

A photograph of a child swinging on a swing set in a park. The child is seen from behind, wearing a grey beanie, a red headband, and a dark blue hooded jacket. They are holding the chains of the swing. The background is a blurred green lawn and trees.

Pegasus West Development Fast-track Referral Memo- Recreation, Leisure and Open Space

July 2026

Prepared for: Wolfbrook Developments (Pegasus) Limited

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1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report has been prepared to support a referral application made under s13 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 by Wolfbrook Developments (Pegasus) Limited (Wolfbrook). It provides a preliminary, high-level assessment of the proposed development's recreation and open space considerations to assist the Minister in determining whether the project should be referred to an expert panel. A master-planned residential development with a supporting commercial / community node and infrastructure, as a contiguous extension to the Pegasus and Ravenswood urban area.
- 1.2 The analysis determined that the proposed housing development would remove the former golf course, thereby having the greatest impact on the private golf club's former members and visiting golfers. However, Pegasus at the championship-course level is considered commercially unviable, as evidenced by past failed development initiatives. The loss of Pegasus as a championship course on the international professional golf tournament circuit is unlikely to be significant, given the proximity of Clearwater (within 20 kilometres) and the standing of other championship courses in locations such as Central Otago.
- 1.3 Had the course transitioned to a community-level course to improve financial viability, it would have joined two other community-level courses within a 7.3 km radius (Rangiora Golf Club and Kaiapoi Golf Club). The impact of the Pegasus course closure on community-level play within the local network cannot be determined until the necessary data is available. However, it is likely to have both positive and negative effects on the network. Canterbury Golf has stated the course did play an important role in hosting interclub and open events.
- 1.4 The other clear impact is the loss of the open-space outlook, experienced from within and on the periphery of the site, which will change. This outlook is clearly valued by recreationists such as golfers and recreational walkers.
- 1.5 The indicative masterplan provides scope to retain, reconfigure or enhance walking and cycling connectivity, including through new or modified routes within the open space and stormwater network. However, they would no longer be undertaken in or adjacent to an expansive open-space setting. In certain locations, they will become more intimate experiences within pond and vegetation corridors. The opportunities for walking, cycling and dog walking will therefore remain, while the open-space setting in which they occur will have changed.
- 1.6 The greatest potential gains will be in active sport, recreation and leisure opportunities. These could take the form of a wide range of activities, from structured sports on a playing field or in an indoor court to more leisure-based and play activities facilitated by outdoor half basketball courts, multi-use games areas, and playgrounds. While the indicative masterplan has designated open space and recreational/sports zones (which meet Council's stated levels of service provisions), the next stage of planning will determine which mix of new assets best meets local and wider network needs.
- 1.7 The proposed residential development will therefore end golf opportunities on the site, while other opportunities will be retained, modified or introduced. On balance, there will likely be a net increase in active and passive sports, leisure and recreation opportunities available on the site. At this time, I do not believe these effects are likely to be 'significantly adverse' in their totality provided appropriate mitigation is developed and confirmed through the substantive application process. The only effects that cannot be mitigated are the visual loss of clear open space and the ability to play golf on the site.

2 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 This report has been prepared to support a referral application made under s13 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 by Wolfbrook Developments (Pegasus) Limited (Wolfbrook). It provides a preliminary, high-level assessment of the proposed development's recreation and open space considerations to assist the Minister in determining whether the project should be referred to an expert panel. The report identifies the key matters likely to require further assessment at the substantive application stage and confirms that feasible solutions are available to address those matters. It is not intended to provide a full technical assessment, detailed design, or consent-level analysis, and will be supplemented by more comprehensive investigations and reporting should the project be referred for substantive consideration.
- 2.2 The recreation and open space measures discussed in this memorandum are indicative only and are intended to demonstrate that feasible options exist to avoid, remedy or mitigate potential effects. The final form, location, ownership, delivery mechanism and timing of any recreation or open space measures would be confirmed through the substantive application process, following further technical assessment, design development and engagement with relevant parties.

3 Author of Report

- 3.1 My name is Craig Gareth Jones. I currently serve as Director at Visitor Solutions Ltd. I have worked for Visitor Solutions since 1999. I hold a BA, MA(Hons) and PGDipBusAdmin, with an academic focus on recreation and tourism.
- 3.2 I have over 30 years' experience in recreation, leisure, sports, and tourism planning. I have previously held planning and research roles with the Department of Conservation as a recreation planner and with Auckland City Council as a leisure planner.
- 3.3 With Visitor Solutions, I have undertaken more than 1,000 consultancy projects for a wide range of government departments, local government, and private entities. These projects have involved researching and assessing recreational and tourism-related impacts, as well as planning and developing sports and park infrastructure. I have a particular interest in and expertise in open-space, sports, and recreational environments.
- 3.4 I confirm that the statements in this memorandum are within my area of expertise, and I am not aware of any material facts that might alter or detract from the opinions I express. Whilst acknowledging that this consenting process is not before the Environment Court, I have read and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses as set out in the Environment Court Consolidated Practice Note 2023. The opinions expressed in this memorandum are based on my qualifications and experience and are within my area of expertise. If I rely on the evidence or opinions of another, my statements will acknowledge that.

4 Project Overview

- 4.1 The Project is a master-planned residential development with a neighbourhood-scale commercial / community node and associated infrastructure, provided as a contiguous extension to the Pegasus, Ravenswood and Woodend urban area. The approximate 77-hectare site is known as 8 Mapleham Drive, Pegasus.

4.2 The Project will include the following:

- a. Staged subdivision and development to enable up to 1,000 residential allotments/dwellings across a range of residential densities and to cater for a range of typologies;
- b. Development of a commercial/community node that enables provision of day-to-day needs such as retail, service, healthcare, education, recreation and/or related activities for the community, with specific uses determined through community and market needs;
- c. Associated three waters infrastructure; including an integrated stormwater management and open space network featuring neighbourhood parks and green links;
- d. Minor alterations to Pegasus Boulevard to provide for the access requirements of the development including intersection improvements and a new road access;
- e. Associated earthworks, servicing, landscaping and related works to be implemented in stages.
- f. Areas of land set aside to recognise and provide for cultural and archaeological values, including retention of archaeological site M35/440 (pā site), which is registered as a wāhi tapu on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangī Kōrero.

4.3 The development's proposed open space network has been described by DCM Urban Design Ltd as:

“Open space will be structured as a connected green-blue network integrating parks, waterways, streets and stormwater corridors to underpin the overall development pattern. This network will prioritise accessibility, legibility and amenity, providing well-distributed neighbourhood reserves that contribute to character and outlook while supporting efficient land use. Strong connections will be established with adjoining open space and natural features in Pegasus and Ravenswood. Existing high-value natural wetlands and riparian corridors will be prioritised for retention and enhancement, complemented by the creation of new multi-functional open space assets, while lower-value existing engineered stormwater ponds may be rationalised with new ponds constructed in optimised locations. The network will be designed as part of the wider cultural landscape, with opportunities to incorporate Ngāi Tūahuriri values and cultural expression through naming, design elements and narratives where supported by mana whenua. Native planting and riparian enhancement will be embedded throughout to support biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including along the Taranaki Stream” (DCM Urban Design Ltd, 2026).

5 Existing Environment (High Level)

- 5.1 The Pegasus West site comprises approximately 77 ha of land formerly developed as part of the Pegasus Golf Course, located between Pegasus Township, Ravenswood and Woodend, traversed by Pegasus Boulevard with direct connectivity to State Highway 1. Surrounding land uses are predominantly residential to the east within Pegasus Township, with rural and pastoral properties to the north and south and commercial and residential development associated with Ravenswood to the west, while State Highway 1 forms a key transport corridor along the western boundary.

- 5.2 Several enclaves of large-lot residential development adjoin the site, reflecting the earlier Mapleham subdivision and subsequent golf course development. The land is generally low-lying and gently undulating, comprising landscaped fairways, artificial ponds, swales and drainage features that together form an integrated stormwater and irrigation system. Overall, the site is characterised by a modified recreational landscape with established water management infrastructure and embedded residential development within a wider urban–rural interface.
- 5.3 The Pegasus Golf and Sports Club previously offered an 18-hole, par-72, 77-hectare championship golf course, a covered driving range, a pro shop, and practice greens. The course was designed in a parkland style and incorporated a range of water features. It was privately operated from 2009, when it opened, to 2026. The course hosted multiple major golf events, including the New Zealand PGA and the NZ Women’s Open.
- 5.4 The previous owners attempted to make the operation financially viable by planning to introduce higher-end accommodation for offshore guests. This accommodation development failed to eventuate, resulting in a planned sale and then the appointment of liquidators. Visitor Solutions had prior discussions with the owning entities that operated the golf course around development opportunities.
- 5.5 The financial viability of the site as a championship golf course is unlikely to change based on available data. That is, the (former) Pegasus Golf Course is not considered financially viable as a commercial championship golf course.

6 Preliminary Assessment of Effects

- 6.1 The Pegasus Golf Course was part of a network of 36 courses in Canterbury and was “regarded as one of Canterbury’s premier championship venues” (Canterbury Golf general manager Blair Minton, 2026, Canterbury Golf website).
- 6.2 The next-closest par-72 championship course is Clearwater, 20 km to the south, which Canterbury Golf describes as combining “elements of links golf inspired by the great Scottish courses with parkland golf, more reminiscent of Florida” and having “established itself as an international professional golf tournament venue and is the current home of the ISPS Handa NZ Women’s Open” (Canterbury Golf website).
- 6.3 Canterbury Golf views the course as being “.. a critically important asset within the wider network of golf facilities that serve our communities. The course is not only a valued recreational facility for local residents but also an integral part of the sporting infrastructure that supports participation, competition, tourism, and community wellbeing across the Canterbury region” (correspondence from Blair Minton, 8th July, 2026 – General Manager, Canterbury Golf).
- 6.4 At the end of January 2026, the Pegasus Golf and Sports Club reported 211 “financial golf members”, of which 172 were paying, and 39 were free of charge. Members were split 170 male and 41 female. This was down from a total of 350 members in the preceding year (Pegasus Golf and Sports Club - Golf Membership Report as at 31 January 2026, Summary). Membership presumably declined as the course’s financial viability became more tenuous. This is consistent with patterns ahead of other clubs closing.
- 6.5 The closest golf courses to Pegasus are Rangiora Golf Club (6.9 km) and Kaiapoi Golf Club (7.3 km). Both of these 18-hole courses are intended for community-level play.

- 6.6 To assess the capacity of neighbouring courses to accommodate community-level play following the closure of the Pegasus course, Visitor Solutions is in the process of requesting data from surrounding golf clubs. This data is not available at the time of this memo's completion.
- 6.7 The loss of any golf course will affect the surrounding golf network. However, without utilisation data from surrounding golf courses, it is not possible to calculate community-level golf impacts. From our past research, these community-level impacts are often positive and negative: positive impacts include improved financial viability, greater revenue for reinvestment in renewals for surrounding clubs through greater utilisation, while negative impacts may include peak-time capacity issues, decline in overall user experience, potential waitlists, increased loading on the course (higher repair and maintenance costs), less flexibility across the network, and at times, can lead to an increase in green fees.
- 6.8 The closure of the Pegasus Course as a premier championship venue will be a loss to the network; however, Clearwater offers an alternative championship-level course within a 20-minute drive of Pegasus.
- 6.9 Aside from direct golf impacts, there are also a range of wider open space, recreation and leisure impacts associated with a change of use. These primarily centre on the loss of open space. Although the Pegasus golf course was always private (for paying golfers), it facilitated a range of walking opportunities for the general public by linking public and private pathways. These were primarily used by walkers, runners and dog walkers.
- 6.10 Public walkways along multiple boundaries also benefit from open-space views over the course. This is particularly true along the raised eastern boundary. Walkers encountered on the site visited (26th June, 2026) reported that these views enhanced their recreational experience, while the length of the interconnected public and private track networks was seen as enabling the creation of walking routes of varying lengths, which was considered an attractive recreational feature. Although these views were drawn from a very small number of participant observation interactions (n=5), they are consistent with our past research in other New Zealand locations. Further research will determine if these views are representative of other recreationists using the site and its surrounds.
- 6.11 The loss of open space cannot be disputed. It will affect how people recreate in the area. However, the only outright loss of recreational amenity in full will be for golfers who accessed the private course. Other users will have altered experiences but not an outright loss of recreational opportunities. Open-space experiences are also available in other nearby areas, such as around Pegasus Beach (approximately 5 km from the site), Lake Pegasus (1.8 km) and Te Kohanga Wetlands (1.8 km). These areas offer walking, cycling, running and play opportunities. A residential development will also introduce new recreational opportunities that are currently not facilitated on the site. At this time, I do not believe these effects are likely to be 'significantly adverse' in their totality provided appropriate mitigation is developed and confirmed through the substantive application process. The only effects that cannot be mitigated are the visual loss of clear open space and the ability to play golf on the site.

7 Indicative Mitigation Management

- 7.1 I consider the following to be suitable mitigation approaches:
- Provision for connected off-street walking routes and/or boardwalks, where appropriate and feasible.

- b. A mix of active sport and recreation hard court spaces such as tennis courts, basketball half-courts and multi-use games areas.
- c. Flat open grass spaces suitable for ball sports such as football and rugby (these may not need to be structured playing fields).
- d. Playground and/or nature play spaces.
- e. An area capable of accommodating an indoor or covered court facility in the future (subject to potential partner discussions and needs and feasibility analysis)

8 Project Opportunities/Benefits (Discipline Perspectives)

- 8.1 The current master plan remains high-level but indicates several potential recreation and open-space opportunities. The proposed development will also meet the Waimakariri District Council greenspace level-of-service measure and targets. For example, the Council requires one hectare of neighbourhood reserve per 1,000 residents. We understand that the Council also aims for a neighbourhood park to be within 500-800m (10-minute) walking distance of most homes, located on a street frontage for passive surveillance and safety, linked to pedestrian and cycle networks, and ideally near schools or community facilities. Ideally, it should have a minimum dimension of 40 x 125m.
- 8.2 Potential opportunities being considered for incorporation into the substantive application proposal include:

Walking and Cycling opportunities

- 8.3 Currently, formalised walking and cycling opportunities vary in nature and can be increased to improve connectivity across the site. Under the indicative masterplan, emphasis is placed on maximising walking connectivity through and along stormwater management and pond areas, creating closer connections for recreationists to the vegetated and aquatic settings.
- 8.4 This approach aligns with the Waimakariri District Council Engineering Code of Practice (Part 10), which requires early integration of watercourses and wetlands into subdivision design and promotes the retention and enhancement of natural waterways and wetlands through reserves, walkways and cycleways, which directly delivers dual stormwater–recreation outcomes.

Interpretive Opportunities

- 8.5 The indicative master plan offers a range of interpretive opportunities, both cultural and environmental, should Mana whenua consider these appropriate. The mix of interpretive approaches and narratives would be explored with mana whenua, where appropriate and subject to their support, in line with agreed best practice. Potential sites of consideration could include optimised interpretive elements on the historic pa site, beside the pond area or in new settings. Interpretation can be used to enhance the new and existing track network.

Active Sports Opportunities

- 8.6 The redevelopment of the site creates an opportunity to retain existing active sports and introduce additional opportunities. The current tennis courts could be retained, and adjacent amenities enhanced with improved landscaping. Alternatively, they could be repositioned or replaced with other assets better aligned to residents' needs, such as a multi-use games area (MUGA).

- 8.7 The indicative masterplan identifies areas that may be capable of supporting active recreation or sports opportunities, subject to further analysis, design refinement and engagement with relevant parties. An analysis of sport and leisure infrastructure has identified the site as an ideal satellite facility, complementing larger sports hubs in the neighbouring urban areas of Rangiora and Kaiapoi. The exact mix of facilities will be determined in the next stage of analysis, which will allow for greater engagement with stakeholders and the community.
- 8.8 Waimakariri District Council Sports Facility Plan 2017-2027 states “The current operating practise regarding the provision of sports fields is based around historical guiding principles of providing 1 hectare of sports park per 1,000 of population.” Sufficient space has been set aside to meet these requirements should further analysis indicate sports fields are the most appropriate use of the allocated land.
- 8.9 Sports assets could be either more formal in nature, such as an indoor or outdoor covered court facility or positioned more at the recreational end of the spectrum, such as an outdoor basketball half-court or multi-use games area (MUGA). The most appropriate mix of assets would be informed by further engagement, where appropriate with partner organisations, such as sports organisations and the Waimakariri District Council, in the following planning stages.

Play Opportunities

- 8.10 The Waimakariri District Council Play Space Strategy 2017 ‘Key Level of Service Components’ states “Most urban and suburban residential properties to be within 500 metres radial distance of a local play space and 1,000 meters of a community play space. One play space per 1,000 people to serve as an overall minimum standard.”
- 8.11 The current indicative masterplan design can accommodate these requirements in numerous locations. Potential options include a mix of nature play and more formal playgrounds. The nature play elements could also be developed to accommodate cultural interpretive elements, if desired by Mana Whenua.

9 Key Matters For Further Assessment

- 9.1 Further assessment will be required to develop the most appropriate mix and location of facilities, spaces and opportunities to complement the existing facility network and meet community needs. This should take into consideration factors such as residents' age cohorts and family types (e.g., meeting the needs of older residents and younger families).
- 9.2 Integrating recreational and leisure opportunities with the natural landscape and areas of cultural significance will also require further assessment.

10 Conclusion

- 10.1 The proposed housing development would remove the former golf course, thereby having the greatest impact on the private golf club's former members (211 “financial golf members” in January, 2026), and visiting golfers. However, Pegasus at the championship-course level is considered commercially unviable, as evidenced by past failed development initiatives. Had the course transitioned to a community-level course to attempt to improve financial viability, it would have joined two other community-level courses within a 7.3 km radius (Rangiora Golf Club and Kaiapoi Golf Club).

- 10.2 The loss of Pegasus as a championship course on the international professional golf tournament circuit is unlikely to be significant, given the proximity of Clearwater (within 20 kilometres) and the standing of other championship courses in locations such as Central Otago.
- 10.3 The impact of the Pegasus course closure on community-level play within the local network cannot be determined until the necessary data is available. However, it is likely to have both positive and negative effects on the network. Canterbury Golf has stated the course did play an important role in hosting interclub and open events.
- 10.4 The other clear impact is the loss of the open-space outlook, experienced from within and on the periphery of the site, which will change. This outlook is clearly valued by recreationists such as golfers and recreational walkers.
- 10.5 The indicative masterplan identifies the potential to retain some existing activities, such as tennis. Walking and cycling opportunities would also remain or increase in length or connectivity; however, they would no longer be undertaken in or adjacent to an expansive open-space setting. In certain locations, they will become more intimate experiences within pond and vegetation corridors. The opportunities for walking, cycling and dog walking will therefore remain, while the open-space setting in which they occur will have changed.
- 10.6 The greatest potential gains will be in active sport, recreation and leisure opportunities. These could take the form of a wide range of activities, from structured sports on a playing field or in an indoor court to more leisure-based and play activities facilitated by outdoor half basketball courts, multi-use games areas, and playgrounds. While the indicative masterplan has designated open space and recreational/sports zones (which meet Council's stated levels of service provisions), the next stage of planning will determine which mix of new assets best meets local and wider network needs.
- 10.7 The proposed residential development will therefore end golf opportunities on the site, while other opportunities will be retained, modified or introduced. On balance, there is potential for an overall increase in active and passive sports, leisure and recreation opportunities available on the site. At this time, I do not believe these effects are likely to be 'significantly adverse' in their totality provided appropriate mitigation is developed and confirmed through the substantive application process. The only effects that cannot be mitigated are the visual loss of clear open space and the ability to play golf on the site.

11 Limitations

- 11.1 This assessment is based on preliminary design information and will be refined through detailed technical work at substantive application stage.
- 11.2 Data is being requested to determine the impact of the golf course's closure on the Canterbury golf network. A final determination on the scale of impacts on the golf network cannot be made at this time.