

## Your Comment on the Ashbourne substantive application

Please include all the contact details listed below with your comments and indicate whether you can receive further communications from us by email to substantive@fasttrack.govt.nz.

1. Contact Details			
Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.			
<b>Organisation name (if relevant)</b>			
<b>First name</b>	Fiona		
<b>Last name</b>	Stoffer		
<b>Postal address</b>	[REDACTED]		
<b>Home phone / Mobile phone</b>	[REDACTED]	<b>Work phone</b>	
<b>Email (a valid email address enables us to communicate efficiently with you)</b>	[REDACTED]		

2. We will email you draft conditions of consent for your comment			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I can receive emails and my email address is correct	<input type="checkbox"/>	I cannot receive emails and my postal address is correct

**Please provide your comments below, include additional pages as needed.**

I am the part-owner of [REDACTED] directly adjoining the proposed Northern Solar Farm and within proximity to the Ashbourne Development. **I wish to formally oppose the application in its current form under the Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024.**

My concerns relate to serious and unaddressed environmental, technical and social impacts of the proposed subdivision, retirement village and solar farm. Based on the developer's own documentation and the independent review by residents, the proposal is unsuitable for this location for the following reasons:

- **Land Use and Environmental Impact**

There are **known flooding issues** along Station Road and near 127–172 Station Road. Existing board drains have been removed or blocked, and stormwater modelling in the application uses

**incorrect curve-number data**, making the conclusions unreliable.

Flooding will worsen for properties downstream, including our property at [REDACTED]

- **Noise, Vibration and Neighbouring Property Impact**

The **Northern Solar Farm** will exceed permitted noise limits during construction and operation. My property at [REDACTED] is specifically identified as the most affected dwelling. The mitigation proposed that residents “not be home during the day” is entirely unacceptable, particularly for my household of **shift workers** who sleep during daylight hours. Continuous noise and vibration from pile-driving and solar operation will negatively affect health, safety, and financial wellbeing.

**Property Value Impact:**

The presence of an industrial-scale solar farm immediately beside a rural-residential property is likely to significantly **reduce property value** and market desirability. Independent studies in New Zealand and overseas have shown that proximity to visible solar installations, substations, or high-voltage infrastructure typically leads to **5–20% decreases in sale value**, depending on visibility, noise, and the loss of rural outlook.

In this case, the solar farm boundary sits within **metres of my home**, separated only by a **2.2-metre security fence** and panels reaching **2.5 metres in height**. The proposed vegetative screening will take **10–15 years** to mature, meaning that for the next decade the property will be dominated by industrial fencing, humming transformers, and reflected glare.

The development removes the rural views and sense of openness that are fundamental to the area’s residential appeal. Buyers seeking a quiet rural lifestyle are unlikely to purchase properties adjoining such infrastructure. The resulting loss of value is not a theoretical concern, it represents a tangible reduction in my family’s equity and long-term financial security.

- **Infrastructure and Planning Non-Compliance**

The proposal lies **outside Matamata’s programmed urban expansion area** and **inconsistent with the district structure plan**.

Station Road lacks sufficient **stormwater, wastewater, and water infrastructure**, and the assumption that council will extend these at public cost is unjustified.

Town services are already under pressure. Adding over **1,000 residents and 400 retirees** would overwhelm Matamata’s limited medical, emergency, and council resources.

The **Future Proof Strategy** shows no immediate housing shortage; this project risks oversupply and market instability.

**Location outside planned growth boundary:**

The Ashbourne site sits beyond the boundary of the Eastern Matamata Structure Plan (ESSP)- the area the Matamata-Piako District Council has programmed for future urban expansion.

This western edge of town is zoned Rural and Rural-Residential, forming a deliberate buffer zone between Matamata's urban core and surrounding productive farmland.

The ESSP and District Plan confine urban growth to the east and north-east of the town, where infrastructure has been designed and budgeted.

Approving dense subdivision and solar development to the west of Station Road would therefore leapfrog the programmed growth area, bypassing council planning, undermining infrastructure investment priorities, and setting a precedent for unplanned urban sprawl onto high-quality agricultural land.

**In summary, the Ashbourne proposal:**

- Destroys **productive farmland**
- Increases **flood and geotechnical risk**
- Relies on **incorrect and incomplete data**
- Imposes **unacceptable noise, visual, and financial harm** on neighbours
- Fails to align with **Matamata's planning framework**

The projects adverse impacts far outweigh any claimed benefits. I strongly urge the Panel to decline the application in its current form, or at a minimum, require a full reassessment under normal Resource Management Act processes, allowing proper scrutiny and appeal rights.

Regards,

Fiona Stoffer

██████████ Property owner

Matamata