



## FTAA-2511-1149: Application received for referral of the project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – Stage 2 decisions

### Project Name: Otaihanga Retirement Village

Date submitted:	19 March 2026	Tracking #: BRF-00603	
Security level:	In-Confidence	MfE priority:	Urgent

	<b>Action sought:</b>	<b>Response by:</b>
To Hon Chris Bishop, Minister for Infrastructure	Decision on recommendations	26 March 2026

Actions for Minister's Office staff	<b>Return</b> the signed briefing to: <a href="mailto:FTAreferrals@mfe.govt.nz">FTAreferrals@mfe.govt.nz</a> <b>Approve</b> the attached notice of decisions letter.
Number of appendices: 6	Appendices: 1. Statutory framework for making decisions 2. Application documents for Otaihanga Retirement Village 3. Stage 1 Briefing Note and decisions 4. Section 18 Report on Treaty settlements and other obligations 5. Comments received from all parties 6. Draft Notice of Decisions

### Ministry for the Environment contacts

Position	Name	Cell phone	1 <sup>st</sup> contact
Principal Author	Whitney Nelson		
Manager	Stephanie Frame	s 9(2)(a)	✓
General Manager	Ilana Miller	s 9(2)(a)	

## Project location



Image 1: Project area in red, located in Paraparaumu within the Wellington Region.

## Key messages

1. This briefing seeks your decisions under section 21 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) on the application from Summerset Villages (Paraparaumu) Limited (the applicant) to refer the Otaihanga Retirement Village (the project) to the fast-track approvals process.
2. A copy of the application is in Appendix 2. This is the second briefing on this application. The first (Stage 1) briefing (BRF-00210) with your initial decisions annotated is in Appendix 3.
3. The project is to construct and establish a retirement village and associated infrastructure on approximately 12.6 hectares of land at 73 Ratanui Road in Paraparaumu, Kāpiti Coast District, in the Wellington Region. The project includes:
  - a. approximately 250 independent living units consisting of cottages and villas
  - b. a central main building comprising of approximately 40 assisted living suites, 40 care suites, and associated amenities
  - c. a range of resident amenities such as a bowling green, pickleball court, pétanque court

- d. internal circulation and parking provision
  - e. roading network upgrades
  - f. earthworks and boundary treatment.
4. The project will require resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), approval under the Wildlife Act 1953 and archaeological authority under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014. No other approvals under specified Acts are sought as part of the application.
  5. We recommend you **accept** the referral application as the project meets the criteria set out in section 22 and does not appear to involve an ineligible activity.
  6. We seek your decisions on our recommendations and notification of your decisions.

### Assessment against statutory framework

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7. The statutory framework for your decision-making is set out in Appendix 1. You must apply this framework when you are deciding whether to accept or decline the referral application and when deciding on any further requirements or directions associated with referral of the project.
8. Before accepting the project, you must consider the following:
  - a. the application (in Appendix 2)
  - b. the section 18 Treaty settlements report (in Appendix 4)
  - c. any comments from invited parties (in Appendix 5).
9. Following that, you may accept the application if you are satisfied that it meets the criteria in section 22 of the Act and if there are no reasons you must decline the application. We provide our advice on these matters below.

### Section 18 Treaty settlements and other obligations report

10. A treaty settlements and other obligations report (the report) prepared under section 19 of the Act is attached in Appendix 4.
11. The report identified the following relevant groups under section 18(2): Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Inc as a relevant Treaty settlement entity/iwi authority, and Muaūpoko Tribal Authority Inc, Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Charitable Trust, and Te Rūnanga o Raukawa Incorporated as relevant iwi authorities. The report also identified Puketapu ki Paraparaumu Trust, Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki, and the ART Confederation as other Māori groups which may have an interest in the application.
12. The report identified Ngāti Toa Rangatira Claims Settlement Act 2014 under section 18(2). No other obligations (such as Mana Whakahono ā Rohe or joint management agreements) have been identified under section 18(2) as relevant to the project area.
13. In its acknowledgements and apology to Ngāti Toa Rangatira, the Crown recognised its failures to fulfil its Treaty obligations including adequately protecting the interests of Ngāti Toa Rangatira and commits to a new age of co-operation with Ngāti Toa Rangatira based on mutual trust and respect for Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi and its principles. We have not identified any other principles and provisions of the Treaty settlement, or other obligations, which may be directly relevant to this application.

14. In response to the invitation for Māori groups to comment under section 17(1)(d) of the Act, Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Charitable Trust commented that the application does not meet cultural, environmental, regulatory, and engagement expectations. They cite insufficient engagement, flawed design, adverse impacts on wetlands and cultural values, and lack of regionally or nationally significant benefits and outcomes.
15. The Minister for Māori Development and the Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Tari Whakatau support the application for referral, subject to the panel considering a substantive application having regard to the matters raised by Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Charitable Trust. The Ministers also encourage the applicant to maintain ongoing engagement with relevant Māori rūpū and in particular Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai, and to consider their requests for a cultural impact assessment, co-designed consent conditions, and the establishment of a formalised partnership approach.
16. The report did not identify any matters that would make it more appropriate for the proposed approvals to be authorised under another Act or Acts.

### **Section 16 Effects of Treaty settlements and other obligations on decision-making**

17. In accordance with the section 18 report, we have not identified any documents that you must give the same or equivalent effect to, or procedural requirements you must comply with under section 16.

### **Written comments received**

18. Comments were received under section 17 of the Act from Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), the Minister for Economic Growth, the Minister for Seniors, the Department of Conservation (DOC), and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (HNZPT). The key points of relevance to your decisions are summarised in Table A.
19. A summary of the comments received from Māori groups is provided under the assessment of the section 18 report above. The key points from the remaining comments are:
  - a. GWRC do not consider that the information in the application establishes that the project will have significant regional or national benefits. GWRC consider that the project is not well aligned with regional planning documents.
  - b. the Minister for Economic Growth considers that the primary benefit of this project is the provision of additional housing which is critical for a growing economy. The Minister considers that this project could also be assessed under section 22(2)(a)(iii) of the Act for increasing the supply of housing, addressing housing needs, or contributing to a well-functioning urban environment.
  - c. the Minister for Seniors considers that, based on the information provided, the project is suitable for referral to the fast-track process as it is likely to increase the supply of housing, address housing needs, or contribute to a well-functioning urban environment under section 22(2)(a)(iii) of the Act.
  - d. DOC commented that they are not aware of any reason that the project should not be referred. DOC considers that, if the project is referred, the substantive application should include detailed ecological surveys.
  - e. HNZPT commented that, if the project is referred, they anticipate further engagement with the applicant to ensure all relevant documentation is provided with a substantive application.

## Reasons to decline

20. The statutory framework in Appendix 1 sets out the situations where you must decline the application for referral under section 21(3).
21. We consider that you have sufficient information to make an informed decision. We consider you can be satisfied that the project does not involve any ineligible activities and that it meets the referral criteria set out in section 22. As such, we have not identified any reasons under section 21(3) that you must decline this application.
22. You may also decline the application for any other reason under section 21(4). The Act gives some guidance on matters you could consider when deciding whether to decline an application and these are set out in Appendix 1.
23. The project will involve earthworks in or near natural inland wetlands, triggering a prohibited activity under Regulation 53 of the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (NES-F). Comments from GWRC, DOC and Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Charitable Trust raised concerns that the project may have significant adverse effects on wetlands. We consider that the applicant has provided sufficient information with the referral application to indicate that any significant adverse effects on the environment relating to this project can be appropriately managed by conditions of consent. We do not see this as a reason to decline the referral application.

## Reasons to accept

24. The statutory framework in Appendix 1 sets out the reasons you can accept a referral application and refer the project to the fast-track approvals process.
25. Our assessment of these matters is summarised in Table A. We consider the project meets the requirements of section 22, as:
  - a. The project is a development project that would have significant regional benefits because it will:
    - i. increase the supply of housing and address housing needs through the provision of a retirement village with approximately 250 residential units, 40 assisted living suites and 40 care suites
    - ii. deliver significant economic benefits by providing 481 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) years of direct employment and 786 FTE years of total indirect and induced employment over the seven-year development period, 53 FTEs during the operation phase, and \$169 million in Net Present Value to the region (according to the applicant's economic impact assessment).
  - b. referring the project to the fast-track approvals process would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes because the timeframes under the Act are significantly shorter than under the RMA, the Act precludes public and limited notification, and appeal rights are limited
  - c. the project is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process because the project is neither novel in the New Zealand context nor beyond the scope of what a panel would typically assess under the RMA.

## Conclusions

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26. We consider the project satisfies the criteria under section 22. We recommend that you accept the application under section 21 of the Act and refer the project to the fast-track approvals process.

## Next steps

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27. The Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) must give notice of your decisions on the referral application, and the reasons for them, to the applicant(s) and anyone invited to comment under section 17 and publish the notice on the Fast-track website.

28. If you decide to refer the project, the Ministry must also give notice of your decision to:

- a. the panel convener
- b. any additional iwi authorities or Treaty settlement entities that you consider have an interest in the matter other than those invited to comment under section 17
- c. the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)
- d. the relevant administering agencies.

29. You must also provide all of the information you received that relates to this application to the EPA and the panel convener, including:

- a. the referral application
- b. any comments received under section 17
- c. the report obtained under section 18
- d. if a report was obtained under section 19, that report.

30. We will undertake this action on your behalf.

31. We have attached a notice of decisions letter to the applicant(s) based on our recommendations (refer Appendix 6) and we will provide it to all relevant parties. We will provide you with an amended letter if required.

32. Our recommendations for your decisions follow.

## Recommendations

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33. We recommend that you:

- a. **Note** section 21(3) of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) requires you to decline the referral application from Summerset Villages (Paraparaumu) Limited (the applicant) if you are satisfied that the project involves an ineligible activity, or you consider that you do not have adequate information to inform the decision under this section or if you are not satisfied that the Otaihanga Retirement Village project (the project) meets the referral criteria in section 22 of the Act.

Noted

- b. **Agree** that before deciding on the application for project referral under section 21(1) of the Act you have considered:

- i. the application in Appendix 2
- ii. the report obtained under section 18 in Appendix 4
- iii. any comments and further information sought under sections 17 and 20 and provided within the required timeframe (if you have received any comments or further information after the required timeframe you are not required to consider them but may do so at your discretion) in Appendices 5.

Yes / No

- c. **Agree** you are satisfied the project will meet the referral criteria in section 22 of the Act as:

- i. the project is a development project that would have significant regional benefits because it will:
  - increase the supply of housing and address housing needs through the provision of a retirement village with approximately 250 residential units, 40 assisted living suites and 40 care suites
  - deliver significant economic benefits by providing the addition of 481 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) years of direct employment and 786 FTE years of total indirect and induced employment over the seven-year development period, 53 FTEs during the operation phase, and \$169 million in Net Present Value to the region (according to the applicant's economic impact assessment).
- ii. referring the project to the fast-track approvals process would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes because the timeframes under the Act are significantly shorter than under the RMA, the Act precludes public and limited notification, and appeal rights are limited
- iii. the project is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process because the project is neither novel in the New Zealand context nor beyond the scope of what a panel would typically assess under the RMA.

Yes / No

- d. **Agree** there is no reason the project must be declined under section 21(3)

- i. the project meets the criteria in section 22 as detailed in recommendation c above

- ii. the project does not include an ineligible activity as explained in Table A
- iii. the application includes adequate information to inform your decision.

Yes / No

- e. **Agree** to accept the referral application under section 21(1) and refer the project to a panel under section 26(2)(a).

Yes / No

- f. **Agree** to specify Summerset Villages (Paraparaumu) Limited as the person who is authorised to lodge a substantive application for the project.

Yes / No

- g. **Agree** to specify the deadline for lodging the application is two years from notification of referral decision under section 27(3)(b) of the Act.

Yes / No

- h. **Agree** that the Ministry for the Environment will provide your notice of decisions to:

- i. anyone invited to comment on the application including local authorities and relevant Māori groups
- ii. the panel convener
- iii. the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).

Yes / No

- i. **Approve** the draft notice of decisions letter to the applicant(s) (Appendix 6).

Yes / No

## Signatures

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Stephanie Frame  
**Manager, Fast-track Operations**

Hon Chris Bishop  
**Minister for Infrastructure**

**Date:**

Table A: Stage 2 analysis

<b>Recommendation</b>	<u>Accept</u> the referral application and refer the project to the fast-track approvals process.		
<b>Project details</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project Location</b>
	Otaihanga Retirement Village	Summerset Villages (Paraparaumu) Limited	73 Ratanui Road in Paraparaumu, Wellington (legally described as Lot 1 DP 617312 RT 12641), noting that the site was created through an amalgamation of two titles and that the new Record of Title is yet to be issued.
<b>Project description</b>	<p>The project is to construct and establish a retirement village and associated infrastructure on approximately 12.6 hectares of land at 73 Ratanui Road in Paraparaumu, Kāpiti Coast District, in the Wellington Region. The project includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. approximately 250 independent living units consisting of cottages and villas</li> <li>b. a central main building comprising of approximately 40 assisted living suites, 40 care suites, and associated amenities</li> <li>c. a range of resident amenities such as a bowling green, pickleball court, pétanque court</li> <li>d. internal circulation and parking provision</li> <li>e. roading network upgrades</li> <li>f. earthworks and boundary treatment.</li> </ul> <p>The applicant seeks resource consent approvals under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), approval under the Wildlife Act 1953 and archeological authority under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.</p>		
<b>Minister invites comments / requests information</b>	<b>Comments from invited parties</b>		
	<p><b>Local authorities</b></p> <p><i>Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC)</i>  GWRC states that, while the identified housing supply and economic benefits are not trivial, the information contained in the application does not establish the regional or national significance of the housing supply and economic benefits of the project in the context of the Wellington Region.</p> <p>GWRC considers that the project will not deliver any other regionally or nationally significant benefits, such as regionally significant infrastructure, climate change mitigation or adaptation measures, address significant environmental issues and is not well aligned with regional planning documents</p> <p>GWRC have not identified any existing resource consent applications lodged with Greater Wellington that would be competing applications if a substantive application for the project were lodged.</p> <p>GWRC have not identified any existing resource consents on or adjacent to the site of the kind referred to in section 30(3)(a) of the Act.</p> <p><b>Ministers</b></p> <p><i>Minister for Economic Growth</i>  The Minister considers that the primary benefit of this project is the provision of additional housing which is critical for a growing economy. The Minister states that, given this application would provide a significant boost in the housing supply, it could also be assessed under 'increasing the supply of housing, addressing housing needs, or contributing to a well-functioning urban environment' as per section 22(2)(a)(iii)] of the Act.</p> <p><i>Minister for Seniors</i>  The Minister considers that, based on the information provided, the project is suitable for referral to the fast-track process. The Minister considers that the construction of the retirement village, is likely to meet the criterion to 'increase the supply of housing, address housing needs, or contribute to a well-functioning urban environment under section 22 (2)(a)(ii) of the Act.</p> <p><b>Māori Groups</b></p> <p><i>Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Charitable Trust</i>  Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Charitable Trust state they do not consider the application demonstrates that the proposed development is of regional or national significance and accordingly do not consider that the project as currently described meets the threshold intended for referral under the Act. The Trust states that, while the application refers to housing supply and economic benefits, these benefits appear to be primarily local and private in nature and have not been shown to deliver outcomes that are significant at a regional or national scale.</p> <p>The Trust states that the site contains natural wetlands that are of significance within their rohe and form part of the wider freshwater and ecological system connected to the Waikanae River Catchment. The Trust notes that natural wetlands are taonga and hold ecological, cultural, and spiritual values being integral to the exercise of kaitiakitanga. The Trust considers that the proposal raises concerns given that wetland reclamation in this location is currently identified as a prohibited activity under the relevant freshwater regulations, and the application relies on offsetting approaches that appear to prioritise stormwater and flood management functions than</p>		

	<p>restoration or replacement of equivalent cultural and ecological wetland values. The Trust states the application does not demonstrate how adverse effects on wetlands will be avoided and are not satisfied that the proposed mitigation or offsetting approaches aligns with their Kaitiakitanga Plan or with tikanga-based approaches to freshwater management.</p> <p>The Trust states that they have some engagement with the applicant in relation to the plan change component of the proposal but that there has been limited meaningful engagement regarding the impacts on wetlands, freshwater systems, and cultural values. The Trust considers that this engagement has not enabled them to fully understand the proposal and its effects, provide informed input at an early stage, nor participate in the shaping of the proposal in a way that reflects their role as mana whenua and kaitiaki.</p> <p>The Trust states that, if the project proceeds beyond referral stage, they expect to see a Cultural Impact Assessment, co-creation of consent conditions, a partnership agreement, and early and informed engagement for any substantive application process.</p> <p><b>Administering agencies</b></p> <p><i>Department of Conservation (DOC)</i>  DOC confirms that they met with the applicant on 30 October 2025 to discuss the project. DOC states that they do not have sufficient information to determine the level of any actual and potential environmental effects and considers that it is likely that any effects can be managed with appropriate design and conditions. DOC states they are not aware of any reason that the project should not be referred.</p> <p>DOC considers that, if the project is referred, detailed ecological surveys should be done with methodologies and results provided in the substantive applications in order to inform the wildlife approvals required for this project.</p> <p>DOC considers that the project may have significant adverse effects on the ecological values anticipated noting that there are features such as wetlands on site and records of inanga, giant bully and long-fin eel present within the vicinity of the site. DOC states they do not consider the elements outlined in the application to be measures that will address significant environmental issues [section 22(2)(a)(ix) of the Act]. DOC considers that once more detailed information is available, it would be possible to achieve a project with the imposition of conditions that does not have significant adverse effects on the environment.</p> <p>DOC notes that there are wetlands located on the site, and the site is located in the Waikanae River catchment, which is a Nga Awa restoration site. The site will need to be managed so that it does not affect the Waikanae Estuary Scientific Reserve. Effects on the catchment, and in particular, the reserve, should be considered further in any substantive application. DOC recommends consideration of whether any culverts to be installed as part of the project might require a complex freshwater fisheries activity approval.</p> <p>DOC states they have not identified any issues with the applicant's compliance history under the Wildlife Act and there are no competing applications relating to the Wildlife Act.</p> <p>DOC considers that the project is not inconsistent with the Conservation General Policy 2005 and the Wellington Conservation Management Strategy 2019, however considers that for any substantive application the applicant should consider; conserving healthy freshwater ecosystems downstream of the site within the Waikanae River catchment, management of threatened and at-risk species that may be found on the site to ensure their persistence and disturbance is minimised, and protecting freshwater ecosystems, fisheries, fish habitat and fish passage on site.</p> <p><i>Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (HNZPT)</i>  HNZPT confirms they meet with the applicant on 15 October 2025 to discuss the project and the future fast track application. HNZPT states that, if the project is referred, they anticipate further engagement with the applicant to ensure all relevant documentation is provided with a substantive application, including a fulsome archaeological assessment, appropriate methodologies and strategies proposed, appropriate draft management plan and research strategy, evidence of appropriate consultation with tangata whenua and appropriate proposed conditions.</p>
<p><b>The Minister must decline an application if the Minister is satisfied that the project involves an ineligible activity [section 21(3)(b)]</b></p>	<p>Based on the information in the application, we consider you can be satisfied that the project does not involve an ineligible activity because it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• would not occur on identified Māori land, Māori customary land or a Māori reservation as confirmed by the relevant records of title</li> <li>• would not occur in a customary marine title area or protected customary rights area as it is not in the Common Marine and Coastal Area (CMCA)</li> <li>• is not an aquaculture activity or activity that is incompatible with aquaculture activities that would occur in an aquaculture settlement area and for which the applicant is not authorised to apply for a coastal permit because it will not occur in the CMA and the project does not involve aquaculture activity</li> <li>• would not require an access arrangement which cannot be granted under the Crown Minerals Act (including s61(1A)) because it does not include an access arrangement, would not occur on Schedule 4 land.</li> <li>• would not be prevented by section 165J, M, Q, ZC or ZDB of the RMA because it will not occur in the CMA</li> <li>• would not occur on Schedule 4 land as confirmed by the records of title</li> <li>• would not occur on a national reserve as confirmed by the records of title</li> <li>• would not occur on a reserve held under the Reserves Act 1977 that is managed by or vested in someone other than the Crown or a local authority and that person has not consented in writing as confirmed by the record of title</li> <li>• is not a prohibited activity or decommissioning activity under the EEZA, 15B or 15C of the RMA</li> <li>• is not for the purpose of an offshore renewable energy project.</li> </ul> <p>No comments raised by parties invited to comment have indicated that the project would be ineligible for referral.</p>
<p><b>The Minister must decline an application if the Minister considers they do not have adequate information to inform the decision [section 21(3)(c)]</b></p>	<p>We consider you have adequate information to inform the referral decision.</p>

<p>Relevant considerations and procedural requirements in Treaty settlement, Mana Whakahono ā Rohe, joint management agreement, or the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011 or the Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019 [section 16]</p>	<p>Not applicable to this project.</p>
<p>Section 22 assessment criteria</p>	
<p>The project is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional or national benefits [section 22(1)(a)]</p>	<p><i>The Minister <u>must</u> consider a relevant Government policy statement (GPS) [s22(1A)]</i>  The only current GPS is the Government Policy Statement on Grocery Competition. As this project does not involve a supermarket development or grocery-related activities, there is no GPS relevant to your decision.</p> <p>The Minister <u>may</u> consider any of the following matters, or any other matters the Minister considers relevant:</p> <p><i>The project has been identified as a priority project in a central or local government, or sector plan or strategy or a central government infrastructure priority list [s22(2)(a)(i)]</i>  The applicant states that the project site has been identified in the Kāpiti Coast District Council's 2022 Growth Strategy – Te Tupu Pai as a "Medium-priority greenfield growth area."</p> <p>GWRC note that the project site is on the boundary of the Paraparaumu urban area – an area not identified as a priority development area in the Wairarapa-Wellington-Horowhenua Future Development Strategy 2024-2054 (FDS).</p> <p>We note the FDS maps classify Paraparaumu as a 'regionally significant rural centre' and the FDS also notes that housing affordability and supply is a major challenge in the Kāpiti and Horowhenua areas.</p> <p>Based on the assessment above, we do not recommend you refer the project under this criterion.</p> <p><i>Will increase the supply of housing, address housing needs, or contribute to a well-functioning urban environment [s22(2)(a)(iii)]</i>  The applicant considers that the project will provide an increase in housing development capacity for the Kāpiti Coast District, including an increase in capacity for aged-care housing. The applicant states that, according to Statistics NZ projections, the number of Wellington Region's residents aged over 75 years is expected to more than double from around 40,360 residents to nearly 89,270 residents by 2048. The applicant considers the project will cater to Kāpiti's ageing population while freeing up existing residential housing stock for others in the market. The applicant considers the project will enhance the variety of living options, price points, and overall growth potential within Kāpiti Coast's senior residential market, contributing positively to the creation of a 'well-functioning' urban environment as envisaged by the National Policy Statement for Urban Development 2020 (NPS-UD).</p> <p>The Minister for Economic Growth considers that the primary benefit of this project is the provision of additional housing which is critical for a growing economy. The Minister states that, given this application would provide a significant boost in the housing supply, it could also be assessed under 'increasing the supply of housing, address housing needs, or contribute to a well-functioning urban environment' [section 22(2)(a)(iii)] of the Act.</p> <p>The Minister for Seniors considers that, based on the information provided, the project is suitable for referral to the fast-track process. The Minister considers that the project is likely to meet the criterion to 'increase the supply of housing, address housing needs, or contribute to a well-functioning urban environment under section 22 (2)(a)(ii) of the Act.</p> <p>GWRC acknowledges that the project will contribute to increasing housing supply but considers that the information contained in the application does not establish whether the housing supply benefits of the project will be significant in the context of the overall Wellington Region. GWRC estimates that an additional 99,300 residential dwellings are needed to meet projected demand out to 2053.</p> <p>We note that while 250 residential units proposed by the project could be considered minor in the context of housing supply for the Wellington Region as a whole, we consider it noteworthy and significant for the Paraparaumu-Kapiti area and providing housing and care facilities for an ageing population. We note you previously decided to refer a project of a similar type and scale - a 252-unit retirement village in Mission Bay, Auckland (FTAA-2503-1030).</p> <p>We also note that the FDS maps for the 'Kapiti-Horowhenua area' show Paraparaumu as a 'regionally significant rural centre' and the FDS also notes that housing affordability and supply is a major challenge in the Kāpiti-Horowhenua area</p> <p>Based on the application and comments from Ministers and GWRC, we consider that the project will provide a significant increase to the supply of housing and address housing needs in the Pararaumu-Kapiti area. Therefore, we recommend that the project <b>meets the criterion under section 22(2)(a)(iii).</b></p> <p><i>Will deliver significant economic benefits [s22(2)(a)(iv)]</i>  The applicant considers that the project represents a significant investment in the local area through both the construction and operation of the retirement village. The applicant considers the project will generate significant direct and indirect employment in Paraparaumu and the wider Kāpiti Coast area.</p> <p>The applicant's Economic Impact Assessment states that, under a fast-track scenario, the project will provide sustained employment over a seven-year development period with 481 FTE years of direct employment and 786 FTE years of total indirect and induced employment over the development period. The applicant states that the project will provide indirect benefits for local businesses supplying goods and services to the retirement village during the construction phase and thereafter during village operation. The operation phase will require 53 FTE including caregivers and housekeepers. The applicant states that the project will result in \$169m in Net Present Value to the Wellington Regional Economy.</p> <p>GWRC states that, while the economic benefits are not trivial, the information contained in the application does not establish the regional or national significance of the economic benefits of the project.</p>

	<p>We consider that addition of 481 FTE years of direct employment and 786 FTE years of total indirect and induced employment over the seven-year development period, 53 FTEs during the operation phase, and \$169m in Net Present Value (according to the applicant's economic impact assessment) to the region will provide significant economic benefits. Based on the applicant's assessment and the comments received from GWRC, we consider the project will deliver significant economic benefits in the Paraparaumu-Kāpiti area and wider region. Therefore, we recommend that the project <b>meets the criterion under section 22(2)(a)(iv)</b>.</p> <p><i>Will support climate change mitigation, including the reduction or removal of greenhouse gas emissions [s22(2)(a)(vii)]</i> The applicant states the project will support climate change mitigation through a combination of design, location, and operational efficiencies. The applicant states this includes the efficient use of the area's existing urban infrastructure, low-emission building design and construction practices, and improved biodiversity and carbon sequestration on the project site through planting and wetland restoration.</p> <p>The climate change mitigation design elements proposed by the applicant are not considered to represent climate change mitigation outcomes at a scale that would have significant regional or national benefits. Accordingly, we do not recommend you refer the project under this criterion.</p> <p><i>Will support climate change adaptation, reduce risks arising from natural hazards, or support recovery from events caused by natural hazards [s22(2)(a)(viii)]</i> The applicant states that the project will incorporate robust stormwater management strategies that support climate change adaptation and reduce risks associated with natural hazards. The applicant states that Summerset operates a comprehensive emergency response programme for its villages, recognising the heightened vulnerability that elderly residents have to natural hazards.</p> <p>We consider the climate change adaption design elements proposed by the applicant are likely to have localised benefits for reducing risk from natural hazards within the development, but do not consider these will have significant regional or national benefits. Accordingly, we do not recommend you refer the project under this criterion.</p> <p><i>Will address significant environmental issues [s22(2)(a)(ix)]</i> The applicant considers the project will address significant environmental issues, and focus on resilience, biodiversity enhancement and sustainability. The applicant states that key elements of this focus include a stormwater management system designed to achieve hydraulic neutrality and provide on-site treatment, improved biodiversity and carbon sequestration through planting and wetland restoration, and the use of energy-efficient design features to reduce overall energy consumption and associated greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>The applicant's proposed design elements and restoration works could be a positive addition to the project and would likely provide localised environmental benefits; however, they are primarily mitigation measures to address the project's own adverse effects. This does not amount to the project addressing significant environmental issues in a way that would have significant regional or national benefits. Accordingly, we do not recommend that you refer the project under this criterion.</p> <p><i>Is consistent with local or regional planning documents, including spatial strategies [s22(2)(a)(x)]</i> The applicant states that, while the project site is not currently zoned for residential development, the site has been identified by the Kāpiti Coast District Council's 2022 Growth Strategy – Te Tupu Pai as a "Medium-priority greenfield growth area". The applicant states that this was due to the project site being surrounded by an established urban environment and the likely ease of the environment to cater for increased residential activity.</p> <p>GWRC also considers that the project is not well aligned with its regional planning documents, including the Future Development Strategy (FDS), parts of the Regional Policy Statement (RPS), the Regional Natural Resources Plan (NRP), and the Regional Land Transport Plan.</p> <p>Given the project is not well aligned with local and regional planning documents, we do not recommend you refer the project on this criterion.</p> <p><i>Conclusion</i> Based on the assessment above, we consider the project is a development project that would have significant regional and national benefits in line with the criteria for accepting a referral application under section 22(1)(a) of the Act. If you agree with this recommendation and are satisfied that the whole project meets the criteria in section 22, you may accept the referral application and refer the whole project to the fast-track approvals process in accordance with section 26 of the Act.</p>
<p><b>Referring the project to the fast-track approvals process [section 22(1)(b)]</b></p>	<p><i>Would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes [s22(1)(b)(i)]</i> The applicant considers that the fast-track approvals process may facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes. The applicant notes that the project will involve earthworks in or near natural inland wetlands, triggering a prohibited activity under Regulation 53 of the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (NES-F). This would preclude the project from progressing through the standard RMA consenting pathway, however if the project is referred, prohibited activities may be considered through the fast-track approvals process.</p> <p>We consider referring the project will facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under the normal processes under section 22(1)(b)(i).</p> <p><i>Is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process [s22(1)(b)(ii)]</i> The applicant considers the project is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track process. The applicant considers that, due to project readiness, an experienced applicant team, the limited complexity of the project and manageable stakeholder interest, this project is unlikely to place undue burden on decision-making resources or compromise the efficiency of the fast-track approvals process.</p> <p>We consider referring the project is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process, in line with the criteria for accepting a referral application under section 22(1)(b)(ii), as we consider the project is neither novel in the New Zealand context nor beyond the scope of what a panel would typically assess under the RMA.</p>
<p><b>Reasons to decline</b></p>	
<p><b>Minister <u>must</u> decline [section 21(3)]</b></p>	<p><i>The Minister <u>must</u> decline a referral application if:</i></p> <p><i>The application may not be accepted under subsection 1 (meets referral criteria)</i> The analysis above concludes that the project meets the section 22 referral criteria, and as such, we do not consider this applies. If you agree, there is no reason to decline the application under this section.</p> <p><i>The Minister is satisfied the project involves an ineligible activity</i> As detailed above, we do not consider that the project involves an ineligible activity. If you agree, there is no reason to decline the application under this section.</p>

	<p><i>The Minister considers that they do not have adequate information to inform the decision under this section</i> We consider you have adequate information to inform your referral decision. If you agree, there is no reason to decline the application under this section.</p> <p>To conclude, we have not identified any reason that you must decline the application under section 21(3).</p>
<p><b>Minister may decline [section 21(4) and 21(5)(a-h)]</b></p>	<p><i>The Minister <u>may</u> decline a referral application for any other reason, whether or not it meets the criteria in section 22.</i></p> <p><i>Reasons to decline a referral application under subsection 4 include, without limitation:</i></p> <p><i>The project would be inconsistent with a Treaty settlement, Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019, Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011, a Mana Whakahono ā Rohe, or a joint management agreement</i> Nothing in the application, the comments received from invited parties, or the section 18 Treaty settlements report indicates the project would be inconsistent with these documents.</p> <p><i>It would be more appropriate to deal with the matters that would be authorised by the proposed approvals under another Act or Acts</i> We have not identified any matters that would make it more appropriate to deal with the matters that would be authorised by the proposed approvals under another Act or Acts.</p> <p><i>The project may have significant adverse effects on the environment</i> The applicant considers that all potential adverse effects associated with the proposal can be appropriately managed through design and consent conditions. The key potential environment effects the applicant has identified include landscape and visual amenity effects, ecological effects, archaeological effects, transport effects, civil engineering effects, geotechnical effects, contamination effects, and cultural effects.</p> <p>Comments from GWRC, DOC and Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Charitable Trust raised concerns that the project may have significant adverse effects on wetlands.</p> <p>We consider that the applicant has provided sufficient information with the referral application to indicate that any significant adverse effects on the environment relating to this project can be appropriately managed by conditions of consent. Schedules in the Act set out the information requirements for a substantive application, including information required to assess adverse effects and mitigation measures to help prevent or reduce the actual or potential adverse effects. At the substantive stage, an expert panel would also have the ability to seek further technical advice and impose conditions on any approvals granted to ensure the effective management of potential adverse effects.</p> <p><i>The applicant(s) has a poor compliance history under a specified Act that relates to any of the proposed approvals</i> The Applicant had provided information on compliance history which outlines four abatement notices and three formal warnings (Attachment 15 of the application). The Applicant has provided detail outlining the reason for each abatement or formal warning and states that all these matters have been resolved. GWRC comments did not include an assessment of the compliance history of the applicant or provide comments in that regard. We consider that nothing in the application or comments received from invited parties would indicate that the applicant has a poor compliance history under a specified Act.</p> <p><i>The project area includes land that the Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations considers necessary for Treaty settlement purposes</i> The project area does not include land necessary for Treaty settlement purposes.</p> <p><i>The project includes an activity that is a prohibited activity under the Resource Management Act 1991</i> The applicant notes that the project will involve earthworks in or near natural inland wetlands, triggering a prohibited activity under Regulation 53 of the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (NES-F). As noted above, we consider that the applicant has provided sufficient information with the referral application to indicate that any significant adverse effects on the environment relating to this project can be appropriately managed by conditions of consent. Schedules in the Act set out the information requirements for a substantive application, including information required to assess adverse effects and mitigation measures to help prevent or reduce the actual or potential adverse effects. At the substantive stage, an expert panel would also have the ability to seek further technical advice and impose conditions on any approvals granted to ensure the effective management of potential adverse effects.</p> <p><i>A substantive application for the project would have one or more competing applications.</i> The comments received from GWRC confirm they have not identified any existing resource consent applications lodged that would be a competing application if a substantive application for this project were lodged.</p> <p><i>In relation to any proposed approval of the kind described in section 42(4)(a) (resource consents), there are one or more existing resource consents of the kind referred to in section 30(3)(a)</i> The comments received from GWRC confirm they have not identified any existing resource consents on or adjacent to the site of the kind referred to in section 30(3) of the Act.</p> <p><i>Any other matters</i> We have not identified any other matters or reasons to consider declining the referral application.</p> <p><i>Conclusion</i> We do not recommend you decline the application. We note you retain the discretion to decline a referral application under section 21(4) for any other reason, whether or not the project meets the criteria in section 22.</p>

## Appendix 1: Statutory framework summary

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1. You are the sole decision maker for referral applications. If you accept a referral application, then the whole or part of the project will be referred to the fast-track approvals process.
2. If a Treaty settlement, the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011, the Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019, a Mana Whakahono ā Rohe or a joint management agreement provides for consideration of any document or procedural requirements, you must, where relevant:
  - a. give the document the same or equivalent effect through this process as it would have under any specified Act; and
  - b. comply with any applicable procedural requirements.
3. You must decline a referral application if:
  - a. you are satisfied the project does not meet the referral criteria in s22
  - b. you are satisfied the project involves an ineligible activity (s5)
  - c. you consider you do not have adequate information to inform your decision.
4. You may decline an application for any other reason, including those set out in s21(5) and even if the application meets the s22 referral criteria.
5. You can decline an application before or after inviting comments under s17(1). However, if comments have been sought and provided within the required time frame, you must consider them, along with the referral application, before deciding to decline the application.
6. If you do not decline a referral application at the initial stage you must copy the application to, and invite written comments from:
  - a. the relevant local authorities,
  - b. the Minister for the Environment and relevant portfolio Ministers
  - c. the relevant administering agencies
  - d. the Māori groups identified by the responsible agency
  - e. the owners of Māori land in the project area (if applicable)
  - f. you may provide the application to and invite comments from any other person.
7. You can request further information from an applicant, any relevant local authority or any relevant administering agency at any time before you decide to decline or accept a referral application (see section 20 of the Act).
8. However, if further information has been sought and provided within the required time frame you must consider it, along with the referral application, before deciding to decline the application.