

Your Comment on the Waikanae North Development

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.			
Organisation name (if relevant)	Wellington Conservation Board		
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Last name	Wilson-Goldman		
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Email (a valid email address enables us to communicate efficiently with you)	██		

2. We will email you draft conditions of consent for your comment			
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Please provide your comments below, include additional pages as needed.

Wellington Conservation Board submission on the Waikanae North Developments Limited application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

July 2026

About Us

The Wellington Conservation Board is a statutory body established under the Conservation Act 1987.

One of the functions of the board is to advise the Director-General of Conservation on conservation matters within the jurisdiction of the board.

Board members are drawn from a wide range of backgrounds and disciplines, including statutory planning processes, recreation, infrastructure development, nature conservation, volunteerism, environmental policy and ecology.

The Board's jurisdiction includes the area of the Waikanae North Developments Limited application.

Matters of interest to the Board's kaupapa

Ecological impact

The Board supports the proposed ecological improvements to be provided by the applicant:

- Restoration planting of stream and wetland margins, and within existing wetlands;
- Improving the hydrology and ecology of the floodplain wetlands on the Site;
- The creation of new wetland areas that result in a net gain in wetland extent, and shall be at least 1.74ha;
- Re-naturalisation of a length of the Ngarara Stream through the Site;
- Replacement and enhancement of lizard habitat; and

- A net gain in indigenous vegetation extent and diversity, and an enhancement in ecological connectivity along the dune and wetland corridor through the Site that aids in establishing linkages from the coast to the mountains.

Pest plant and animal control

The Board has concerns that an expansion of the roading network could provide for increased invasive predator movements within and through the site.

The applicant has proposed a pest plant and animal control programme in wetland and dune restoration areas, which the Board supports.

The Board also asks the applicant to consider an additional commitment to pest animal control along the roads and trails constructed as part of this development.

The Board also asks for a sustained commitment to pest plant and animal control – both during and following development, as this work can take time to reach its full benefit.

The Board recommends a 20-year minimum commitment for all pest plant and animal control.

Further detail is required regarding how biodiversity outcomes will be protected alongside residential development, particularly:

- Management of domestic cats and dogs.
- Community education and responsibilities for protecting indigenous wildlife.

Planting and wetlands

We support the proposed 20m buffer zone for planting between the wetland areas and those proposed for building.

While we are concerned about the loss of 1.69ha of extant wetlands, given the overall state of wetland loss across the district, we are comfortable with the applicant's commitment to an overall net gain of wetland extent to more than offset this, particularly when combined with restoration planting to improve the quality of the water and the overall habitat.

Erosion and sediment control will need to be allowed for throughout the life of the development and beyond, as modelling cannot accurately predict new rainfall / weather events, including those caused by climate change, nor the effectiveness of planting.

With the severity of impact of sediment on wetland ecosystems, this is critical for this development.

The Board also recommends that the applicant is clear about how they plan to manage the availability of plants and seedlings, given the high demand and supply challenges that exist in this market.

Connectivity

The Board encourages consideration of connectivity beyond the development in planning – not solely within the development in isolation of its surrounds. This includes development of ecological corridors that connect the site to areas such as:

- Hemi Matenga Scenic Reserve, which contains one of the largest remaining stands of kohekohe forest in the country and is experiencing ecological recovery through pest management and bird restoration efforts.
- Ngā Manu Nature Reserve, which provides an important biodiversity refuge and opportunity to strengthen species movement and habitat connectivity.
- Connections towards surrounding wetlands, dunes, waterways and coastal ecosystems.

Fish passage

The restoration of Ngarara Stream presents a significant opportunity to restore ecological and cultural values.

The Board would like to see the applicant work with Mana Whenua to identify opportunities to restore:

- mahinga kai values;
- the mauri of the stream;
- traditional relationships with the waterway.

There are also opportunities for the applicant to explore opportunities to extend stream restoration beyond the development footprint by working collaboratively with neighbouring landowners.

The Board would also like to see the applicant incorporate enhanced fish passage opportunities throughout the site, including:

- improved culvert design;
- rock ramps;
- natural fish pathways into and out of wetlands;
- wetland-stream connectivity improvements.

There are opportunities to draw on successful local examples, including natural fish passage approaches trialled through projects with local catchment groups such as Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Trust.

Recreational access

The proposal notes that in addition to two reserve areas to be vested in Kāpiti Coast District Council, there are also other open space areas described as ‘Private Open Space’.

While the proposal states the private nature of these areas does not suggest that they would exclude access for the general public through any trail network they contain, the Board considers that insufficient and expects that any trail network explicitly provide for public access.

Cultural impact

The Board notes what appears to be positive engagement between the applicant and tangata whenua to date, in particular with Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Charitable Trust.

The Board supports the addressing by the applicant of the outstanding matters identified in the Interim Cultural Impact Assessment.

Impact of retail and commercial activity

Conditions should be considered to ensure future commercial uses do not create adverse effects through:

- waste generation
- contaminants
- lighting
- vehicle movements
- impacts on wetlands waterways or indigenous species.

Long-term conditions of use should be established to ensure future activities remain compatible with ecological objectives.

Conclusion

The Board is grateful for the opportunity to provide feedback on this proposal through the Fast Track process.

Overall, the Board is comfortable with this proposal proceeding, with two key elements it would like addressed:

- Expansion of the proposed pest animal control programme to include roadways and trails, and for a sustained period of time (minimum 20 years) following the completion of development.
- Address in full the outstanding matters identified in the Interim Cultural Impact Assessment undertaken by Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Charitable Trust.

Contact details

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