

Attachment 4 – Waiheke Onsen Consultation Record



Organisation	Date	Method	Attendees	Summary
New Zealand Invest	October 2025 - Ongoing	Ongoing discussions	Anna Wellingham	Ongoing engagement regarding the proposal. NZI have been very supportive of the project.
Department of Conservation	10 December 2025	Online Meeting	DoC: Bridgette Munro Fiona McKenzie Waiheke Onsen: Rebecca Sanders [Planner]	Discussion around the project and ecology of the site and DoC approvals required. Further information requested was provided in January. Pre Lodgement Consultation Summary provided by DoC attached.
Watercare	16 December 2025	Online Meeting	Watercare Shabnee Hussain Clemence Carlinet Daniel Kuruppu Annika Swanberg Martin Ball Tanvir Bhamji Priyan Perera Anna Jennings Waiheke Onsen: Nick Roberts [Planner] Rebecca Sanders [Planner] Wendy Baverstock [Planner] Toby Mandeno [Civil Engineer]	Discussion around overall development, Fast-track referral process and approach to wastewater servicing.
Watercare	20 January 2026	Online Meeting	Watercare Shabnee Hussain Clemence Carlinet Daniel Kuruppu Annika Swanberg	Follow up meeting on wastewater servicing.

Barker & Associates

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			<p>Martin Ball Tanvir Bhamji Priyan Perera Anna Jennings Waiheke Onsen: Nick Roberts [Planner] Rebecca Sanders [Planner] Wendy Baverstock [Planner] Toby Mandeno [Civil Engineer] Elliot Olsen [Watersmart] Brett Sinclair [Groundwater]</p>	
Auckland Council	2 February 2026	Meeting	<p>Auckland Council: Mayor Wayne Brown John Duguid Angie Burn Dean Williams Waiheke Onsen: Nick Roberts [Planner] Wendy Baverstock [Planner] s 9(2)(a)</p>	Discussion around overall development, Fast-track referral process and approach to Council feedback.
Watercare	18 February 2026	Letter		
Ministry for the Environment	5 March 2026	Email	<p>Alison McLaughlin <i>Principal Advisor System Oversight Team</i></p>	Acknowledgement email confirming MfE is no longer a relevant administering agency for the RMA.
Auckland Council	12 March 2026	Feedback Memo		

Fast-Track Pre-Lodgement Consultation Summary

Purpose - This document provides a summary of information from DOC following a pre-lodgement consultation request.

Project Details

Project name:	Waiheke Onsen
Engagement type:	Pre-lodgement consultation for Referral Application
Applicant/agent:	Waiheke Mon E Limited Email: s 9(2)(a) Agent: Rebecca Sanders – Barker & Associates Email: s 9(2)(a) Phone: s 9(2)(a)
Proposal overview:	<p>The Waiheke Onsen Development is to consist of a visitor attraction, involving a Japanese geothermal retreat (Onsen) including hot pools, private day pools, private saunas, spa treatment, Ryokan visitor units, a yoga and meditation pavilion and associated residential or visitor accommodation with café and parking facilities.</p> <p>The project is to be located at 32 Tiri Road, Oneroa, Waiheke Island, on a 50,300m² site that is currently unoccupied. The site is bound by Ocean View Road to the South, Tiri Road and a private rural property to the Northeast, holiday accommodation to the East and a parking lot and tramping track to the West. The site is zoned Rural 1 and features open fields surrounded by bushland.</p>
Location:	32 Tiri Road, Oneroa, Waiheke.
Date pre-lodgement request received:	<p>First contacted by email on the 18th November 2025.</p> <p>Signed request for consultation received on the 18th November 2025.</p> <p>Deposit paid on 27th November 2025.</p> <p>Initial Consultation meeting was held on the 10th of December 2025. Consultation was paused further to this meeting while the Applicant progressed iwi consultation. Further correspondence was undertaken between the 20th of January and the 10th of February 2026.</p>
Summary of pre-lodgement Consultation	
Fast track project lead DOC:	Bridgette Munro – Consultant Fast Track Consents Advisor

<p>DOC specialist input required:</p>	<p>Fast Track Project Lead – Bridgette Munro Statutory Manager – John Galilee Ranger / Project Lead Community – Fiona McKenzie Permissions – Darcy Liddell BHV – Wendy Lin (Management Planner) BHV (Lizards) – To be confirmed BHV (Heritage) – Brooke Jamieson</p>
<p>DOC Permissions/ Approvals Identified by applicant in pre-lodgement request as potentially required:</p>	<p>The Applicant has identified that an approval under the following legislation will be required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Act 1953.
<p>DOC Commentary on Fast Track approvals and permissions identified:</p>	<p>The Applicant provided the following documents, together with its Request for Fast-track Pre-lodgement Consultation form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An email with a brief description of the project and an aerial photograph showing the location of the site, dated the 18th of November 2025. <p>Upon a request for any further information, an Illustrative Masterplan for the site was provided (on the 2nd of December 2025) dated the 16th of April 2025.</p> <p>In addition to this, an update regarding iwi consultation and archaeological sites found within the vicinity of the site was provided on the 20th of January 2026.</p> <p>It is the Applicant's responsibility to comply with the FTAA and to ensure that the proposed approvals are identified and all the required information is provided as part of a referral application. Section 13(4) sets out the information to be included in a referral application.</p> <p>Wildlife Approvals, which are required for absolutely protected wildlife (refer to the tier scheme within the Wildlife Act (1953)) authorise acts that would otherwise be an offence under the Wildlife Act (1953), including to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch and handle wildlife on site (including wildlife sampling and wildlife salvage) • Take samples from wildlife • Take or destroy the eggs of wildlife • Attach identification bands to wildlife • Mark, tag, or attach other scientific apparatus to wildlife • Catch and temporarily hold wildlife in captivity (less than 3 months) • Transfer captive wildlife from one holding facility to another holding facility • Kill wildlife • Hunt, disturb, kill or catch alive protected wildlife that are causing damage • Translocate wildlife. <p>If any of these activities are required for absolutely protected species, then wildlife approvals would be required.</p> <p>It is noted there are no mandatory information requirements in respect of wildlife approvals at the referral stage.</p>
<p>Treaty partners:</p>	<p>Treaty partners with interests relevant to the project area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ngā Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau; • Ngāti Tamaoho; • Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki; • Ngāti Pāoa

	DOC encourages the Applicant to engage directly with relevant Māori groups as required by section 29 of the Act.
<p>Treaty Settlement implications/considerations:</p>	<p>Ngā Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau Collective Redress Act 2014 Consideration should be given to the implementation of the Motu Conservation Management Plan, any potentially impacted taonga species and habitats, together with any statutory authorisations that may have a high impact on the spiritual, ancestral, cultural, customary and historic values of Ngā Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau.</p> <p>Further, it is noted that the Project is near the Hauraki Gulf, as such consideration should be given to any potential impacts on the Gulf.</p> <p>Ngāti Tamaoho Claims Settlement Act 2018 Consideration should be given to the protection of ecosystems and indigenous flora and fauna within the Ngāti Tamaoho rohe.</p> <p>Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki Claims Settlement Act 2018 Protection of taonga species should be considered and the Applicant should consult with Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki on wāhi tapu and areas of significance.</p> <p>Consideration should also be given to any potential impacts on the Hauraki Gulf.</p> <p>Ngāti Pāoa Claims Settlement Act 2025 The Ngāti Pāoa Claims Settlement Bill gained royal assent on the 12th of November 2025. It is still unclear what conservation-related interests may be, as the final settlement date is likely to be in March of 2026.</p> <p>It is noted that there are a number of Treaty settlements under negotiation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Crown and Ngāti Whanaunga initialled a Deed of Settlement on 25 August 2017; • The Crown and Ngāti Tamaterā initialled a Deed of Settlement on 20 September 2017; • Te Patukirikiri and the Crown signed a Deed of Settlement on 7 October 2018; • The Crown and Ngāti Maru initialled a Deed of Settlement on 8 September 2017; and • The Crown and Marutūāhu Collective initialled a Collective Redress Deed on 27 July 2018 <p>It is not yet clear what impact these settlements may have.</p> <p>DOC encourages the Applicant to engage directly with iwi as required by section 29 of the Act.</p>
<p>Section 4 Conservation Act 1987 implications/considerations</p>	<p>No relevant conservation related interests have been identified at this time.</p>
<p>Potential Resource Management Act (RMA) considerations and effects:</p> <p><i>Note: DOC's role in relation to 53(2)(m)(i) FTAA</i></p>	<p>Very high-level RMA commentary has been provided. Some primary considerations for DOC include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That an Ecological Assessment for the site is prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced person and that the relevant surveys are undertaken. The Ecological Assessment should include a hierarchy of methods to address adverse effects. Biodiversity and environmental effects must be considered and appropriate mitigation included as part of the full and comprehensive Assessment of Environmental Effects ('AEE') included with the potential substantive application. Information included should specifically address the presence and management of lizards and ecological values. <p>Further advice can be provided during any pre lodgement consultation on the substantive application.</p>

<p>DOC Statutory Planning Document considerations in relation to site (e.g. CGP/CMS/CMP):</p>	<p>The following Statutory Planning documents are relevant to the Proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000 • Conservation General Policy 2005 ('CGP'); and • Auckland Conservation Management Strategy 2014 <p>The Project is not inconsistent with the relevant statutory planning provisions. However, consideration should be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevant provisions of the Hauraki Marine Park Act 2000 relating to the catchments of the Hauraki Gulf; • Conserving any threatened and at-risk species to ensure their persistence; • Protecting and restoring relevant indigenous ecosystems; • Maintaining habitat connectivity and water quality of waterways.
<p>Any specific information requests to applicant(s)/agent for pre-app engagement at this point:</p>	<p>DOC encourages the Applicant to engage further with DOC prior to lodging a substantive application.</p>
<p>Any further information/considerations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is located within the drainage catchment of the Hauraki Gulf, as identified in Schedule 3 of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000. • It is noted that there are three areas of PCL located near the site, these include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matietie Historic Reserve, s.18 Historic Reserve (Reserves Act 1977) • Waiheke Matiatia Protected Private Land, Protected Private Land Agreement (Reserves Act 1977) • Hauraki Gulf Marine Park, (Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000). • There are several recorded archaeological sites to the west of the site. Given this and the proximity to the Maitiatia Historic Reserve (which contains a pā, urupā and extensive middens), DOC considers that an Archaeological assessment for the site should be prepared as part of any potential substantive application.
<p>Additional Notes:</p>	<p>While DOC will assist applicants as much as we can when they engage in pre-lodgement consultation, it is the applicants' responsibility to comply with the FTAA and to ensure they have applied for all permissions they need.</p> <p>Guidance for applying for a wildlife approval under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 can be viewed here: https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/concessions-and-permits/fast-track/guidance-for-wildlife-approval2.pdf</p> <p>Any Lizard Management Plan developed to address the management of lizards present should identify suitable release locations for any lizards to be salvaged and released.</p> <p>DOC encourages the Applicant to share draft substantive application documents, should the application be referred, so that feedback can be provided on how they align with information requirements of the Act, noting DOC is unable to request further information once a completeness check is commenced by the EPA.</p> <p>Note that a panel will invite the statutory bodies listed in clause 4 of Schedule 7 to comment on the application (NZCA, conservation boards, Fish and Game Council, and Game Animal Council). We encourage applicants to engage with these bodies in advance of filing a substantive application.</p> <p>It is recommended that the information provided in any substantive application prepared under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 be separated out by the various approvals sought (if multiple approvals required) and all information requirements are addressed for each approval sought.</p>

18th February 2026

s 9(2)(a)

C/- Wendy Baverstock
Isle Island Limited

s 9(2)(a)

To the Trustees of the s 9(2)(a)

Re: Proposed Development at 32 Tiri Road, Waiheke Island – Wastewater Servicing (Technical Intent)

Watercare Services Limited (Watercare) provides this response with respect to the draft Technical Memorandum titled *‘Revised Wastewater Demand Memo – Hotel and Onsen Development, 32 Tiri Road, Waiheke Island’*, dated 23 December 2025. This response is provided in the context of our ongoing discussions regarding the proposed development and the wastewater treatment and disposal capacity of the Owhanake (Waiheke) Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP).

This letter is provided at the request of the applicant s 9(2)(a) to outline Watercare’s position from a technical wastewater servicing perspective only. It does not constitute a commitment to provide services and is subject to the conditions and qualifications set out below.

This letter does not override, pre-empt, or influence any planning or policy decisions, including land use provisions, Rural Urban Boundary (**RUB**) considerations, resource consent processes, or Council determinations.

This letter does not constitute written approval of the proposal. Watercare reserves all rights to comment on the proposal through any processes under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 or Resource Management Act 1991.

Any consideration of wastewater servicing remains subject to confirmation of planning permissibility, regulatory approvals, and alignment with statutory processes.

Technical Wastewater Servicing Position

Based on information provided to date, Watercare confirms that:

- The Owhanake WWTP operates under an existing discharge consent permitting discharge of up to 250 m³/day; however, the installed hydraulic capacity of the plant is limited to 130 m³/day, which has been reached during peak wet weather flow conditions.

The plant is also at capacity in terms of nutrient loadings relative to discharge consent conditions, particularly during summer months.

- Any additional wastewater flows associated with the proposed development cannot be accommodated within the existing infrastructure capacity without upgrades to the WWTP and associated conveyance infrastructure. A renewal of the discharge consent (expiry August 2028) will also be required.

- From a technical perspective only, wastewater servicing of the proposed development could be achievable at the WWTP only if:

- upgrades are undertaken to address hydraulic and nutrient loading constraints at the WWTP and within the conveyance network; and
- such upgrades are accommodated either as maintaining compliance with the current discharge consent conditions and treatment performance requirements, or under conditions of a new discharge consent.

- Watercare has no funded growth upgrades planned for Waiheke Island. Accordingly, any infrastructure upgrades required to service the development would need to be on the basis that the developer fund the capital and operational investment required to service the area. Any service for wastewater would be on a full cost recovery basis through an Infrastructure Funding Agreement to be entered into with Watercare (at Watercare's absolute discretion).

Watercare's Growth Servicing Policy

In May 2015, Watercare adopted a Board-approved policy framework governing the provision of water and wastewater services to growth areas. Part of the site is located within the RUB however, the majority of the site is located outside the RUB. Watercare's infrastructure planning and servicing policy does not currently provide for growth-related wastewater servicing outside the RUB. The limited exception recognised in the policy is where servicing outside the RUB is requested by Council and is subject to full cost recovery.

Nature of this Letter

This letter:

- Confirms only that from a technical engineering perspective, wastewater servicing could be considered subject to infrastructure upgrades and commercial agreements;
- Does not represent approval, commitment, or guarantee of servicing;
- Does not constitute a Development Agreement, service approval, or policy exemption;
- Watercare will align with Council's position in relation to consistency with the Future Development Strategy, Auckland Unitary Plan (Regional Policy Statement) and Auckland District Plan (Hauraki Gulf Islands Section).
- This letter does not constitute written approval of the application / proposal; and
- Watercare reserves all rights to comment on the proposal through any processes under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 and Resource Management Act 1991.

Watercare remains willing to continue engaging with the applicant on a without-prejudice basis to further understand technical requirements, infrastructure solutions, and potential staging options, subject to resolution of policy matters and appropriate cost recovery arrangements.

Yours Sincerely,



Helen Shaw

Head of Strategy and Consenting
Strategy & Planning

Watercare Services Limited

From: [Admin Agency FTAA](#)
To: [Rebecca Sanders](#); [Admin Agency FTAA](#)
Cc: [Nick Roberts](#)
Subject: Re: Referral Application consultation - Waiheke Onsen
Date: Thursday, 5 March 2026 2:49:59 pm
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image.png](#)
[image.png](#)
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Kia ora Rebecca,

Following the Fast-track Approvals Amendment Act 2025 last December, MfE is no longer a relevant administering agency for the RMA. The requirements for pre-lodgement consultation with us under section 11 have been removed.

Prior to these changes, we would usually provide a letter to prospective applicants alerting them to national direction that may be relevant to their application. There's information you may find useful on the new national direction and changes to existing national direction which recently came into effect here: [RMA National Direction updated | Ministry for the Environment](#)

Please let us know if there's anything else we can assist with.

Kind Regards,

Alison McLaughlin ([she/they](#))

*Principal Advisor | Kaitatari Matamua
System Oversight Team*

Ministry for the Environment | Manatu Mo Te Taiao
s 9(2)(a) | s 9(2)(a) | mfe.govt.nz

Ministry staff work flexibly by default. For me, this means I am generally available Monday-Friday between 8:30 and 4:00. I am based in Otago/Christchurch.



Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao



From: Rebecca Sanders <RebeccaS@barker.co.nz>

Sent: Thursday, March 5, 2026 2:38 PM

To: Admin Agency FTAA <AdminAgencyFTAA@mfe.govt.nz>

Cc: Nick Roberts s 9(2)(a)

Subject: Referral Application consultation - Waiheke Onsen

MFE CYBER SECURITY WARNING

This email originated from outside our organisation. Please take extra care when clicking on any links or opening any attachments.

Hello,

We are writing on behalf of Waiheke Mon E Limited regarding the property located at 32 Tiri Road, Waiheke (refer to the location details in the image below). Waiheke Mon E Limited is in the process of preparing a referral application under the Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024 for **Waiheke Onsen** a unique regional asset and visitor attraction, involving a luxury Japanese geothermal retreat (Onsen) including hot pools, private day pools, private saunas, spa treatment, Ryokan visitor units, a yoga and meditation pavilion and associated residential or visitor accommodation with café and parking facilities.

The **Waiheke Onsen** will consist of the following:

1. A 180 room hotel;
2. Ryokan (Approximately 10)
3. A luxury Japanese geothermal retreat (Onsen) including hot pools that can accommodate 150 guests, private day pools (16), private saunas (4) and a café/restaurant;
4. A spa facility with treatment room and a pool;
5. A yoga and meditation pavilion; and
6. Associated facilities including carpark, reception, changing rooms and service kitchen.



In accordance with the pre-consultation requirements under section 11(1)(e) of the FTAA, before lodging a referral application the applicant must consult with the relevant administering agency which we understand to be the Ministry for the Environment.

This email is intended to initiate the necessary pre-lodgement consultation and to arrange a pre-application meeting to discuss the project.

Please let us know the early opportunity for us to commence this consultation and if any further information is required.

Ngā mihi | Kind regards,

REBECCA SANDERS
Senior Associate

s 9(2)(a)
s 9(2)(a)

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Tauranga, Napier, Wellington,
Christchurch, Queenstown, Wānaka

I work Monday - Thursday and will respond to your email as soon as I can.

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MEMORANDUM

To: s 9(2)(a)

From: Andrew Miller (Consultant Planner, Auckland Council)
Fennel Mason (Premium Project Lead, Auckland Council)

Date: 11 March 2026

Subject: Preliminary planning feedback on proposed onsen development, 32 Tiri Road, Waiheke Island

Introduction

Auckland Council ('the Council') acknowledges the ongoing preparation by the s 9(2)(a) for a Referral application under the Fast-Track Consenting Act 2024 ('the Act'). This memorandum provides preliminary, high-level planning feedback following initial landscape input from Oliver May of Boffa Miskell, and a review of early-stage documentation.

The Council's objective at this stage has been to assist the applicant in identifying key technical and planning matters that may require further assessment within the referral and potential substantive application to the fast-track panel. Please note that this feedback is based on a preliminary scope of information only, and we anticipate a more comprehensive set of assessments will accompany the Referral in due course.

This feedback is informed by a review of the following material:

- Masterplan Drawings by G2 Studio Ltd (dated 16 April 2025).
- Wastewater Memorandum by Ground Projects Ltd (dated 16 September 2025).
- Planning summary and correspondence by IsleLand Planning (dated October 2025 – February 2026).
- Letter by Watercare Services Ltd regarding wastewater servicing (dated 18 February 2026).
- Preliminary Landscape Effects memorandum by Boffa Miskell (dated 5 March 2026), attached to this memorandum.

Status under the district plan

An important component of the pending Referral application will be the clear definition of the activity under the Auckland Council District Plan (Hauraki Gulf Islands Section) (HGIDP).

While initial discussions suggested that the proposal is a 'Tourist Complex', further review of the HGIDP suggests that 'Integrated Visitor Development' may be a more appropriate and encompassing definition. The latter category provides for a comprehensive proposal for all buildings and activities associated with a development of this nature, and includes visitor accommodation, restaurants, cafes, and tourist complexes within its scope.

Given the scale and multi-use nature of the development this broad definition likely captures the collective nature of the proposal more accurately than of Tourism Complex. Regardless of the final choice, it is important that the Referral application clearly justifies the selected activity category. The site is located within the 'Other Areas' of the Rural 1 land unit, and an Integrated Visitor Development in this location is a non-complying activity under Rule 4.2.

Land unit considerations

The Rural 1 land unit mainly applies as a transition between village areas, prioritising landscape amenity and rural character. The HGIDP identifies the 'Onetangi Road' area as the primary location for large-scale non-rural activities (such as Tourist Complexes). The reason for this stated within the plan is that area has capacity to absorb higher intensity activities.

Because the subject site at 32 Tiri Road sits outside the 'Onetangi Road' area, the proposal faces a high threshold for demonstrating how such a substantial increase in intensity can be absorbed. Key considerations include:

- Policies 10a.19.3.2 and 10a.19.3.6 require the maintenance of a clear distinction between rural landscapes and neighbouring villages (Oneroa). There is a risk that the scale of the proposed hotel stages may blur this distinction.
- The assessment must demonstrate how the development maintains the 'openness, features, and patterns' of the rural landscape despite the proposed building density.

Landscape review

Initial and high-level feedback has been obtained from Oliver May of Boffa Miskell. Based on his input, the site occupies a prominent position on a Significant Ridgeline and maintains a high-profile frontage to Ocean View Road. His key findings are summarised below:

- The density of development has the potential to diminish the distinction between the site's rural land unit and the adjacent residential land unit, which could reduce the open space landscape character and amenity of the land unit.
- Ocean View Road is the primary arrival sequence for visitors travelling from the Matiatia Ferry terminal. The site acts as a visual gateway to the island. Any development must respond to this sensitivity to ensure it does not present as a discordant or overly urbanised entry point.
- The hotel buildings are large and the integration of structures of this magnitude into a steep, undulating rural landform without dominating the Ocean View Road corridor will be a significant design challenge.
- Several buildings, including the spa complex, appear to sit within or near the Significant Ridgeline overlay. The height and massing of these structures must be carefully managed to ensure the legibility of the ridgeline is not compromised.
- The landscape and vegetation strategy needs to be carefully considered to reflect the rural character of the land unit. Exotic species with foliage and seasonal blooms (such as cherry blossoms) which are easily discernible from indigenous species are likely to be contrary to the rural landscape character of the site and wider landscape.

The applicant is encouraged to consider utilising the Auckland Urban Design Panel (AUDP) to work through the upcoming design stages to ensure that the design of the proposal develops in a way manner that is in keeping with the character of the area.

Wastewater

The projected wastewater flow of approximately 95,900 L/day is substantial. Watercare has indicated that the Owhanake Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is currently at its hydraulic and nutrient capacity. As there are no funded growth upgrades planned for the treatment plan, the applicant will need to provide a clear strategy for infrastructure funding and potential plant upgrades if relying on this as a solution to the site's wastewater requirements. To continue with the application process without formal agreements in place with Watercare is a key planning/project risk that the applicant is encouraged to address.

Water supply

The wellness focus of the development suggests high water demand. The Waiheke Aquifer is a 'High-use' resource under the Auckland Unitary Plan. The sustainability of this water source and whether rainwater harvesting can realistically bridge the gap is a critical question. The applicant is encouraged to investigate this constraint.

Other matters

A preliminary site visit and review of aerial imagery suggest the presence of wetland-type vegetation and a stream at the lower portions of the site. This may bring the National Environmental Standard for Freshwater (NES:F) into consideration. Additionally, the steep topography will require detailed geotechnical assessment and careful management of earthworks to align with natural hazard provisions. We would welcome further discussion on these aspects as part of the pre-application process and suggest that ecological and engineering advice is sought in these respects.

Conclusion

Council remains open to further dialogue as you refine the proposal and would welcome a meeting to discuss the matters identified in this memorandum, or other aspects of the proposal. As recommended above, the applicant is encouraged to consider utilising the Auckland Urban Design Panel (AUDP) to work through the upcoming design stages.

Prepared by:



Andrew Miller

Consultant Planner

Resource Consents

Memorandum

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Attention: Fennel Mason | Principal Project Lead

Company: Auckland Council

Date: 5 March 2026

From: Oliver May | Associate Principal | Landscape Architect

Message Ref: Fast Track Referral pre-application 32 Tiri Road Waiheke – Landscape Effects Advice Note

Project No: BM260123.00

Introduction

In February 2026 Auckland Council requested for Boffa Miskell to review and provide some high level feedback on matters related to potential landscape effects on a proposed Comprehensive Onsen / Spa Development project on Waiheke Island intended to be lodged through a Fast Track Referral.

The proposed project site is located at 32 Tiri Road on the western side of Waiheke Island. The project site is located in the “Rural 1 – Landscape Amenity” zone of the Hauraki Gulf Island District Plan (HGIDP). The site is also subject to a “Significant Ridgeline” overlay, which limits the potential development on the site, relative to the existing ridgeline. To the immediate south of the site is Ocean View Road, a primary road between the Matitia Ferry Terminal and Oneroa.

The key planning and zone context and constraints are:

- *Rural 1 – Landscape Amenity land unit*
- *Significant Ridgeline overlay over the site*
- *The proposed land use is best described as a ‘Tourist Complex’ under the District Plan, but may fall into other or multiple categories.*
- *The proposed land use does not fit with the activity type anticipated in the underlying zone.*

Landscape Character and Visual Baseline

The site has a rural landscape character which is defined by the predominantly vegetated landcover, steep undulating terrain and absence of buildings and structures. Vegetation patterns within the surrounding context are predominantly indigenous forest species and exotic vegetation (including weed species) typically a result of historic rural farming practices. In addition to the vegetation the steep undulating topography and well defined ridgelines provide a sense of enclosure and remoteness which characterise the landscape and wider land unit.

The Rural 1 land unit of the site abuts a “Island Residential 1 (traditional residential)” and “Island Residential 2 (bush residential)” land units. The pattern of development between these land units is a well defined “hard line” with no graduated transition in development density and type.

The visual amenity of the surrounding landscape context is a key component in establishing the rural character and “sense of remoteness” which characterises the Rural 1 land unit. The visual catchment of the site and the land unit is typically well contained by the steep landform and vegetation. However, it is acknowledged that a key viewshaft towards the land unit is available from the coastal marine area (CMA) to the west on the approach to Mātiatia Bay. This well trafficked area is part of a visual sequence and introduction to the island experienced by visitors arriving by ferry and travelling east along Ocean View Road.

Due to its location the proposed site is part of the perceived “gateway” to the island. As a result, the appearance of any discordant or out of character land use activity is likely to have a heightened influence on the people arriving at the island from the Mātiatia. Buildings and dwellings in the wider rural landscape are typically screened by vegetation within the balance of the lot. As such any development of the nature provided will need to be well integrated into the landscape.

Potential landscape and visual conflicts between the HGIDP and the proposal

This section identifies the potential conflicts between the HGIDP and the proposal which may result in landscape character and visual effects which would need to be managed, mitigated or avoided.

- The proposed land use on the site is not anticipated by the HGIDP ands would therefore be a non-complying activity
 - Although the proposal is intended to have a rural aesthetic and to benefit from the remoteness and rural aesthetic, it is likely that the activity will be classified as “non-rural”.
- The proposed density of the development within the site.
 - The density of the proposed buildings and the relative size of the hotel buildings will not accord with the anticipated pattern or type of development in land unit.
 - The density of development has the potential to diminish the distinction between the sites rural land unit and the adjacent residential land unit, which could reduce the open space landscape character and amenity of the land unit.
 - Earthworks and vegetation removal to enable the construction of the proposal may result in a sizable change to the character of the landscape and increase the visibility of the site in the short to medium time.
- Multiple buildings, including the main Spa building, proposed within the Significant Ridgeline overlay area.
 - The height of the proposed buildings have the potential to impact the legibility of the ridgeline, particularly close to the centre of the ridgeline.
 - Height of buildings at the proposed density has the potential to result in cumulative effects and has the potential to reduce the sense legibility and character of the ridgeline.
- The proposed hotel buildings located adjacent to Ocean View Road are likely to be highly visible from Ocean View Road.
 - The relative scale of the proposed hotel buildings have the potential to adversely affect the character of the landscape when viewed from the highly trafficked and island arrival sequence when travelling along Ocean View Road.

Critical constraints and recommendations

Critical constraints anticipated to arise from this proposal and key recommendations to address are summarised below:

1. The scale of the proposal and the density of buildings do not align with the character of the landscape or the land use anticipated by the land unit and the rural gateway to the island.
 - a. The perceived scale of the proposal will need to be managed/mitigated by the design of the buildings and landscape mitigation planting to ensure that the rural landscape, sense of openness and the character of the land unit is retained.
 - b. The relationship between the proposal and the Ocean View Road will need to be designed to limit dominance effects and a perceived intensification of a non-rural activity.
2. The vegetated rural character of the landscape is maintained.
 - a. The proposed mitigation planting within the proposal should be carefully considered to reflect the rural character of the land unit. It is recommended that the proposed planting has an emphasis on indigenous species particularly where species will be highly visible from the surrounding landscape. Exotic species with foliage and seasonal blooms which are easily discernible from indigenous species are likely to be contrary to the rural landscape character of the site and wider landscape.
 - b. Vegetation within the site is retained where possible and consideration is given to advanced mitigation planting in the site. Early establishment of planting in the site should be considered to assist in moderating or minimising potential adverse landscape character and visual amenity effects.
3. The visibility of the proposal from the surrounding landscape may reduce the amenity of the rural landscape character.
 - a. It is recommended that the anticipated visual catchment of the proposal is understood and potential views from the surrounding landscape and the CMA are identified and assessed.
 - b. Consideration should be given to views towards the proposal from the surrounding landscape and seascape to ensure the rural amenity and character within the site are maintained.
 - c. An evaluation of the potential effects on the character and legibility of the Significant Ridgeline should be undertaken to ensure that these can be managed or mitigated.

The Auckland Urban Design Panel (AUDP) is a useful resource to ensure that the design of the proposal develops in a way manner that is in keeping with the character of the area and achieves the recommendations listed above.

I trust that the above advice note provides you with enough information to enable you to advise the applicant on the key landscape and visual constraints of the Site. Please let me know if you require any further clarification.

Yours sincerely,



Oliver May
Associate Principal | NZILA Registered Landscape Architect
BOFFA MISKELL LTD

Feedback Sought	Response
<p>Planning Feedback</p> <p>Status under the district plan:</p> <p>An important component of the pending Referral application will be the clear definition of the activity under the Auckland Council District Plan (Hauraki Gulf Islands Section) (HGIDP). Regardless of the final choice, it is important that the Referral application clearly justifies the selected activity category. The site is located within the 'Other Areas' of the Rural 1 land unit, and an Integrated Visitor Development in this location is a non-complying activity under Rule 4.2.</p>	<p>Noted. The activity table (10a.19.5) includes rules for the whole Rural 1 land unit and a subset which only apply in the 'Onetangi Road area'. The activity table allows for a range of non-rural activities within the land unit (including 'other areas') as discretionary activities and a wider range of such activities can be applied for as non-complying activities. Key matters which will determine whether consent could be granted include (i) whether the adverse effects of the proposed activity on the environment will be no more than minor overall, particularly including adverse landscape, rural character and amenity values, and (ii) whether the clear distinction between the land unit and neighbouring villages is maintained.</p> <p>The final activity definition will be addressed in detail as part of a substantive application in the context of the final design. Within the preliminary planning assessment in support of the referral application a non-complying activity under the Hauraki Gulf Islands District Plan has been assumed.</p>
<p>Land unit considerations</p> <p>The Rural 1 land unit mainly applies as a transition between village areas, prioritising landscape amenity and rural character. The HGIDP identifies the 'Onetangi Road' area as the primary location for large-scale non-rural activities (such as Tourist Complexes). The reason for this stated within the plan is that area has capacity to absorb higher intensity activities.</p> <p>Because the subject site at 32 Tiri Road sits outside the 'Onetangi Road' area, the proposal faces a high threshold for demonstrating how such a substantial increase in intensity can be absorbed. Key considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies 10a.19.3.2 and 10a.19.3.6 require the maintenance of a clear distinction between rural landscapes and neighbouring villages (Oneroa). There is a risk that the scale of the proposed hotel stages may blur this distinction. 	<p>Noted. A complete assessment of the proposal against policies 10a.19.3.2 and 10a.19.3.6 will be included within the substantive application in the context of the final design and informed by a visual landscape assessment.</p>

Feedback Sought	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment must demonstrate how the development maintains the ‘openness, features, and patterns’ of the rural landscape despite the proposed building density. 	
<p>Landscape Review Initial and high-level feedback has been obtained from Oliver May of Boffa Miskell. Based on his input, the site occupies a prominent position on a Significant Ridgeline and maintains a high-profile frontage to Ocean View Road.</p>	<p>Noted. The specific feedback and recommendations from Oliva May are addressed below.</p>
<p>Wastewater: Watercare has indicated that the Owhanake Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is currently at its hydraulic and nutrient capacity. As there are no funded growth upgrades planned for the treatment plan, the applicant will need to provide a clear strategy for infrastructure funding and potential plant upgrades if relying on this as a solution to the site’s wastewater requirements. To continue with the application process without formal agreements in place with Watercare is a key planning/project risk that the applicant is encouraged to address.</p>	<p>The applicant has had a series of meetings with Watercare on the capacity of the Owhanake WWTP to service the development <i>refer Attachment 4</i>. Watercare has confirmed that there is a need for an upgrade to the WWTP with a renewal consent required before 2028 (which has to happen irrespective of this development). The applicant will continue to work with Watercare on this issue with a view to being able to provide a formal agreement to support a substantive application.</p>
<p>Water supply: The Waiheke Aquifer is a ‘High-use’ resource under the Auckland Unitary Plan. The sustainability of this water source and whether rainwater harvesting can realistically bridge the gap is a critical question. The applicant is encouraged to investigate this constraint.</p>	<p>The applicant has undertaken preliminary groundwater, civil engineering and water re use assessments which have determined that the proposed water supply solution is feasible. More extensive technical assessments will be produced to support the substantive application.</p>
<p>Other matters A preliminary site visit and review of aerial imagery suggest the presence of wetland-type vegetation and a stream at the lower portions of the site. This may bring the National Environmental Standard for Freshwater (NES:F) into consideration. Additionally, the steep topography will require detailed geotechnical assessment and careful management of earthworks to align with natural hazard provisions. We would welcome further discussion on these aspects as</p>	<p>Noted. Should the proposal be successfully referred the applicant will engage an ecologist and Geotech engineer to undertake assessments to inform the final design and support a substantive application. As a precaution we have identified that the proposal could potentially trigger a prohibited activity status by way of Regulation 53 of the NES:F given some reclamation of streams and wetlands with lower ecological values may be required to facilitate development.</p>

Feedback Sought	Response
<p>part of the pre-application process and suggest that ecological and engineering advise is sought in these respects.</p>	
<p>Landscape Feedback</p>	
<p>1. The scale of the proposal and the density of buildings do not align with the character of the landscape or the land use anticipated by the land unit and the rural gateway to the island.</p> <p>a. The perceived scale of the proposal will need to be managed/mitigated by the design of the buildings and landscape mitigation planting to ensure that the rural landscape, sense of openness and the character of the land unit is retained.</p> <p>b. The relationship between the proposal and the Ocean View Road will need to designed to limit dominance effects and a perceived intensification of a non-rural activity.</p>	<p>Noted. The design is high level and conceptual to support the referral application. Should the application be successfully referred the final design submitted for a substantive application will address the scale of the proposal within the rural setting and any landscape mitigation required. The feedback regarding the need to limit dominance effects on Ocen View Road will also be considered further in the final design.</p>
<p>The vegetated rural character of the landscape is maintained.</p> <p>a. The proposed mitigation planting within the proposal should be carefully considered to reflect the rural character of the land unit. It is recommended that the proposed planting has an emphasis on indigenous species particularly where species will be highly visible from the surrounding landscape. Exotic species with foliage and seasonal blooms which are easily discernible from indigenous species are likely to be contrary to the rural landscape character of the site and wider landscape.</p> <p>b. Vegetation within the site is retained where possible and consideration is given to advanced mitigation planting in the site. Early establishment of planting in the site should be considered to assist in moderating or minimising potential adverse landscape character and visual amenity effects.</p>	<p>Noted. Should the proposal be successfully referred the applicant will engage a landscape architect to ensure the substantive application provides a landscape design for the site that addresses the feedback raised.</p>

Feedback Sought	Response
<p>3. The visibility of the proposal from the surrounding landscape may reduce the amenity of the rural landscape character.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It is recommended that the anticipated visual catchment of the proposal is understood and potential views from the surrounding landscape and the CMA are identified and assessed. b. Consideration should be given to views towards the proposal from the surrounding landscape and seascape to ensure the rural amenity and character within the site are maintained. c. An evaluation of the potential effects on the character and legibility of the Significant Ridgeline should be undertaken to ensure that these can be managed or mitigated. 	<p>Noted. Should the proposal be successfully referred the applicant will engage a landscape architect to undertake a landscape and visual effects assessment. The recommendations from this assessment will feed into the final design.</p>