

11 December 2025

Environmental Protection Authority
Attn: Expert Consenting Panel - Ashbourne
Via email

Tēnā koutou,

Applicant Response to Minute 4 of Ashbourne [FTAA-2507-1087]

This response addresses the request for expert conferencing and the request for further information raised in Minute 4 of the Expert Panel, issued on 3 December 2025. As requested, Expert Conferencing was undertaken on the identified matters relating to Economics, Stormwater, and Groundwater. Joint Witness Statements have been prepared and will be forwarded to the EPA.

In relation to the requests for further information outlined in Items 12 to 26 of Minute 4, the following response is provided. This response is supported by the following attachments:

- Attachment 1: Engineering Drawings
- Attachment 2: Geotechnical Seismicity / Active Faulting JWS
- Attachment 3: Traffic Response
- Attachment 4: Landscape Drawings – Residential

Table 1: Further information response.

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	Further Information to be Provided	
	<i>Stormwater</i>	
12	Please provide a drawing or drawings showing the extent of the proposed subsoil drainage system and details on its depth below finished ground levels that is necessary to ensure groundwater levels remain at a sufficient distance below proposed soakage trenches so as to not adversely affect performance of soakage trenches for ongoing disposal of stormwater.	The proposed subsoil drainage system is shown in plan on drawing C401, SK4001, and in section on drawings C430-4 and C430-4A. Drawing C401 shows the full extent of the subsoil drainage network and the pipework system. Drawing SK4001 illustrates the subsoil drainage system, with areas color-coded to indicate groundwater interaction. The red-shaded region corresponds to areas where the subsoil drainage is below the peak groundwater level (GWL). In contrast, the green-shaded area represents areas where the GWL remains below the subsoil drainage system based on peak historical recorded levels, indicating no significant interaction.

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		<p>Drawings C430-4 and C430-4A show winter groundwater levels, with trench invert depths referenced to finished ground levels, demonstrating that the subsoil drainage will maintain groundwater at a sufficient depth below the soakage trench inverts.</p> <p>This ensures the ongoing hydraulic performance of the soakage trenches for stormwater disposal is not adversely affected. The depth and layout of the subsoil drainage system have been designed in accordance with relevant hydrological and geotechnical expert feedback to provide effective groundwater control across all catchments.</p> <p>Drawings C3300 and C3301 show the proposed RV road cross sections with subsoils located 1m below ground. A reminder, we are not reliant on low groundwater levels within the RV as we are no longer proposing soakage here.</p> <p>Drawings C340-1 depth to subsoils beneath kerbs (where no soakage trench is proposed) have been added for clarification.</p>
	<i>Wastewater</i>	
13	Is there to be provision for a 100% (area) reserve wastewater field. If not advise why not. If so, please provide updated plans to show this.	As per our previous response, we are proposing a 50% reserve field as "where advanced secondary treatment is provided, as this system has, Waikato Regional Council will accept a reduced reserve area".
14	Please confirm the extent of agreement regarding the MPDC conditions in relation to wastewater management (Appendix to Memorandum 5).	We accept additional consent conditions can be added. We suggest that the applicant, WRC and MPDC planner reconvene to agree upon the conditions that can be developed to be put forward to the panel for reviewing and implementing in the week commencing 15 th December.
15	Please confirm what landscaping of effluent disposal field will be undertaken as per TP-58 and AS NZS 5417.	Grass / Turf will be used across the entire disposal field. This meets TP-58 and AS/NZS 1547, which require shallow-rooted vegetation that supports evapotranspiration, maintains soil stability, and avoids root intrusion into the system. The area will be fully fenced to prevent stock access and protect the field from compaction or damage. No shrubs, trees, structures, or contour changes are proposed within this area, and the field will remain accessible for inspection and maintenance.

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16	Are there any issues that will impact the functioning of the wastewater field taking into account the groundwater levels arising from responses to MPDC Memorandum 2.	Per the groundwater JWS there is agreement that groundwater levels are currently held by farm drains to 0.5 m BGL. However, these drains will be removed and the agreed naturalised level without drains is 0.1 m. Therefore, we are proposing to further raise the proposed groundwater surface within the wastewater disposal field to 1000mm above 67.8m, to a minimum RL of 68.8m and these is reflected on updated plans C5000A and C2400-1.
	<i>Geotechnical seismicity</i>	
17	In relation to Memorandum 2 from T. Cowbourne, it is stated that the site has not been shown to be free of active faults. The memo included a description of an expected scope of works that expected a SQEP such as GNS to carry out, noting this would take months to complete. It does not appear that this has been provided. Please outline how it can be understood that the site is free from risks from active fault lines.	<p>As per expert conferencing on the 9th of December 2025 between Terrane Consulting (MPDC representative), CMW (Applicants representative), and EnGeo (Applicants Representative), it was discussed that GNS is unlikely to issue a statement that the site is "... free of active faults".</p> <p>A discussion regarding GNS conducting a fault desktop study was had. It was agreed that GNS should be engaged to complete a site-specific fault desktop study for the development area, and it was suggested during the discussion that this GNS study be a made a condition of consent.</p> <p>While not requested by the Panel, the Applicant has conferenced with Terrane Consulting and reached agreement on this matter. To this end, experts have prepared a Joint Witness Statement for the benefit of the Panel, included as Attachment 2.</p>
	<i>Transport</i>	
18	Please provide details on the extent of agreement between MPDC and the Applicant regarding MPDC proposed condition amendments/additions (Memorandum 6);	Please refer to response provided as Attachment 3 .
19	Please confirm if it is the applicant intention to agree to a PDA which will include costs of designating the proposed future road connection to Firth St.	The applicant intends to agree to a PDA, including costs of designating the proposed future road connection to Firth Street, subject to conditions on Development Contribution offset. The applicant is continuing to meet with MPDC to finalise the PDA.
	<i>Planning/Landscape/Urban Design</i>	

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20	The Landscape plans for the residential area do not include landscape boundary treatments. Please provide examples of these.
	Landscape boundary plans have been incorporated into the Residential and Greenway Landscape Drawings set, included as Attachment 4 .
21	MPDC to advise on the Applicant’s response on urban design considerations in respect of the number of rear lots.
	For MPDC to respond
22	The Applicant is to provide its updated Residential Design Guide (due 4 December 2025).
	Response issued to Panel 4 December 2025.
23	The Applicant is to propose wording for an appropriate consent notice relating to the proposed buffer planting.
	<p>The following wording is proposed:</p> <p>(85) The following must be registered as a consent notice on the records of title to be issued for Lots 378-388 and 390-403: <i>“That the planting buffer area shown on the Buffer Planting Plan prepared by Greenwoods Associates version XXX be planted and maintained with a mix of species as per the approved Planting and Establishment Plan to a width of no less than 3m in perpetuity. Any dead or unhealthy plants within the buffer area are to be replaced during the next available planting season to maintain the visual buffer.”</i></p> <p>(86) The following must be registered as a consent notice on the records of title to be issued for Lots 38-45, 47-51, 90-97, 132-137, 166-180, 268-281, 419-420, 428-429, and 474-492: <i>“That the planting buffer area shown on the Buffer Planting Plan prepared by Greenwoods Associates version XXX be planted and maintained with a mix of species as per the approved Planting and Establishment Plan to a width of no less than 2m in perpetuity. Any dead or unhealthy plants within the buffer area are to be replaced during the next available planting season to maintain the visual buffer.”</i></p>
24	Lots 8 and 9 suggests in terms of the NPS-HPL that this land “meets the exemption under Clause 3.10 as the land is subject to permanent or long-term constraints that make primary production economically unviable”. Clarification is required, as the Land Use Capability Assessment describes the land as LUC 2s1 (and
	The Applicant agrees to the removal of the rural residential Lots 8 and 9 from the application, and to incorporate this land into the northern solar farm (Lot 7). The area will be shown as vacant land for grazing and not constitute an extension of the built solar panel structures.

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	adjacent to 1s1). The Panel queries whether it could not form part of overall use of site by solar farm by livestock?	While no update to the Scheme Plan is provided as part of this response, the Applicant commits to updating the 'Day 0' scheme plan to reflect this change as we have indicated below in our response to point '25'.
25	Please confirm that it is acceptable or any issues that the Applicant would have with a proposed condition for a restrictive covenant over the balance lot to prevent this being used for future development.	<p>The Applicant confirms that they will agree to a consent notice over the balance lot requiring the Lot to be retained only for uses allowed for under the MPDC District Plan. The CN would be placed on the ROT at the day zero scheme s224c. We note the scheme plan is not yet updated but will incorporate these changes.</p> <p>Potential draft wording of the consent notice is provided below:</p> <p><i>That a consent notice be registered against the record of title for [Insert relevant Lot number and Certificate of Title reference] stating that "no future urban land use or development occur, other than those activities permitted by the MPDC District Plan or authorised prior to the date of this consent notice being registered."</i></p>
26	Please confirm that to riparian planting in Waitoa Stream and the overall treatment of this area has alignment with certain provisions of the NPS-IB (Policies 13 and 14) and WRPS Policy IM-P5 or provide updated planting and treatment for this area so that consistency with the NPS-IB and the WRPS will be achieved.	<p><u>NPS-IB</u></p> <p>Policy 13 of the NPS-IB states that "Restoration of indigenous biodiversity is promoted and provided for", while Policy 14 states "Increase indigenous vegetation cover is promoted in both urban and non-urban environments".</p> <p>In this regard, the Applicant notes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When viewed overall, the Ashbourne development provides for substantial planting across the entirety of the site, including 107 native specimen trees and approximately 20,000m² of native planting within the Ashbourne Greenway, and approximately 7,500m² of native planting (including 30 native trees) within the proposed wetlands. It is considered that this represents an overall significant increase in indigenous biodiversity and vegetation cover as a result of the development, in accordance with Policies 13 and 14 of the NPS-IB.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With specific regard to the proposed esplanade reserve adjoining the Waitoa River, Enhancement Riparian Planting is proposed alongside the proposed discharge channel from the Ashbourne Greenway to the Waitoa River. In addition, 26 native specimen trees are proposed within the Esplanade Reserve, increasing indigenous vegetation cover in accordance with Policy 14 of the NPS-IB. The submitted Ecological Impact Assessment notes that the riparian margin of the Waitoa River has been planted in native species at variable widths, however these are not yet mature enough to provide canopy cover. Riparian planting is proposed along the discharge channel to the River. • Natural inland wetlands/oxbow are also present on site, and it is noted that the response prepared by Ecological Solutions in response to Minute 2 of the Expert Panel summarised the following: <i>“No specific landscape planting is proposed in around the oxbow wetlands. The existing vegetation communities around these features were characterised as mature, mixed exotic and native. The existing communities were providing adequate shade, organic recruitment, and bank stabilisation. The current level of riparian function was deemed effective and therefore not in need of replacement.”</i> • While it is acknowledged that no additional riparian planting is immediately proposed along the Waitoa River, it is considered that overall, the proposal positively restores indigenous biodiversity, including through the introduction of fauna habitat throughout the development. Overall, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies 13 and 14 of the NPS-IB. • Further we note the uncertainty as to the esplanade vesting to MPDC. We are proposing a condition as this is expected during the first subdivision opportunity, but the extent and detail of the esplanade establishment, species and density is still to be agreed with MPDC and we are happy to

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	<p>have this indicated in a condition of consent on the 'day zero' subdivision.</p> <p><u>WRPS Policy IM-P5</u></p> <p>Policy IM-P5 of the Waikato Regional Policy Statement states:</p> <p><i>"Areas of amenity value are identified, and those values are maintained and enhanced. These may include:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Areas within the coastal environment and along inland water bodies;</i> <i>2. Scenic, scientific, recreational or historic areas;</i> <i>3. Areas of spiritual or cultural significance;</i> <i>4. Other landscapes or seascapes on natural features; and</i> <i>5. Areas adjacent to outstanding natural landscapes and features that are visible from a road or other public place"</i> <p>The bank of the Waitoa River is currently held in a private title and has no public access or amenity. The Applicant has identified that the area has the potential to offer amenity value, and as such has offered an esplanade reserve as part of this application. The Applicant has included specimen trees within the application to increase amenity and has indicated that a 3m wide path could be established by the MPDC at an appropriate gradient.</p> <p>Further, the proposal is anticipated to improve water quality of the Waitoa River, with the Ashbourne Greenway providing treatment of stormwater prior to discharge into the Waitoa.</p> <p>It is considered that the provision of a useable esplanade reserve, where public access previously did not exist, has identified and enhanced an area of amenity value for the region, and the proposal thus accords with Policy IM-P5 of the WRPS.</p>

We trust that the above addresses your queries.

Yours sincerely | Nā māua noa, nā

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