2.0 Response to Appendix 2 – Request for Clarifications

For completeness, the below response is provided in relation to comments under Appendix 2 – Request for Clarifications, dated 3rd September 2025.

3. *The Urban Design Assessment (“UDA”) explains the methodology followed and how project-specific design principles (3.1 of the UDA) were identified, including from the applicable planning framework of national, regional and council documents. I request the following:*

- a. *The UDA presents a number of design principles that synthesise many statutory Plan matters as well as non-statutory industry good practice thinking. That is of itself fairly typical. Please identify any particular important statutory urban design outcomes called for by the planning documents (including in terms of land subdivision) that the proposal responds to.*

As noted in **Section 2.4 (Planning Context)** of the Urban Design Assessment (UDA) and **Section 3** of the Urban Design Memorandum for the referral application, a number of national, regional and district planning instruments have directly informed the Ashbourne masterplan. In summary, the key statutory urban design outcomes, and how the proposal responds, are as follows.

National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD)

NPS-UD sets national direction to enable well-functioning urban environment. Although it identifies Matamata and their hinterlands within the definition of being urban areas as a Tier 3 territorial authority, the NPS-UD still requires Council to take a strategic approach to meet the expected demand for housing and enable housing choice, provide the development capacity to meet expected demand for business land, and integrated land use with active mode, public transport and other relevant infrastructures

A **compact, connected neighbourhood** is the key urban form to be expected in accordance with the NPS-UD. Other specific urban design outcomes also include **quality and safe public realm** and **encouraged density near local amenities and movement routes**. As outlined below, the Ashbourne development is generally in alignment with the urban design outcomes sought by the NPS-UD in the following ways, together meeting the NPS-UD’s outcomes for a well-functioning urban environment in a Tier 3 context:

- **Connected, compact neighbourhood structure:** The masterplan is organised around two spine roads, a greenway movement corridor and short, walkable blocks, producing a legible, connected structure that supports everyday trips by foot and cycle and integrates with Station Road and the wider network.
- **Sufficient capacity and housing choice:** On a single, comprehensively planned landholding at the urban edge, Ashbourne delivers over 500 residential lots/units across calibrated lot bands and typologies (including compact lots near amenities and larger lots at the periphery), plus approximate 1,500m² GFA of neighbourhood-scale business floorspace. This directly supports capacity and choice sought by the NPS-UD.
- **Intensity focused in the right places:** More intensified residential densities are located around the proposed commercial node, greenway and key movement routes, with deliberate transitioning down toward rural and rural-residential interfaces. This is consistent with the NPS-UD’s direction to focus development where access to services and movement is greatest.
- **Quality and safety of the public realm:** Active frontages, low/visually permeable front fencing, tree-lined streets, and stormwater reserves designed as visible, useable open space (rather than “back-of-lot” spaces) embed CPTED, amenity and legibility into the public realm.

- **Access to daily needs:** A centrally located neighbourhood centre (which could accommodate a superette, café, childcare, or other small retail or commercial tenancies) is within a short walk of surrounding homes and the retirement village, reducing car dependency and supporting a well-functioning local catchment.
- **Integrated infrastructure and staging:** Three-waters, streets and open space are planned and staged alongside development so each phase operates as a complete, serviced neighbourhood cell, aligning land-use capacity with infrastructure delivery.

2024 Future Proof Strategy

The Future Proof Strategy is a 30-year growth management and it is directly relevant to a greenfield development in Matamata, as it sets the strategic framework for all growth and development within the Matamata-Piako sub-region for the next 30 years. More specifically, the Strategy provides the foundational direction that is then implemented through specific district-level planning documents, such as the Matamata-Piako District Plan.

In urban-design terms, Future Proof emphasises **connected, compact growth, mode shift, housing diversity, green-blue infrastructure, and climate resilience**. The key urban design outcomes sought by the strategy are built around its "transformational moves" and the following briefly demonstrates how the proposed development is achieving these outcomes:

- **Iwi aspirations:** The Proposal embeds place-based cultural narratives within the greenway and stormwater spaces (interpretive elements, bilingual wayfinding and native planting) and creates opportunities for ecological restoration that support environmental health and kaitiakitanga. This has been identified as part of the cultural narratives through the consultation and engagement with mana whenua and it ensures cultural values are expressed in everyday public places when it is possible.
- **A comprehensive and fundamental evolution of our transport system:** This move translates to outcomes including the integration of transport and land use, grid-based street patterns and reduction of car dependency. More specifically, a walkable block pattern anchored by two spine roads and an off-road shared path in the greenway supports short trips on foot and cycle, with mode-selective links that deter rat-running while preserving permeability. The commercial node and retirement village are within a 5–10 minute walk for most homes, reducing car dependency and supporting a future-ready modal shift consistent with sub-regional transport direction.
- **A vibrant metro core and lively metropolitan/town centres:** This move focus on supporting town centres being well connected by transport modes. The Proposal will help support a more lively town centre in Matamata by providing for an increased residential catchment in close proximity.
- **Thriving communities and neighbourhoods:** The Proposal supports improved housing affordability and choice through additional supply. Growth is planned in a way that provides relatively direct access to facilities, services and amenities. Diverse lot sizes and housing typologies deliver choice across different stages, complemented by an integrated retirement village designed around age-friendly movement, clear wayfinding and access to amenities. Streetscapes follow CPTED principles (active frontages, low permeable fencing, clear sightlines which will be implemented through the proposed Residential Design Guideline), and stormwater reserves are public-facing to avoid inactive back-of-lot spaces, supporting safety, sociability and identity.
- **Water-wise and water-sensitive communities:** The Proposal embedded nature-based stormwater techniques in the greenway, streets and parks so water infrastructure plays part of the public realm to

improve resilience, water quality and ecosystems. More specifically, the greenway connects detention, treatment, planting and recreation, advancing water-sensitive urban design outcome as a core design respond to this move.

Matamata-Piako District Plan and Eldonwood South Structure Plan

The Matamata-Piako District Plan is the primary statutory instrument for subdivision, land use, transport, infrastructure and amenity. For greenfield growth it seeks **a coherent neighbourhood structure, safe and efficient transport, a high-quality public realm, integrated three-waters/green-blue infrastructure, calibrated density transitions, and well-managed rural interfaces**. The Eldonwood South Structure Plan localises these expectations next to Ashbourne by identifying indicative street alignments, stormwater/open-space corridors, and a centres-oriented pattern that future growth should connect to. Below outlines the outcomes sought and how the proposal responds.

- **Clear street hierarchy, permeable blocks, lots fronting public streets (not rear-lots), and future-proofed connections to adjoining growth areas.** The Proposal incorporates two primary spines with short, walkable blocks, lots predominantly front streets or open spaces. . These responses collectively give effect to the DP's coherent subdivision and neighbourhood legibility outcomes and generally implements the Structure Plan's intent.
- **Safe, efficient access to the wider network, with improved walking/cycling and intersections and access rationalised on arterial/collector routes.** Two vehicle accesses to Station Road are provided, one for the residential precinct and another is provided exclusively to the retirement village precinct. The internal roading layouts and geometry supports low operating speeds and short crossings will maintain permeability. Walking and cycling connections are provided throughout the development, including continuous footpaths along all public roads, walking and cycling paths and off-road greenway shared path. These connections will connect to the wider existing roading network (in time as surrounding areas are also developed). This will help encourage the use of active modes where practical (depending on the purpose of the journey and end destination).
- **A mix of housing typologies with higher intensity near amenities/movement spines and lower intensity at sensitive edges, enabling choice while managing effects.** The Proposal positions smaller lots around the commercial node and greenway, with larger lots (which include additional setback controls and landscape treatment to be placed adjacent to rural and rural-residential edges). This implements the outcomes of intensity at the right location.
- **Active, safe streets and edges, including to incorporate front doors/windows to public space, low, permeable front fencing and well-treated corners and reserve interfaces.** The shape, orientation and dimensions of the majority of residential lots proposed in Ashbourne will generally maximise building frontages addressing streets and reserves on the shared boundary, while avoiding back fences to public space. In addition, the Proposal has street-facing entries and windows, with low permeable front fencing implemented through the Residential Design Guideline and conditions of consent. These responses will ensure edges are active, safe and legible, thereby giving effect to the amenity/CPTED provisions under the District Plan.
- **Visible, multi-functional stormwater systems in streets and reserves, as well as provide for flood resilience.** The Proposal has responded to the identified known flood data, while also providing nature-based rain gardens, swales, wetlands and dry basins embedded in streets and parks, and a central greenway to manage stormwater. The central greenway spine will provide detention, treatment and

recreation functions and the remaining stormwater reserves are placed visibly to the public realm (not behind lot backs).

- **Soft edges to rural and rural-residential land, through the specific provision of setbacks, landscape buffers, compatible scale to avoid reverse-sensitivity and visual dominance.** For Ashbourne, larger lots and landscape edges have been proposed along boundaries adjoining rural residential lots. Landscaping treatment, including fences and/or 2-3m landscape buffer planting treatments, have also been proposed along boundaries adjoining rural and rural-residential lots. Along the southern boundary (adjoining rural land), lot orientation and dimensions encourage low-rise built form. At solar-farm interfaces, landscape buffers provide a respectful transition to rural land.
 - **Design quality assurance and implementation, including consistent and integrated landscape outcomes.** The Proposal has provided a comprehensive set of landscaping plans which details the landscaping treatments on all public streets, greenways and stormwater areas, retirement village precinct and solar farm precinct. It is also proposed to establish a Residential Design Guideline and design review process to ensure quality façade articulation, fencing and planting that uphold DP quality and landscaping provisions at consent and building stages.
 - **Development and infrastructure are integrated, and they are delivered in coordinated stages, so each phase functions as a complete neighbourhood unit.** The Proposal has staged and sequenced the overall development with roads, open space and three-waters in accordance with growth. Early stages open from the Peakedale side (as an extension from the most recent Peakedale subdivision), progressing toward the central greenway and commercial node, with later stages connecting north to Station Road along the spine road. The retirement village follows its own logical staging programme consistent with its operational needs. This reflects the District Plan and Structure Plan policy intents.
4. *One identified design principle used in the UDA is “connectivity, legibility and accessibility”. This is explained in the UDA as meaning (amongst other things) “a well-connected street and pathway network that prioritises walking, cycling, and accessibility...”. Please explain how this principle has been used to determine what external connectivity to the Site should be provided. Of particular interest are:*
- a. *The proposed lack of any connections at all south of the Site (potentially making the Site boundary a permanent severance in the event of any future urban growth occurring in Matamata beyond the timeframe of interest to the Applicant);*

At lodgement, no connections were proposed to the land south of the Site, reflecting the Eldonwood South Structure Plan, which shows primary connections directed toward Station Road and Peakedale, with no identified southern extension. In response, the layout has been refined to provide a southern road connection via an extension of Road 13 (as an extension of Peakedale Drive).

- b. *That the balance lot west of the retirement village seems only accessible from Station Road and not from the Site itself (unless in the specific potential case of the balance lot being used as a retirement village extension). Related to this, please explain how the balance lot will be integrated into the neighbourhood;*

The balance lot is currently zoned Rural and will continue to operate for rural activities.

If the balance lot is ever developed for a different urban use, access within the balance lot can be reconsidered at that time through a separate consent process, informed by the prevailing planning framework. While vehicular connection to Road 7 is not proposed, a public shared path is included along the Greenway, providing an accessible walking and cycling link for the balance lot. Vehicular access will be via Station Road, which will remain its primary access.

If the balance lot is developed as a retirement village extension, there are practical opportunities to integrate it with the consented retirement village layout. The retirement village masterplan has also future-proofed by preserving logical “corridor options” for westward extension (for example, aligning internal lanes and open-space corridors so that a future staged expansion can occur in a legible way as shown by arrows below). While there is no formed internal connection at this stage, the pattern has been designed so that, when and if the balance lot is developed, it can be efficiently integrated into the retirement village structure.



c. Why existing roads extending to the Site are in some cases not to be connected to or are only to be partially connected for certain travel modes;

The “connectivity, legibility and accessibility” principle has been applied to prioritise safe, direct and legible links while avoiding arrangements that would compromise street function or introduce rat-running. In practice, that means concentrating public road connections where they best integrate with the Proposal’s two spine roads, and using mode-selective links (walking/cycling) where full vehicular connections would create geometric/safety conflicts or are not legally feasible.

Currently, the Site has the potential access points connecting to the existing roads:

- Private roads: Chestnut Lane and Eldonwood Drive
- Public roads: Station Road, Highgrove Avenue, Peakedale Drive

For Chestnut Lane and Eldonwood Drive, both are private roads. While full connections could offer local benefits, they are contingent on third-party agreement. Through consultation, landowners have indicated that they do not support connections, including for walking and cycling. Nevertheless, for Eldonwood

Drive, the Stage 1A stormwater pond lot (Lot 4001) includes sufficient space to future-proof a potential pedestrian connection; however, no formed pathway is proposed as part of this application.

For the public roads, the proposal provides:

- Vehicle access via two connections to Station Road (one public connection through residential area and one private connection through retirement village)
- A vehicle connection to Peakedale Drive via Road 13 (with future extension to the south)

An east–west connection (Road 1) is also proposed that is aligned to the most recent public road layout in the Peakedale subdivision. The corridor will be protected at full local-street width to achieve a consistent street cross-section and street pattern. This approach maintains connectivity and permeability between Ashbourne and Peakedale (and beyond) while keeping a clear, legible option for a seamless vehicular tie-in in the future.

No pedestrian or cycle connection to Highgrove Avenue is proposed. We understand that this reflects the outcomes of direct neighbour consultation.

Nevertheless, from an urban design perspective, we agree the benefits of the provision of a shared path, with a recommended width of 6m, will preserve connectivity and everyday permeability for people on foot and bikes.



d. What if any connectivity through the large solar farm areas was considered or may be appropriate;

Connectivity through the solar farm area has not been provided. The solar farms are utility environments with fenced arrays, electrical equipment, stock grazing and maintenance traffic. Introducing public routes inside them would likely create operational, safety and CPTED conflicts without adding meaningful permeability. There is also no public destination “beyond” the solar farms at present, so a through-route would be a link from nowhere to nowhere.

e. Are any pedestrian or cycle upgrades along Station Road to the Site’s access points proposed;

The proposal includes upgrade to Station Road footpath with a sealed 3m width. This is intended to improve safety and connectivity for people walking and cycling to the site and to key destinations such as schools and the town centre.

- f. In the Master Plan report accompanying the UDA, figure 4 (section 1.5) identified a ‘cultural narrative opportunity’ for a green connection east of the proposed greenway through to the Site’s eastern boundary. As far as I can ascertain this conceptual connection has not been provided for. An explanation of why is requested given it was a product of the project’s own urban design analysis following their identified principles;*

The “cultural narrative opportunity” shown in Figure 4 of the Master Plan was a conceptual indication of a green, story-carrying connection to the east, arising from engagement with mana whenua. It was always intended to be outcome-based and engagement-led, rather than a fixed alignment.

The underlying intent remains embedded in the proposal and will be realised at a minimum through:

- native planting and riparian-style treatments within the central greenway
- native planting along key spine roads
- opportunities for cultural wayfinding and interpretive elements.

Should mana whenua and the project team identify more specific cultural narrative treatments or alignments as the project advances, these can be integrated at detailed design and construction stage.

- g. In the Master Plan report at figure 10 (section 3.4) a high-level key connectivity outcome for the Site is shown that integrates a link through the proposed retirement village to Station Road. Please confirm that the ‘through link’ from Station Road through the retirement village site to the residential precinct will be available for all modes and including the public, or whether it is intended to be gated or secured for residents only.*
- i. If the former, please explain why no public roads are proposed in the retirement village area;*
 - ii. If the latter, please explain the consequences of this in terms of the opportunity identified in figure 10 (which does not indicate a lesser degree of connectivity through the retirement village than other key connections shown).*

The through-link shown in Figure 10 of the Master Plan report has been confirmed as private in operation. The internal carriageway will be gated for vehicles, reflecting retirement village operational and safety needs. However, the adjoining pedestrian footpath will remain ungated and publicly accessible during daylight hours, maintaining walking and cycling permeability between Station Road, the retirement village, the greenway and the residential precinct.

Retirement villages operate best with low-speed, access-managed streets that support age-friendly environments and allow the operator to manage safety, servicing and parking. Keeping the roads private achieves this. Wider vehicular permeability is instead provided via the public street network in the residential precinct.

Figure 10 illustrated a high-level connectivity opportunity at lodgement. In the refined design, the active-mode intent of that figure is still met through the ungated footpath link. The village will not operate as an all-modes through-route for general traffic. If circumstances change in future, the arrangement could be revisited, but that is not proposed at this time.

5. *At face value the proposal includes some outcomes that appear atypical. This is not to suggest they are considered inappropriate, but the reasoning behind the various decisions made would be most helpful. Specifically:*

- a. *The proposed transition of density is identified as relevant and has been provided for on some sides of the Site but then not on others - notably the southern boundary. Relevant to my query is that under the assessment principle “diversity in housing and density”, the explanation provided in the UDA states (my emphasis added) “ensure appropriate density transitions that sensitively integrate higher-density areas around proposed local amenities and lower densities at interfaces with rural edges” (i.e., not just rural-living edges).*

It is acknowledged that the southern boundary interfaces with Rural-zoned land. Along this edge, proposed lots are generally 500 m² and above, with rear yards oriented to the south. On lots of this size, typical building envelopes, front and rear yard depths and height-to-boundary rules are expected to produce suburban outcomes at the southern edge, resulting in low perceived bulk.

In order to respond to interface concerns, additional measures have been introduced along the southern boundary:

- a 2m wide planting buffer along the common boundary,
- a 5m Building Line Restriction (BLR) on the adjoining residential lots, and
- boundary fencing between 1.5m and 1.8m in height.

The 2m buffer allows for two rows of planting at 1.2m spacing, creating a dense and naturalised screen. Together, the lot orientation, expected built form, planting buffer, BLR and fencing create a “soft edge” outcome without establishing large rural-residential lots inside the Site. While the density step-down is not expressed solely through lot size, the overall interface package is considered to achieve the intent of lower intensity at rural edges.

- b. *The retirement village will be higher density than much of the residential housing development proposed. Public connectivity is also generally more important in a publicly-accessible residential area than a retirement village where access-management is more common. But it is the residential housing development that has been positioned in that part of the Site that appears to present constrained connectivity (including pedestrian and cycle-only links to several adjacent roads), and which could potentially accommodate the highest densities due to its proximity to existing Matamata (i.e., using the UDA’s principle of a ‘gradient’ or ‘transition’). If the balance lot is planned to be used for the retirement village, this would further emphasise a ‘reverse transition’ of density being achieved across the development. I am certain that much thought went into the planning and layout, and to that end more explanation is requested of how and why the retirement village and residential development areas were ‘landed’.*

The location of the retirement village and the general residential areas reflect a combination of urban design, servicing and land-use considerations:

- The western land parcel is larger and more regular, suited to a single-owner, comprehensively planned retirement village with internal amenity and staged delivery. Its position also preserves a clear option for westward expansion if required in future.

- The eastern side of the Site is more fragmented in geometry but well placed to tie into the finer grain of Peakedale and the existing town network via Station Road and Peakedale Drive. It is therefore more suitable for general residential subdivision.

The apparent “reverse transition” arises when considering density in units per hectare. While the retirement village yields a higher unit count per hectare, it is expected to comprise predominantly single-storey units with generous internal open space, communal gardens and wide internal circulation. Its perceived bulk and dominance at the edges are therefore low. In addition, a 3m wide planting buffer along the eastern external boundary will provide additional visual and amenity screening.

By contrast, the residential area will be delivered as vacant lots. Although the lots themselves are not especially small (generally 350–700 m²), future dwellings may be up to two storeys within the applicable controls. As a result, the built intensity and height around the commercial node and greenway may read as visually “denser” than parts of the retirement village.

Connectivity has also influenced land use placement. Positioning general residential development closer to Peakedale Drive and Station Road favours walking and cycling trips to schools, community facilities and the town centre. The retirement village, with a different trip profile and a stronger emphasis on internal amenity, is better suited to the western location, connected but more self-contained.

6. *The commercial node has been relied on (at least in part) to support the proposed density adjacent to it as well as in terms of the overall appropriateness of the proposal. I understand that the application is for the commercial node to remain entirely ‘optional’ and that it may or may not be implemented in the event that consent is granted. The UDA only provides an assessment of the scenario that the commercial node does occur. Please provide an assessment of the scenario of the commercial node not occurring, including whether the higher-density lots argued in the UDA to be appropriate due to proximity to the commercial node should be changed and if so through what post-consent mechanism.*

Since lodgement, the Applicant has committed to delivering the commercial node in its “Option 1” form, and the alternative “Option 2” (full residential replacement) has been withdrawn. The scenario of the commercial node not proceeding is therefore no longer the intended or sought outcome under this application. If, for any reason, any significant future change to the commercial node (for example, full localisation to residential) would be addressed through a new consent process.

7. *It is not clear to me whether purchasers of a residential lot must construct the specific house typology (“residential typology designs”) identified for that lot (which would seem to make the various “development conditions” proposed in conditions seem redundant) or whether those typologies are just one ‘acceptable solution’ to be consented, should the purchaser wish to construct that. If it is intended that the typologies shown are what must be constructed, then additional information is requested demonstrating how highly uniform or overly repetitive built form outcomes (i.e., what is colloquially often referred to as a ‘cookie-cutter’) will be avoided.*
8. *Subject to item (7) above, land use conditions governing development on the allotments are proposed. An explanation is requested of whether, and if so how, purchasers would / could go about ‘infringing’ any of those in the way that normal zone standards in a District Plan land use zone might be. Would non-compliance trigger a s.127 variation of the whole consent or would there be some other mechanism (or in real-world terms would there simply be no means of ‘non-compliance’)? If a form of*

resource consent approval is envisaged, please identify the activity status and any other assessment framework that might apply.

9. *Ultimately and for the purposes of monitoring the consent (and subject to item (7) above, I understand that there are no actual proposed built form outcomes other than the proposed development standards that the Council could independently monitor (i.e., the guidelines are understood to all ultimately just be suggestions to inspire allotment purchasers, not requirements that must be achieved). I do not understand what the guidelines mean when they refer lot developers to the need for both building and resource consents. Please explain what additional resource consents are envisaged.*
10. *The guidelines document generally is not always consistent in terms of how some outcomes are described as if they were fixed requirements, and others as if they are things that are promoted or encouraged more generally. Please clarify what aspects of the guideline are intended to be fixed requirements, and what are not.*
11. *Please confirm whether it is envisaged that the Council is being expected to assess proposals for Building Consent against the Guidelines document for full compliance as well as the stated conditions of consent.*

The relationship between Development Controls and the Residential Design Guideline has been clarified and refined as follows:

- Development Controls (maximum building envelope and key quantitative standards) will be secured as conditions of consent and expressed using definitive verbs to set clear boundaries rather than “generally comply.” These will establish a maximum building envelope for all future development.
- The Residential Design Guideline (DG) will incorporate all Development Controls to avoid ambiguity and will clearly distinguish between:
 - Core Controls, including density limits, maximum site coverage, front yard setbacks, garage door setback and scale, side and rear setbacks, maximum height, height in relation to boundary, minimum permeable coverage, landscape buffers, outdoor living and service areas, fences and walls along street boundary, and
 - Discretionary Guidelines (e.g. preferred façade articulation, material palettes, planting typologies).
- A private covenant mechanism will be used to ensure the DG is implemented and that subsequent dwellings are subject to a Design Review Panel (DRP) process.

Typology Plans will be approved as part of the consent package and will operate as “acceptable solutions”. These are not mandatory but act as a tool to assist deliverability and consistency, not a requirement that every lot be built to a standardised plan. Lot owners may either:

- build the approved typology for their lot, or
- propose an alternative design that needs to comply with the Development Controls and is endorsed through the DRP process.

While the consented development controls hold the overall massing and building envelope, the revised DG comprises additional core controls and discretion guidelines, such as material variety and façade articulation.

When a dwelling design does not comply with the Core Controls (for example, an exceedance of the maximum envelope), it will require a s127 variation to the consent, supported by an appropriate assessment

to be reviewed and assessed at the time of application. Therefore, there will be no informal 'tolerance' of any non-compliance. References in the DG will be updated to reflect this framework and avoid implying additional unspecified consent triggers.

Council will not be expected to assess the dwelling design against the DG as part of the building consent process but will assess the compliance against the Development Controls and any relevant consent conditions (i.e. certify that it has been undertaken). The DRP will instead manage the alignment with the controls (both core controls and discretionary guidelines) under the Design Guidelines. It is also required that the DRP process will occur prior to the submission of building consent process, as will be outlined in the revised Design Guidelines.

12. In the event that the Council declines to accept some or all the various open spaces proposed for a recreation purpose, would these remain privately owned or revert to something something different? Would additional recreation purpose open spaces then need to be provided?

It is understood that Council is supportive of accepting the proposed open space for recreational purposes, noting there is one open space in the form of 2,345m² public green space (Lot 1001). It is our understanding that all other open spaces are to be vested for drainage, stormwater, and infrastructure purposes.

Should Council's position change in relation to the open space, the ownership and ongoing management arrangements would be reviewed at that time in consultation with Council. However, based on current discussions, no alternative provision is anticipated to be required.

13. The western side of Matamata has been to date largely developing as a countryside living / rural-residential type 'transition' out from the existing urban area east of that (including via the Eldonwood Structure Plan). The proposal would be substantially different to that, and this may present both positive and negative urban design outcomes for Matamata. The Council's planning to date appears to have focused most development of the densities proposed on the eastern side of the village including because that is where employment activities are occurring. Please provide an explanation of the Matamata-wide merits of the proposal including in terms of:

- a. Any urban form, character, or functionality effects arising from introducing relatively high-density development in the western fringe of Matamata including in terms of its compatibility with the rural-residential development that has occurred previously.*

We observe that the potential challenges (such as the interface with established rural-residential activities) are addressed through soft edge treatment, including increased building setbacks, and landscape buffers along key rural and rural-residential interfaces. These measures can assist in managing the perceived bulk, privacy and visual dominance, thereby creating a more reasonable respectful transition into existing rural-residential properties. The proposal will deliver diversity of housing and a more efficient urban form, supporting the NPS-UD and Future Proof objectives for housing choice and compact growth.

- b. Any urban form effects arising from the proposed commercial node as a de-facto centre for west Matamata.*

The commercial node is intended to serve as a local neighbourhood centre, not a competing town centre. The scale is limited and is proposed to provide for day-to-day needs of residents as well as supporting amenities such as on-site carparking and servicing areas. The uses of this land could include activities such

as a superette, café, childcare and small services, to support the immediate catchment. By focusing on local convenience trips, it complements rather than undermines the existing Matamata town centre, which remains the primary destination for higher-order retail and services.

c. Are the solar farms de-facto urban edges / barriers that would inhibit well-functioning urban form patterns beyond them.

In the short to medium term, they will act as a functional edge to urban development, similar to other rural-zone infrastructure or production uses. While there are currently no known examples in New Zealand of a solar farm site being repurposed to urban development to our best knowledge, the Ashbourne solar farm areas are held in large, contiguous titles with relatively light, reversible physical works (panel arrays, underground cabling and perimeter access tracks). If zoning or market circumstances change in future, these elements can be removed and the land reconfigured for streets and blocks in a conventional way. On that basis, it is considered that the solar farms do not preclude future urban use of the land or the ability to deliver a well-functioning urban environment over the longer term.

d. Would the proposal proceeding warrant reconsideration of future growth for Matamata noting that much land identified by the Council to date has not yet been zoned.

Future growth for Matamata will constantly need to be reconsidered in line with changes to resource management legislation (including requirements for responsive planning), local government reform, population forecasts and a changing climate. It is not unusual for growth to occur “out of sequence” in response to market demand or varying landowner motivations. The NPS-UD already includes provisions for regular monitoring and updates to Future Development Strategies to enable changes in local circumstances to be factored into longer-term planning processes.

e. How important are the proposed connections to the Site’s Stage 1 eastern boundary (towards Firth Street) in the longer-term of integrating the proposal into the town? Or are those envisaged only as providing opportunity for an immediate neighbour to connect to the network rather than through to Firth Street?

In our opinion, connections toward the eastern boundary (and ultimately Firth Street) are important in both short and longer terms. The connection can provide immediate opportunities for adjoining development (such as subdivisions at Peakedale Dr and Hampton Tce) to tie into a more connected local network, including Road 13 and other spines, thereby avoiding isolated or fragmented subdivision.

In the longer term, they help ensure that Ashbourne is integrated into the town’s street and movement structure, rather than functioning as a disconnected pocket. The preserved alignment of Road 1 toward the most recent Peakedale road is a key example.

3.0 Response to Neighbours' Submissions

All responses to neighbour submissions have been provided through a collective and comprehensive approach, drawing on input from the relevant technical specialists across urban design, transportation, landscape, planning, infrastructure and ecology. This ensures that each matter raised has been addressed holistically and consistently across disciplines, and that the resulting amendments reflect an integrated, best-practice response to the issues identified. These responses are provided as part of Appendix A Tracking Table Response to Affected Landowners.

4.0 Conclusion

In summary, the refinements made since lodgement directly address the matters raised in Mr Munro's evidence and the Request for Clarification under Appendix 2. The updated edge treatments (landscaping and Building Line Restrictions), connectivity approach and confirmed delivery of the commercial node collectively improve the clarity, functionality of the proposal as well as create a more respectful transition to rural and rural-residential neighbours. The amended Development Controls and Design Guideline now provide a framework that distinguishes core controls and discretionary guidelines from flexible design guidance, supported by a design review process that will be managed via private covenant.

Nā māua noa, nā

Barker & Associates Limited



Katherine Hu

Associate | Urban Design

027 403 6548 | KatherineH@barker.co.nz



Cam Wallace

Partner

027 255 1141 | CamW@barker.co.nz

Appendix 1 – Proposed Boundary Treatment Summary

Appendix 2 – Updated Urban Design Drawing Pack

Appendix 3 – Revised Residential Design Guidelines (Note: Consequential amendments will be incorporated in a final DG in due course)