
MINUTE 18 OF THE EXPERT PANEL

Conference Follow-up and RFI

Mt Welcome, Pukerua Bay, Porirua Project

FTAA-2603-1181

(4 September 2026)

[1] Thank you to all participants in the conferences held yesterday. A number of matters arise from those conferences that we need to address.

[2] First, we confirm the Chair's verbal advice that the planning advisors to the applicant and the two councils have until 5pm on Wednesday 9 September to complete conferencing on the mechanical review of conditions and produce a revised marked up set of RMA conditions that might serve as the 'Master' set going forward. The request in Minute 16 in relation to this matter should be treated as amended accordingly.

[3] Second, we record the Chair's verbal advice that the Panel has asked Dr Bramley to provide a report on the matters discussed at ecological conferencing. His report is expected to be in hand early in the week commencing 7 September and the Panel has asked the EPA to circulate it to the parties once received. Any party can provide comment on Dr Bramley's report by noon on 11 September.

[4] Third, we record the Chair's request of counsel acting for the applicant and Porirua City Council that they confer following enactment of the Planning and Natural environments Act (assuming that occurs in this Parliamentary term) and provide a Joint Memorandum advising as to their effect on the Panel's decision-making process, if any.

[5] Fourth, we have a number of information requests arising from the conferences.

[6] Ms Bryden advised that Tiaki Wai has undertaken wastewater modelling of its own. As requested, she has provided a copy of same to the EPA. The applicant is requested to provide any comments it has on that modelling by noon on 11 September.

[7] We confirm the Chair's verbal request that Mr Thompson supply his calculation of the estimated benefits of the project at an 8% discount rate. This should be in tabular form enabling comparison of the 'raw' figures as per his report supporting the substantive application with NPVs discounted at 2% as per the applicant's response to Minute 11, and at 8%. This should be provided to the EPA by 5 pm on 7 September.

[8] We confirm Commissioner McMahon's request of Mr Whittaker that he supply a graphic depiction of the proposed shared path option east of SH59 and within the road corridor by 5pm on 7 September. Related, and in the same time frame, we would appreciate an explanation from Mr McDonnell as to how the proposed link within the boundaries of the application site will be both enabled and required (e.g. by conditions etc) and some discussion about how its proposed extension over the Muri block is likely to be implemented through agreement/arrangement with the adjoining landholder and land developer.

[9] Dr Keesing noted the proposed planting and/ regeneration of slopes adjacent and above the proposed retention wetlands. Can the application please describe what is proposed in greater detail and advise how it is proposed that that work would be maintained, and how its ongoing management would be conditioned. Dr Keesing noted the potential for these areas to be converted to terrestrial ecological offsets and/or compensation if that was considered to be required. Can he please identify the areas suitable for this conversion in greater detail (including with appropriate mapping) and describe how its management

would differ (including in conditions) as a result.

[10] Related, we confirm our request that Dr Keesing complete a BOAM assessment of areas of SNA27 proposed to be cleared to identify the appropriate offset multiple. This additional ecological work is required by noon on 11 September. Once received, Dr Fea and Ms Hooker have leave to provide comments thereon by noon on 16 September.

[11] Dr Keesing also noted the potential for additional wetland offsets/compensation on site (of approximately 0.3—0.5ha) and for stream offsets/compensation in riparian esplanade areas downstream of the site if further offset/compensation is required. He is requested to document the options available within the same timescale (i.e. by noon on 11 September). If, in the interim, Dr Keesing has identified additional on or off-site offsetting or compensation options for adverse effects on wetlands and streams, he is requested to include them too. The ecological advisors to GWRC and DoC have until noon on 16 September to comment on that material, once produced.

[12] Mr Payne is requested to provide:

- (a) Maps of the areas on manual lizard survey he undertook;
- (b) A copy of the EIANZ guidelines discussed in the herpetology JWS;
- (c) Confirmation and documentation of the proposed additional area of c.2,4ha of enhanced lizard habitat discussed in the JWS;
- (d) A discussion of the practicality of fencing lizard relocation areas.

This material should be provided by 5pm on 8 September. If counsel for the applicant has any comment/ submissions as to the weight to be given to threatened status beyond that of Mr Payne, it should be supplied in the same timeframe. Once this package of material is supplied, Dr Fea and Ms Hooker have until noon on 11 September to supply a response.

[13] Mr Dirse discussed further flood modelling that he has underway. The applicant is requested to complete and supply same, extended to cover the

Plimmerton urban area by 5pm on 7 September. We request that the modelling incorporate provision for both climate change effects and potential loss of on-site storage due to sediment accumulation and that the covering commentary detail any consequential mitigation of downstream flood risk that the applicant proposes. Once provided, Tiaki Wai have until 5pm on 14 September to provide a response.

[14] Mr Dirse noted the potential for expanding raingarden coverage to include roadsides where space is available. He is requested to document such options by 5pm on 8 September. Once provided, Tiaki Wai have the opportunity to provide comment on it by noon on 11 September.

[15] Last, but certainly not least, the Panel seeks further information from the applicant as to how it proposes to ensure the functionality of stormwater management in the context of the proposed retention wetlands providing both ecological mitigation/ offsetting and stormwater management in the same footprint. This should include:

- (a) Discussion of ownership given the advice from Tiaki Wai and PCC that neither are likely to accept vesting of the facilities as currently configured;
- (b) Discussion of options to separate ownership and management of ecological mitigation and offsetting areas, from areas managed for stormwater purposes, and what implications that has for the functionality and adequacy of both. The Panel suggests that the applicant consider if broader redesign options might be more viable and sustainable than ‘carving-up’ the areas of the site already allocated for these purposes.

[16] The applicant’s response to this request is required by noon on 11 September. Once produced, other parties have until noon on 16 September to provide comment on the applicant’s response

[17] The Panel records that it is extremely concerned that as currently configured,

quite apart from the ongoing ownership issue noted above, which is a significant matter in itself, the dual use of the same footprint for stormwater management and ecological mitigation/ offsetting in the context of the relatively steep sided gullies on the site has the potential to give rise to significant adverse effects that cannot readily be adequately managed by conditions and which are not clearly outweighed by the obvious benefits the project would have.

[18] That position has obvious implications for the Panel's final decision.

[19] The Panel would strongly urge the applicant to consider what alternative design and management options are available to it in the above circumstances. If the applicant seeks a suspension of processing to consider the position in a less compressed timescale than is available otherwise, the Panel would almost certainly consent to that.

[20] We note that we have received a copy of the Freshwater JWS this morning (minus one signature). We will consider whether a conference to discuss it would assist us once we have the information requested in this Minute.

[21] We have also deferred consideration of whether we should convene a hearing pending receipt of the information requested.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. Robinson', with a large, stylized flourish extending downwards and to the right.

Trevor Robinson
Expert Panel Chair