

BEFORE AN EXPERT CONSENTING PANEL

IN THE MATTER of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the **FTAA**)

AND

IN THE MATTER of Ashbourne (FTAA-2507-1087)

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF IAN COLIN MUNRO ON BEHALF OF THE
MATAMATA-PIAKO DISTRICT COUNCIL**

(URBAN DESIGN)

Dated: 11 November 2025

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1. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

- 1.1 I have reviewed the application's urban design-related documents and visited the Site and surrounds.
- 1.2 I am generally supportive of the principle of urban residential activity occurring on the Site instead of rural residential-type development (noting part of the Site is zoned Rural), however there is a need to manage the potential adverse effects of urban-intensity development relative to Rural and Rural-Residential zoned land adjacent to the Site. In my opinion the proposal has not achieved this.
- 1.3 In assessing the proposal I have identified a number of changes that would result in what I regard as an acceptable urban design outcome. These relate to:
 - (a) The density / intensity of development at many of the Site's external boundaries (lot sizes between 1,200m² – 1,800m² other than east of the Peakedale Drive axis; in relation to the balance lot; and excluding the retirement village).
 - (b) Requirements for fencing and landscaping at external Site boundaries (excluding front boundaries with existing roads).
 - (c) Promoting the earliest-possible commencement of activity at the commercial node (even if developed in-part initially);
 - (d) A minimum 6m wide space for a pedestrian / cycle link to Highgrove Avenue should be provided, and both this and the pedestrian / cycle link to Eldonwood Drive should include suitable lighting and be subject to the boundary / fencing controls proposed to apply to road frontages;
 - (e) Better providing for access and integration between the balance lot and the eastern residential neighbourhood through the retirement village site in the event that the balance lot comes to be used other than for a retirement village expansion;
 - (f) Roads 10 and 17 should be extended to the southern Site boundary;

- (g) The conditions and design guidelines should be clarified and made clearer, along with the role and purpose of the residential dwelling typology plans.
 - (h) No water tanks, accessory buildings other than garages in accordance with the design guidelines, or other utilities should be permitted in front of or in between buildings and any public road or private road / accessway (this excludes utilities that are operationally required and located within the road reserve space).
- 1.4 After considering the above in their totality, I consider that they would represent a significant change to the proposal well beyond what is typical of conditions of consent. They would likely require revisions to most of the proposed plans and possibly realigning roads within the Site. In terms of the application as it stands and on its own merits, I consider consent should be **refused**.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 My full name is Ian Colin Munro. I am a self-employed urban designer.
- 2.2 I hold a Bachelor and a Master of Planning, a Master of Architecture [Urban Design], a Master of Environmental Legal Studies, and a Master of Engineering Studies [Transportation]. I am a Full Member of the New Zealand Planning Institute and a Member of the Urban Designers Institute Aotearoa.
- 2.3 I have over 25 years' experience in the New Zealand industry working across the country and extensively across Auckland. I have worked on well over two-thousand urban development projects. I have specific experience with large-scale urban expansions including structure plans, plan changes, and large-scale resource consents of several hundred dwellings each. I routinely teach at the University of Auckland and am currently employed to teach urban design theory as part of the Master of Urban Design course.
- 2.4 My qualifications and relevant experience are set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.5 In preparing this evidence, I have reviewed:
- (a) Ashbourne Substantive Application - Fast Track Approvals Act, Urban Design Assessment, (Barker & Associates Ltd.) ("**B&A**"), 6 June 2025;

- (b) The various scheme, architectural, and landscape plans submitted with the application (various dates and authors), and the proposed residential design guidelines (June 2025); and
- (c) Memorandum from Katherine Hu and Alicia Lawrie (B&A), responding to several of my urban design queries, 21 October 2025.
- (d) I also reviewed the Applicant's planning report and discussed planning matters with the Council's planning consultant Mr. Rademeyer (planned built form outcomes forming a key part of my consideration of the application's context). These discussions also included matters of uncertainty, and I have relied on Mr. Rademeyer's understanding of the Applicant's intent where I have not been clear.
- (e) I also read an urban design statement prepared on behalf of an adjacent rural residential subdivision, "Highgrove", by Mr. Bruce Weir (Weir + Associates Ltd.), 5 September 2025.

2.6 I attended a site visit on 21 August.

3. CODE OF CONDUCT

3.1 Although this matter is not before the Environment Court, I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses outlined in the Environment Court's Practice Note (2023) (**Code**) and have complied with it in preparing this statement of evidence. If a hearing is held, I also agree to follow the Code when presenting evidence to the Panel.

3.2 I confirm that the issues addressed in this brief of evidence are within my area of expertise, except where I state that I rely upon the evidence of other expert witnesses. I also confirm that I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from my opinions. I confirm that no part of my evidence has been written by or with the assistance of any "AI" software.

4. URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

4.1 In undertaking my assessment, I followed what I consider to be an orthodox urban design methodology based on the following general steps and in compliance with the UDIA Code of Ethics and Code of Practice. I refer to **Appendix 3**, which sets out a number of general limitations, and urban

design references that have guided my approach. Of those, MfE's 2003 "People+Places+Spaces" is the principal New Zealand-based source.

4.2 In summary the key steps in my assessment were as follows:

- (a) The context of my assessment is that I am reviewing an existing urban design assessment prepared for the Applicant by B&A rather than undertaking my own from-scratch assessment. To help the decision maker compare 'apples with apples', I have adopted as much of the Barker & Associates Ltd. urban design assessment approach, structure and categories as possible. I have also limited my assessment to the relevant matters specified within the FTA and the relevant planning documents and sought to avoid unnecessary duplication of the B&A commentary.
- (b) I undertook a visit of the Site and wider Matamata town and surrounds. A site and context analysis was undertaken including a review of the Applicant's assessment of the outcomes sought by relevant planning documents.
- (c) Urban design principles and associated built form outcomes identified in the B&A urban design assessment were confirmed; then
- (d) For each of the matters identified in (c), the proposal's urban design effects and overall merits were reviewed in terms of the following:
 - i. What are the relevant outcomes proposed?
 - ii. Are those reasonable and acceptable in terms of preferred urban design outcomes?
 - iii. Are those reasonable and acceptable in terms of the applicable planning documents?
 - iv. Where shortcomings and/or adverse effects have been identified (regardless of their scale or severity), are additional matters or changes to the proposal warranted and if so are those changes reasonable and proportionate to the scale of the identified shortcoming(s) and/or adverse effects(s)?

- (e) Finally, evaluate the overall merit of the proposal across all of the identified topic areas and confirm support; support subject to additional matters or changes; or opposition to the proposal.

5. RELEVANT ISSUES

5.1 I refer to my request for information dated 3 September 2025, included as **Appendix 2**. Having considered the application material and additional information provided by the Applicant – which importantly did modify the proposal to make the commercial node a permanent (rather than voluntary) inclusion, the key issues raised are as follows:

- (a) Relevant built form outcomes sought by planning documents;
- (b) Solar farms;
- (c) Rural / urban interface;
- (d) Provision of density and intensity;
- (e) Commercial node;
- (f) Connectivity and integration;
- (g) Subdivision layout and subsequent development.

6. RELEVANT BUILT FORM OUTCOMES

6.1 I agree with B&A's use of urban design principles to synthesise and summarise key built form outcomes sought by relevant planning documents, informed by urban design techniques and methods. I am generally in agreement with the principles identified (and the derivation from relevant planning documents explained in the 21 October 2025 Memorandum) subject to the below.

6.2 The proposal is for a scale, intensity and character of urban development that is at odds with what is sought by the District Plan's Rural and Rural Residential zones. I can only conclude that the proposal is contrary to those zones. B&A's analysis as explained in the 21 October 2025 Memorandum makes no reference to the outcomes sought on the subject Site by way of its operative zoning, compared to more general urban form outcomes identified for the district or even region as a whole (taking into account all existing land use zones). Although I do not disagree with what B&A has done as it relates

to approaching the assessment of something clearly very different to what the zones seek in the first instance, those operative zone outcomes nevertheless remain central to the consideration of adverse built form effects on at least immediate neighbours.

- 6.3 It is not the case that acceptable urban design outcomes can only occur where a District Plan is fully or even mostly complied with. But where something very different to what a Plan seeks is proposed, consideration of how to avoid, remedy or mitigate the relevant adverse effects arising from that forms, possibly the central urban design consideration. This is in fairness identified in the B&A work, but based on the above I respectfully disagree that the proposal demonstrates it, as it relates to adjacent land and the substantial visual and character effects likely to result from the medium-density urban neighbourhood proposed (when compared with the existing environment or a pragmatic hypothetical along the lines of the general outcomes sought by the District Plan zones).
- 6.4 The western side of Matamata is characterised by rural and rural-residential-zoned land and it is my understanding from the relevant planning documents that the development of rural residential activities is sought to continue and form a 'buffer' or ring around the urban extent of the town and between the town and the rural environment. This would be in line with the generalised urban planning typology of concentric transitions of density from an urban core (central / highest density) to an outer rural edge.
- 6.5 I will examine this in detail later.
- 6.6 Putting aside the key issue of the actual zoning and District Plan outcomes for that, I am otherwise in general agreement with the high-level outcomes identified by B&A for urban development more generally.

7. SOLAR FARMS

- 7.1 The proposed solar farms are not of urban design concern, although I have no expertise in the potential issue of managing any glare or reflectivity that may (or may not) arise or how to best manage that.
- 7.2 My reasons are:
- (a) Rural zones perform three key potential functions of interest to urban designers (they do not always complement one another):

- (i) As quasi-industrial zones / working environments;
 - (ii) As urban form greenbelts or separators;
 - (iii) As a visual amenity backdrop.
- (b) The solar farms are in my opinion consistent with function (a) above, and can be seen alongside many other major infrastructure or industrial activities that occur in rural environments. Although the rural environment around Matamata is in its current state very open and pastoral, a large number of rural-zone activities are not, including industrial-scale glasshouses or buildings associated with rural industry.
- (c) The solar farms are clearly land-intensive activities and will provide direct energy supply benefits to the community and beyond. In my opinion it is reasonable to conclude they require a rural location and would likely not be practicable on much costlier urban-zoned land.
- (d) The rows of panels proposed, although clearly very different in appearance and character to crops, are not dissimilar to the orderly rows associated with vineyards or other orchard-type activities – some involving frequent trusses or fences.
- (e) Although the solar farms would not provide any means of through-access (i.e., roads), they present a fairly low-value use contained on large land titles that could be changed in the future, and can be compared to large farm activities that similarly often do not provide roads through them. This is very different to the case of an urban-intensity subdivision that would set a more-or-less permanent pattern of access and layout.
- (f) I have reviewed and support proposed landscape / planting mitigation associated with each of the two solar farms.

8. RURAL / URBAN INTERFACE

- 8.1 In the 21 October 2025 Memorandum, B&A acknowledge that the relevant planning documents, and B&A's urban design principles, promote "*intensity focussed in the right places*" (derived from the NPS-UD); "*lower intensity at sensitive edges*" (derived from the District Plan); and "*soft edges to rural and rural residential zoned land*" (also derived from the District Plan). The

proposal relies on a combination of setbacks and landscaping to primarily manage the issue, as well as fencing design.

- 8.2 Generally, it is not the case that acceptable urban design outcomes can only arise with a succession of transitions and buffers in place, or that the outer edges of settlements can only support low-density development. That is a fairly common outcome observable across a bulk of New Zealand's small towns today but equally there are many spatial typologies that rely on very abrupt spatial transitions. The specific urban planning theory of 'Edge Cities' actively promotes densification of (some) urban edges to help service large suburban areas unable to conveniently access historic CBDs, and that can be seen in the large-scale re-zonings that have occurred at Albany and Westgate in Auckland (and again recently at Drury). But I agree with B&A that in the specific case of the current application at Matamata, the transitioning / soft-edge approach is the correct one.
- 8.3 I would respectfully advise the Panel to not be overly doctrinaire when considering the concept of a spatial density gradient that might only permit the densities promoted by the Applicant to occur in a specified location or distance from the centre of Matamata (and which might well not include the Site at all in the first instance). My reasons are:
- (a) New Zealand's permissive planning regime means that allocating higher density on one area of land does not mean the landowners will then provide that (i.e., there is a risk of placing housing choice, affordability and the benefits of density 'all in one basket').
 - (b) There is a difference between a spatial plan providing the theoretical best-possible outcomes and what happens in the real world. Despite the evidence showing clear general trends, there will be people who could easily walk still choosing to drive long distances and vice versa – making a definitive attribution of adverse effects arising from a given density pattern difficult.
 - (c) Across the country it is generally accepted that more housing choice, affordability, and variation is required. I see no urban design benefit in requiring 'more of the same' on the Site just for the sake of being the same.

- (d) My experience with New Zealand centre-focused intensification is that it often has not worked well. Specifically, a less-well located greenfield site able to have density comprehensively designed in from the outset can deliver a better overall result than better-located but already-developed land subjected to fragmented, ad-hoc incremental intensification. Most of the urban planning theory relied on to support the predominant New Zealand 'centres first' approach to planning, as much as I agree with the evidential justification and potential benefits for that, are international and from settings where the State often has more powers to effect brownfield redevelopment than is the case in New Zealand.
 - (e) Ultimately the Site is quite well located to Matamata centre in an absolute-distance sense, and is consistent with the distances I typically see associated with the densities proposed. Matamata centre is itself a fairly large town with a broad commercial and service base (it is larger than many urban town centre zones that support much higher adjacent densities than exist or are proposed at Matamata).
- 8.4 Because of all of the above, I consider there are several arguments in favour of a mix of urban residential densities occurring on the Site along with the commercial node and I would struggle to agree that rural residential activities offer an inherently superior urban design outcome; but the latter is what the relevant planning documents seek and there is in fairness a coherence in the spatial zone pattern in place.
- 8.5 In my opinion if the Site had been already re-zoned to an urban standard and the District Plan provided for the scale and densities proposed, the edge approach generally proposed around the Site's external boundaries would be sufficient to acceptably manage effects on that hypothetical combination of existing environment + planning context. But in light of the actual zoning of the land, and the direction of the relevant planning documents and B&A's own design principles, I consider the need to avoid, remedy and mitigate potential adverse effects on adjacent land based on the Site's existing zoning requires a further softening of development intensity to a compatible level. In my opinion this applies to all of the Site's external boundaries except the western balance lot (not subject to any development at this time), and east of the Peakedale Drive axis on account of the residential zoning and existing

development in that immediate vicinity. The proposed retirement village already proposes sufficient setbacks on the relevant boundaries.

- 8.6 The B&A urban design assessment and the proposal's residential design guideline indicate a combination of fence design, landscaping and setbacks. In my opinion I see no reason why, if developed in accordance with the existing zone provisions, similar fencing and landscaping outcomes might not occur anyway, leaving a significantly more intensive frequency and proximity of dwellings and associated nuisance at rural and rural-residential zone boundaries around the Site. The proposed guidelines (assuming for this topic that they would have the force of rules) specify:
- (a) A rear yard building setback of 1.5m (section 1.3, pg. 6);
 - (b) A height in relation to boundary setback of 3m + 45° (section 1.3, pg. 6), and a maximum building height of 9m (proposed condition of consent 24 but not included within the design guideline¹). This allows for 9m tall buildings positioned 6.0m back from the relevant Site boundary;
 - (c) An optional post-and-rail fence along parts of the boundary, and an indication for existing hedges to be maintained along others (fencing plan on pg. 18);
 - (d) Landscaping guidelines for "higher hedge planting" (pg. 23) and specimen trees on specified lots. Separately, at pg. 25 the guideline specifies all hedges should be maintained to 1.2m maximum height.
- 8.7 In its response to my query on this matter, B&A stated (21 October memo, pg. 9):

In summary, while a density reduction is not expressed through larger lot sizes along the southern edge of the proposal, the lot orientation, dimensions, the anticipated single-storey form, fencing treatment, and edge planting (to be confirmed with the neighbour) are considered to provide a managed, respectful transition between the proposal and the rural land to the south.

¹ At pg. 9, the guideline does state: "Height Control: Building heights must respect neighbouring properties and generally be single storey. Appropriate transition from denser areas to those of lower density."

- 8.8 I disagree with how B&A have characterised the proposal. Post-and-rail fences are visually very open and are not known for providing visual privacy, and are as I understand it to be optional in any event. Similarly, the provisions provide for 9m-tall buildings as close as 6m from boundaries, and only a 1.5m setback for any 1-storey parts of buildings.
- 8.9 In my opinion the proposed guidelines / controls do little to maintain visual amenity, privacy, or otherwise mitigate the adverse scale and intensity effects of urban development proposed on neighbouring sites. In many instances neighbours will experience several new dwellings, possibly higher than the operative zone height limit in places, and associated nuisance very close to and largely visible from their dwellings. I consider that setbacks and gaps between dwellings much closer to the rural residential zone standards are required, along with more comprehensive fencing and landscaping adjoining the Site's external boundaries to separate neighbours from one another (including the retirement village's eastern side). I disagree that maintaining visual privacy in particular should be left to neighbours to address, for which I consider the guidelines do by-and-large leave a door open .
- 8.10 The starting point for "compatible" is 'like with like', or in this instance rural residential allotments of approximately 2,500m² and a 10m yard setback. I would have no concerns with such a 'soft' edge noting that the rural residential zone provides for 2,500m² generally as a minimum allotment size and when adjoining a rural zone this would still present a fairly intensive boundary interface.
- 8.11 **However, in the interests of promoting maximum housing choice and variety, I consider that allotments in the range of 1,200m² - 1,800m² (average 1,500m²) would be sufficient to maintain a reasonable and appropriate character and amenity on adjacent land, and provide an interface with adjacent properties that was still inconsistent with, but not in my opinion contrary to, the spatial and built form outcomes sought by the District Plan at external boundaries. An 8m rear yard setback and 3m side yard setback should also apply.** I consider the retirement village proposes a suitable built form interface and does not need a reduction in scale / density.
- 8.12 **In addition, and including the eastern side of the retirement village, at least 4m width of the rear yard setback (adjoining the rear boundary)**

should be densely landscaped, and solid external side or rear site boundary fences of at least 1.5m height (including to contain domestic pets and help mitigate noise), to maintain a minimum-compatible spatial transition and interface are recommended.

- 8.13 Without the above modifications, I remain unable to agree that adverse urban form and character effects arising from the proposal, due to its context of being positioned on rural and rural-zoned land, have been avoided, remedied or mitigated appropriately.

9. PROVISION OF DENSITY AND INTENSITY

- 9.1 I generally support the Applicant's intent to provide a mixed-density neighbourhood.
- 9.2 The retirement village, being the highest-density, would have been most suitable in the eastern part of the Site including in terms of not connecting with private roads (where external connectivity will be limited or not possible anyway) and Highgrove Avenue (where external connectivity is opposed by the relevant neighbours). This would have also allowed a more convincing transition of density from higher (east) through to lower (west) to be achieved. As it stands and including if the balance lot were added as a retirement village extension, the proposal is likely to achieve a reverse-transition of density increasing along with distance from the centre of Matamata.
- 9.3 Be that as it may, the overall distances involved are still not so great as to lead me to the view that a fundamentally unsupportable urban design outcome will result from the proposal's approach. In terms of the retirement village, there are examples of relatively high-density retirement living in rural or semi-rural settings such as the Tamahere Country Club, or the Arrowtown Lifestyle Village. Subject to suitable external edge mitigation these are manageable. However, and taking my previous recommendations for a lower-density interface to be provided along several external Site boundaries (other than east of the Peakedale Drive axis), it would be desirable if the density of housing well within the Site's eastern half and associated with the commercial node were maximised. This would be to maximise the number of dwellings in the part of the Site closest to Matamata's centre, and to also balance out any loss of yield resulting from lesser-intensity around the Site's external edges.

9.4 To this end, I indicate that I would support a generally unlimited (2-storey only) housing density on the Site that is within a 200m walk of the commercial node but at least 75m from an external site boundary (generally reliant on the site standards proposed by the Applicant so as to provide more and smaller dwellings rather than more overall net scale of built form). Such density would have minimal if any perceptible adverse effects on neighbours, but maximise density in the part of the Site best suited to it. I recognise that the Applicant has not sought or proposed a particularly high density in this part of its Site and may have market-based reasons for that. This observation is made in good faith to identify what I would support noting that other recommendations would have the effect of reducing yield.

10. COMMERCIAL NODE

10.1 The commercial node is supported and forms a major urban design justification for the proposal.

10.2 The information available to me indicates that the commercial node would be developed as part of Stage 4. It is not clear to me whether or how the proposed stages are intended, or might be required, to be implemented in parallel or sequentially, or whether the staging order could be subject to change.

10.3 I have experience with numerous new residential neighbourhoods of a scale that included a commercial node. There is usually a tension between the desirability of providing commercial activities for new residents from the time of the first dwelling, and the commercial viability of a catchment in place that comes at the time of the last dwelling. Many developers overcome this by subsidising initial commercial offerings to secure their early operation as part of bedding-in the character of a neighbourhood as opposed to just another subdivision 'at the edge of town'. Examples are Hobsonville Point (Auckland), Northlake (Wanaka) and Hobbs Bay (Auckland). I have no information on the Applicant's intentions and make no point of it other than to share with the Panel how the issue has been approached elsewhere.

10.4 There is also no need in urban design terms for the commercial node to only be developed in one-go. Starting even with one stand-alone corner shop would be more desirable than leaving the site vacant and to this end I **recommend that the commercial node should be developed, including**

if only initially in-part, as soon as it is possible for the developer to do so.

11. CONNECTIVITY AND INTEGRATION

11.1 It is common ground that the relevant planning documents seek appropriate connectivity, although no specific minimum metrics or standards are used.

11.2 Connectivity is of interest to urban designers as follows:

- (a) A significant body of historic and quantitative analysis has established 'natural' relationships that are predictable and transferable, relating to the distribution of land uses along movement networks (i.e., where different land uses consistently happen and where they do not).
- (b) Health and safety benefits have been repeatedly proven in relation to having safe, visually interesting, and convenient opportunities to move through urban areas for all modes.
 - (i) Convenience is a function of route directness from multiple different trip origins and avoiding frustrating (and disincentivising) travellers, by allowing them travel as close to the actual 'as the crow flies' separation between destinations as possible; making a person walk 600m to access a destination that is only 100m away will not likely result in that person wanting to frequently undertake that journey, even though the 600m may of itself be within an ordinarily 'walkable' distance.
 - (ii) Safety (excluding vehicular road safety) is a function of how land uses relate to transport corridors but also the general minimisation of entrapment spots created by dead-ends (especially where the traveller cannot see the end of the link from the starting point) and a lack of route choice / alternatives (which can create predictable travel patterns and facilitate interception).
 - (iii) On generally flat land, the above are best accommodated by a well-connected, easily walkable 'deformed grid' pattern able to take into account site irregularities and natural features.

- (c) A well-connected and convenient movement network is considered to allow the most resource-efficient means of travel in terms of time, carbon-equivalent emissions, household costs, and public costs. Maximising travel efficiencies has become one of if not the most important urban planning / sustainable urbanism priorities in New Zealand's urban areas (i.e., it is the ultimate basis for promoting development intensity in activity centres and passenger transport routes, and much of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development's policy content).
- 11.3 In urban design terms it is not necessary that connectivity be by way of public roads only; many privately owned facilities provide important local access for communities. In this respect it is not fatal to the proposal for the retirement village's through connection to remain in private ownership. But I remain unclear as to what extent general public thoroughfare will be permitted or encouraged. Based on my knowledge of retirement villages generally, I expect the retirement village access to not actively promote or encourage non-village use. The residential neighbourhood will be predominantly accessed for the foreseeable future from the new road to Station Road (Road 1), and the connection to Peakedale Drive (Road 13).
- 11.4 In my opinion provision for connectivity within the Site (excluding with the balance lot) is generally appropriate, and I agree with the B&A rationale for that 'internal' street and block layout.
- 11.5 I disagree that 'external' connectivity is overall acceptable or appropriate. Specifically:
- (a) I understand from Mr. Rademeyer that a Station Road footpath upgrade is included within the proposal, subject to further recommendations from Mr. Black. I understand Mr. Black recommends a sealed 3m width (except where this is not physically possible). **I agree with this recommendation.**
- (b) The benefits of a well-connected block structure within a Site are blunted if external connectivity is lacking – in some cases developments can become functional cul-de-sacs at the scale of a wider settlement, resulting in households still subjected to overall very inefficient, inconvenient travel options.

- (c) Future connections from the residential development to the eastern Site boundary are supported, noting that indicative connections across intervening land to Firth Street are not part of the application and may not eventuate. I have placed no reliance on those in my analysis. Nevertheless, I note that a road connection to Firth Street would be highly desirable given the scale of the development and the efficiencies a more direct connection east across the railway line at Burwood Road would offer (especially for any active mode travellers). It would be sufficiently beneficial that if it could be achieved within the scope of the application I would recommend formally requiring it as part of the initial stages of development. I understand that the Council has confirmed a willingness to support a Firth Street connection but that it remains an outcome reliant on third-party works and land at this time.
- (d) I agree with the retirement village layout noting that despite providing a connection from Station Road to the internal spine at the retirement village's south-eastern corner, very little non-village-related traffic will likely use that private link (and it may be gated closed at night time or other periods).
- (e) I support the proposed road connections to Station Road and Peakedale Drive. These will be the most important day-to-day connections noting almost all off-site destinations regularly visited will be to the north, north-east, or east of the Site.
- (f) I agree that connecting roads to existing private roads at Chestnut Lane and Eldonwood Drive is likely not possible. I support provision of a pedestrian / cycle access opportunity at Eldonwood Drive (adjacent to proposed Lot 132) including its 6m+ width. I agree that an additional pedestrian / cycle connection at Chestnut Lane adjacent to Lot 474 is not required (although it would nevertheless be desirable). Even in the event that legal access for occupants of the Site to use Eldonwood Drive is withheld at this time, making long-term provision for the connection to occur, even if fenced off and kept vacant in the interim, is the appropriate urban design solution given the scale of the proposal and that once access is foreclosed, it cannot be realistically retro-fitted back in later. I would be comfortable with the linkage being vested as un-formed road in the Council, fenced-off

for now but capable of being formed as and when legal access allows (eventually those existing neighbours may see access to the commercial node as presenting out-weighting benefits compared to the disbenefits of allowing pedestrian and cycle access from the Site onto their roads).

- (g) In terms of Highgrove Avenue, this is a public road and in my opinion it should be connected to with a full public road in the first instance (noting also that the proposed link through the retirement village will not in reality serve as a secondary general public access route for the whole development). Highgrove Avenue extends to the Site boundary and I see no reason why this would have occurred if no future extension into the Site was ever envisaged. However, I do recognise the opposition to the proposal raised by residents within Highgrove and that the proposal is for a scale and intensity well beyond the District Plan's zone framework (resulting in much higher potential use of such a public road connection than likely ever envisaged when Highgrove Avenue was formed). Although I see no support within the relevant planning documents to not provide connectivity here, in this circumstance a pedestrian / cycle-only connection would allow acceptable spatial integration. **It appears that provision for this has been made by way of a narrow allotment between proposed Lots 383 and 384. However, this linkage should be a minimum of 6m wide, similar to that proposed at Eldonwood Drive.** A minimum 6m width for this and the Eldonwood Drive linkage would in turn allow:
- (i) Sufficient separation between users of a central footpath and allotments either side of that allows lower-height front fences (as generally proposed by the Applicant along future roads) while maintaining suitable on-allotment privacy.
 - (ii) Lower-height fences will facilitate passive surveillance of the linkages and communicate more obviously to potential users that the linkages are part of the publicly-accessible movement network.
 - (iii) The width also allows suitable lighting to be provided between roads, facilitating safe and convenient use of the linkages in the nighttime (and deterring potential anti-social behaviour).

- (iv) **Based on the above, I recommend that the Applicant's urban design requirements applying to road frontages should also apply to the boundaries of pedestrian / cycle linkages.**
- (h) I note that my recommendation for a Highgrove Avenue connection accords with the view of B&A in its 21 October 2025 Memorandum:
- “For Highgrove Avenue, a vehicular connection was not proposed because it conflicted with the alignment of the two proposed spine roads and their intersections (i.e., offset/sight-line distances and network legibility). From an urban design perspective, we consider a shared path at a recommended width of 6m, to be a good outcome to preserve connectivity and everyday permeability for people on foot and bikes. However, it is our understanding that the shared path will not be implemented as part of the proposal due to consultation with adjoining neighbours along Highgrove. From an urban design perspective, establishing a walking and cycling link remains the preferred outcome as it would enhance the overall connectivity and integration within the wider street network.”*
- (i) The proposed balance lot, intended to be a possible future retirement village extension, would have no physical access other than to Station Road. However, it could be suitably connected and integrated with the proposed retirement village along its eastern side and numerous accessways are shown extending to that boundary for that purpose. But the connections are intended to be private and for retirement village use only, being well-short of a public road standard. I would not support what I consider to be inadequate connectivity to the balance lot if it were to be instead available for future general residential development – users could only move between that and the residential neighbourhood by using Station Road, a highly inefficient outcome especially given the commercial node is the most likely destination sought from the balance lot in that scenario. It is not clear to me whether or how the Panel could only allow the balance lot to be developed in the future as a retirement village expansion. If it cannot, and the balance lot remains the subject of potential future

residential development unrelated to the retirement village, an additional public road link connecting the balance lot through the retirement village to the eastern residential neighbourhood would be required. The most obvious path would be to continue a road westwards along the northern side of the proposed Greenway / southern side of the retirement village, subject to integration with stormwater facilities and ponds. **I recommend that provision be required for an additional public road link along the southern retirement village / Greenway boundary , connecting the balance lot to Road 7 at Lot 371 (with a condition secured by consent notice registered on the balance lot requiring that road, if formed, to also connect through the balance lot to Station Road when and if the balance lot is developed). If at such time as the balance lot comes to be developed, this road could be either formed / vested (if non-retirement village development eventuated), or alternatively released back to the retirement village for development (if a retirement village extension eventuated).**

- (j) I agree that there is no need for future connectivity to be shown on the western side of the balance lot.
- (k) I disagree that the proposal provides appropriate connectivity to the south. In its response to my query B&A refer to the Eldonwood South Structure Plan to support no provision of any linkage. This is not in my opinion sufficient:
 - (i) The Eldonwood South Structure Plan did not show a road connection to the Site's southern boundary as a requirement; but nor did it state that no roads other than or additional to those indicated would be appropriate.
 - (ii) The structure plan is dated 2016, and contemplated only rural-residential type activities on the land. It did not include a commercial node / de-facto commercial centre, something that users of adjacent land and outside of the Site would likely find a useful amenity that contributed to a well-functioning urban environment.

- (iii) The argument to not provide connectivity to the south is undermined by the way the proposal has itself taken practical advantage of numerous road connections to its north that historically enabled future connectivity to the Site.
- (l) Following on from that, I consider that provision of urban residential activities, public open spaces, and a commercial node on the Site will create a much higher demand for users of external sites to travel into the Site, and this is a materially different proposition than what was ever contemplated by the Eldonwood South Structure Plan.
- (m) Although it is not known when or if land south of the Site may be developed (even if for rural residential activities displaced from the Site by the current proposal), the scale and intensity of urban residential development proposed on the Site warrants reasonable provision of future connectivity and spatial integration.
- (n) **I recommend that as a minimum, Road 10 (adjacent to Lots 173 and 174), and Road 13 (adjacent to Lot 46) be continued to the Site's southern boundary. Road 10 gives direct access to the commercial node and north to Station Road, and Road 13 is the Peakedale Drive axis.** I would have no objection to these 'stubs' remaining unformed but vested in the interim until they were connected from the south. For reference, the southern boundary of the proposed residential area is approximately 610m in length, with two road connections equating to a rough average of one road per 300m of boundary length. This is not unusual - in fact relatively 'light' - in a greenfield urban environment noting typical urban blocks vary between (40m-60m(w) x 150m-200m(l)).

12. SUBDIVISION AND DEVELOPMENT

- 12.1 I am in agreement with the B&A assessment of the general layout proposed, and the outcomes sought for subsequent development of allotments.
- 12.2 The content of the proposed Design Guideline addresses the built form and urban design-related effects and outcomes I would expect, and I am generally comfortable with those.

13. MATTERS OF UNCERTAINTY

- 13.1 The B&A 21 October memo did not respond to all queries I had asked. The following matters have not been resolved, and in the interests of seeking to assist the Panel, I have offered an indication of my opinion based on the understanding I currently have:
- (a) The guidelines specify applicable development controls on the residential allotments but do not include reference to maximum building height (it does include guidance on how to consider height, just not a maximum height limit). That is however listed in the proposed conditions of consent along with all of the other development controls. It is not clear why the guideline omits reference to building height from the development controls. I consider omitting some of the controls set out in the conditions from the design guidelines introduces ambiguity that should be avoided.
 - (b) More generally, the guideline is written in a manner that does not make it clear what aspects are intended to be for negotiation or design discussion / developer approval, and what aspects are intended to be fixed requirements. I recommend that the guideline language be improved to make it clear what matters are not or can not be exceeded (the maximum limits of the development controls).
 - (c) It is my understanding that the purpose of the guidelines and proposed development controls is that individual allotment purchasers will be free to design their own dwelling. In this context the proposed architectural housing typology plans are 'acceptable solutions' or just indicative rather than what is required. I do not fully understand the rationale for condition (23) and its advice note indicating that up to a 10% increase or decrease in "floor area", and internal and external changes to the unit are provided for under the banner of the phrase "generally comply". If the typologies are indicative and home-builders can design within the approved standards it is not clear why the advice note is required.
 - (d) Mr. Rademeyer has informed me of his understanding that the Applicant may consider the condition (23) advice note allows the proposed development controls (subject to a "generally comply" phrase) to all be changeable by up to 10% (i.e. the maximum building

control sought could be 9.9m). **I do not agree with such an ambiguous approach and recommend that:**

- (i) **maximum standards be stated clearly as their maximum total limit(s), rather than be subject to additional tolerance(s);**
- (ii) **that the condition 23 advice note be otherwise clarified; and**
- (iii) **in terms of administering the development controls, these should be expressed in the conditions and the guideline using the language of “shall not be exceeded” rather than “generally comply”, given they are maximum thresholds I have relied on to evaluate maximum-possible adverse built form effects.**

- (e) It is my understanding that the Council would have no role in the assessment of dwelling proposals under the design guideline, which would be a purely developer-run process. I have no objection to this, on the basis that the overall parameters of building bulk and location, and landscaping, fencing, and screening for neighbours are subject to clear consent conditions under the management of the Council rather than being left for a fully-private (and closed to neighbour input) design guideline review.

- 13.2 It is also not clear to me where, in the detail, final matters such as water tanks or other utility services may be located. It would be inappropriate if, for instance, key roads became visually cluttered in ways the B&A assessment assumes will not occur. To that end, **I recommend that no water tanks, accessory buildings other than garages in accordance with the design guidelines, or other utilities be permitted in front of or in between buildings and any public road or private road / accessway (this excludes utilities that are operationally required and located within the road reserve space).**

14. CONCLUSION

- 14.1 I have reviewed the proposal and recognise the additional effort the Applicant has gone to in responding to my urban design questions and queries.

14.2 There is much of the B&A urban design assessment that I agree with. Specifically:

- (a) The Site has the urban design capability to accommodate an urban residential-density development including a commercial node and a retirement village.
- (b) The internal layout proposed is appropriate and generally makes sense.
- (c) There are urban design benefits to promoting more housing choice and variety in Matamata and in urban design terms, other than it is what the relevant planning documents seek on the land, rural-residential development does not of itself present inherent urban design.
- (d) The general internal Site layout proposed is appropriate.

14.3 I have identified a number of recommendations necessary to avoid, remedy or mitigate potential adverse urban form effects or otherwise achieve acceptable outcomes in light of the relevant planning documents. In summary my recommended changes are:

External boundary interface

- (a) Except for the external boundaries east of the Peakedale Drive axis and the vacant balance lot west of the retirement village, allotments adjoining the Site's external boundaries should be in the range of 1,200m² – 1,800m² (average 1,500m²), including a minimum 8m boundary setback, and minimum 3m side yard setback. The retirement village already proposes sufficient setbacks from the relevant external boundary and between buildings in this regard.
- (b) Except for the balance lot west of the retirement village, and including the eastern side of the retirement village, all rear yard setbacks should be densely landscaped for a minimum depth of 4m from the external Site boundary, and on all external side and rear Site boundaries a solid, minimum 1.5m height boundary fence should be provided.

Commercial node timing

- (c) The commercial node should be developed, including if only initially in-part, as soon as it is possible for the developer to do so after the commencement of development on the Site.

Pedestrian / cycle links

- (d) A pedestrian / cycle linkage to Highgrove Avenue in the vicinity of Lots 383 and 384 should be provided. This, and the separate pedestrian / cycle link proposed to Eldonwood Drive, should have a minimum 6m width space; be subject to the boundary / fencing controls that are proposed to apply along street frontages; and include suitable lighting to enable night-time use.

Integrating the balance lot

- (e) An additional public road link should be provided generally along the southern retirement village / Greenway boundary connecting the balance lot to Road 7 at Lot 371 (“Road 7 connection”).
- (f) The balance lot should be subject to a consent notice or similar requiring that, if and when developed and if other than for a retirement village extension, the Road 7 connection described above should be continued through the balance lot to Station Road.
- (g) The Road 7 connection should be held as balance land on the retirement village site until such time as the balance lot is developed. If the balance lot is developed as a retirement village extension, then the requirement for the Road 7 connection will cease to apply and the land can be additionally subject to retirement village development. But if the balance lot is developed other than as a retirement village extension, the road shall be formed and vested in Council at that time.

External road connectivity to the south

- (h) Road 10 (adjacent to Lots 173 and 174) and Road 13 (adjacent to Lot 46) should be continued to the Site’s southern boundary.

Matters of uncertainty

- (i) The conditions and design guidelines should be clarified and made clearer, along with the role and purpose of the residential dwelling typology plans.

- (j) No water tanks, accessory buildings other than garages in accordance with the design guidelines, or other utilities should be permitted in front of or in between buildings and any public road or private road / accessway (this excludes utilities that are operationally required and located within the road reserve space).

14.4 However although I have identified changes to the proposal that would allow me to support it, those changes are cumulatively significant and I am concerned at unintentionally promoting a 'Clayton's consent' that is in fact a refusal to what has been sought. To that end my overall recommendation based on the application as it stands is that it be **refused** based on:

- (a) Insufficient reflection of relevant planning outcomes relating to connectivity and achievement of an appropriately compatible density interface at external Site boundaries; and
- (b) Insufficiently avoided, remedied or mitigated adverse effects resulting from the scale and density of development proposed on rural and rural-residential zoned land, on neighbouring rural and rural residential zoned land.
- (c) As noted earlier in my evidence, in urban design terms the proposal is contrary to the built form outcomes sought for the rural and rural-residential zones as set out within the District Plan, but the consequence of this falls to a professional planning appraisal rather than an urban design one.

Ian Colin Munro

11 November 2025



APPENDIX 1 - Qualifications and Experience



ianmunro

- › **strategic planning**
- › **urban development & growth frameworks**
- › **urban design advice and training**
- › **land use - transport integration**
- › **resource management & statutory policy making**
- › **consultation, facilitation, and public engagement**
- › **independent commissioner**

CAREER SUMMARY

Ian is a senior urban planner and urban designer who has had the opportunity to work across New Zealand including in all of the major centres and many of the provincial centres. Ian's background includes extensive resource management and an emphasis on basing solutions on the opportunities and realities of the circumstance.

- › 2000-2001: *Auckland City Council: planner*
- › 2001-2005: *North Shore City Council: planner / senior planner*
- › 2005-2014: *Urbanismplus Ltd: urban designer / senior associate*
- › 2014-present: *Self-employed urban designer and planner*

KEY FACTS

- › Guest lecturer / tutor / professional teaching fellow, University of Auckland courses in planning and urban design annually since 2001.
- › Presenter / co-presenter, NZPI® annual urban design CPD courses since 2010, and direct training sessions with individual Councils.
- › Co-author, urban design chapter in *Planning Practice in New Zealand*, LexisNexis, 2017 (NZPI® John Mawson Award of Merit, 2018) .
- › Contributor to numerous professional articles and conference presentations including NZPI® Planning Quarterly, Urban, NZJEL and IPENZ. Most Recently co-authored "*The Drury Creek Islands: a case study on the benefits of trading up ecological offsets*", in RMLA Journal, November 2021.
- › Extensive experience in greenfield structure planning and urban re-zoning including, in a variety of roles, new neighbourhoods at Flat Bush, Hingaia, Warkworth, Massey North / Hobsonville, Drury West, Takanini (Auckland); Rotokauri (Hamilton); Jacks Point, Hanley's Farm, 3-Parks, Northlake, (Queenstown).
- › Involved in over 2,500 planning proposals and has extensive experience with the resource management process across New Zealand.
- › As a hearings commissioner, has made or contributed to over 500 decisions on consent and plan change applications since 2007 for Auckland Council, Thames Coromandel District Council, Waikato District Council, Hutt City Council, Porirua City Council, Christchurch City Council and Queenstown Lakes District Council.
- › Contributor to NZPI® award-winning projects: *Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy* (2008); *Auckland City Council's Liveable Arterials* (2009); *Marlborough District Council's Growing Marlborough* (2011); *Christchurch City Council's Sydenham and Lyttleton's master plans* (2012).

QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

2013 - University of Auckland
Master of Transport Engineering Studies (Hons).

2010 - University of Auckland
Master of Environmental Legal Studies (Hons) (Fowlds Memorial Prize*).

2005 - University of Auckland
Master of Architecture [Urban Design] (Hons).

2003 - University of Auckland
Master of Planning (Hons).

2002 - University of Auckland
Bachelor of Planning (Hons) (Senior Scholar in Planning**).

* Most distinguished Masters / Honours student in the Faculty of Law

** Most distinguished Bachelors student in the School of Planning

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

2020 - *Distinguished Service Award*, New Zealand Planning Institute.

2005 → *Full Member New Zealand Planning Institute.*

2005 → *Ministry for the Environment Making Good Decisions RMA Certification.*

APPENDIX 2 – Request for Clarifications, 3 September 2025**ianmunro**68B Clarence Road
Northcote Point
North Shore
AUCKLAND 0627

3 SEPTEMBER 2025

MATAMATA PIKO DISTRICT COUNCIL
ATTN: MARIUS RADEMEYER
BY E-MAIL

Dear Marius

ASHBORNE FAST TRACK CONSENT APPLICATION – URBAN DESIGN QUERIES

1. Thank you for providing me with the application and asking me to identify any additional information required to assess the proposal's merit.
2. The following is requested:

Assessment framework

3. The Urban Design Assessment (“UDA”) explains the methodology followed and how project-specific design principles (3.1 of the UDA) were identified, including from the applicable planning framework of national, regional and council documents. I request the following:
 - a. The UDA presents a number of design principles that synthesise many statutory Plan matters as well as non-statutory industry good practice thinking. That is of itself fairly typical. Please identify any particular important statutory urban design outcomes called for by the planning documents (including in terms of land subdivision) that the proposal responds to.

Connectivity, legibility and accessibility

4. One identified design principle used in the UDA is “connectivity, legibility and accessibility”. This is explained in the UDA as meaning (amongst other things) “a *well-connected street and pathway network that prioritises walking, cycling, and accessibility....*”. Please explain how this principle has been used to determine what external connectivity to the Site should be provided. Of particular interest are:

- a. The proposed lack of any connections at all south of the Site (potentially making the Site boundary a permanent severance in the event of any future urban growth occurring in Matamata beyond the timeframe of interest to the Applicant);
- b. That the balance lot west of the retirement village seems only accessible from Station Road and not from the Site itself (unless in the specific potential case of the balance lot being used as a retirement village extension). Related to this, please explain how the balance lot will be integrated into the neighbourhood;
- c. Why existing roads extending to the Site are in some cases not to be connected to or are only to be partially connected for certain travel modes;
- d. What if any connectivity through the large solar farm areas was considered or may be appropriate;
- e. Are any pedestrian or cycle upgrades along Station Road to the Site's access points proposed;
- f. In the Master Plan report accompanying the UDA, figure 4 (section 1.5) identified a 'cultural narrative opportunity' for a green connection east of the proposed greenway through to the Site's eastern boundary. As far as I can ascertain this conceptual connection has not been provided for. An explanation of why is requested given it was a product of the project's own urban design analysis following their identified principles;
- g. In the Master Plan report at figure 10 (section 3.4) a high-level key-connectivity outcome for the Site is shown that integrates a link through the proposed retirement village to Station Road. Please confirm that the 'through link' from Station Road through the retirement village site to the residential precinct will be available for all modes and including the public, or whether it is intended to be gated or secured for residents only.
 - i. If the former, please explain why no public roads are proposed in the retirement village area;
 - ii. If the latter, please explain the consequences of this in terms of the opportunity identified in figure 10 (which does not indicate a lesser degree of connectivity through the retirement village than other key connections shown).

Explanation of proposed layout decisions

5. At face value the proposal includes some outcomes that appear atypical. This is not to suggest they are considered inappropriate, but the reasoning behind the various decisions made would be most helpful. Specifically:
 - a. Why a transition of density is identified as relevant and has been provided for on some sides of the Site but then not on others - notably the southern boundary. Relevant to my query is that under the assessment principle "diversity in housing and density", the explanation provided in the UDA states (my emphasis added) "*ensure appropriate density transitions that sensitively integrate higher-density areas around proposed local amenities and lower densities at interfaces with rural edges*" (i.e., not just rural-living edges).

- b. The retirement village will be higher density than much of the residential housing development proposed. Public connectivity is also generally more important in a publicly-accessible residential area than a retirement village where access-management is more common. But it is the residential housing development that has been positioned in that part of the Site that appears to present constrained connectivity (including pedestrian and cycle-only links to several adjacent roads), and which could potentially accommodate the highest densities due to its proximity to existing Matamata (i.e., using the UDA's principle of a 'gradient' or 'transition'). If the balance lot is planned to be used for the retirement village, this would further emphasise a 'reverse transition' of density being achieved across the development. I am certain that much thought went into the planning and layout, and to that end more explanation is requested of how and why the retirement village and residential development areas were 'landed'.

Commercial node

6. The commercial node has been relied on (at least in part) to support the proposed density adjacent to it as well as in terms of the overall appropriateness of the proposal. I understand that the application is for the commercial node to remain entirely 'optional' and that it may or may not be implemented in the event that consent is granted. The UDA only provides an assessment of the scenario that the commercial node does occur. Please provide an assessment of the scenario of the commercial node not occurring, including whether the higher-density lots argued in the UDA to be appropriate due to proximity to the commercial node should be changed and if so through what post-consent mechanism.

Development on residential allotments & Design Guidelines

7. It is not clear to me whether purchasers of a residential lot must construct the specific house typology ("residential typology designs") identified for that lot (which would seem to make the various "development conditions" proposed in conditions seem redundant) or whether those typologies are just one 'acceptable solution' to be consented, should the purchaser wish to construct that. If it is intended that the typologies shown are what must be constructed, then additional information is requested demonstrating how highly uniform or overly repetitive built form outcomes (i.e., what is colloquially often referred to as a 'cookie-cutter') will be avoided.
8. Subject to item (7) above, land use conditions governing development on the allotments are proposed. An explanation is requested of whether, and if so how, purchasers would / could go about 'infringing' any of those in the way that normal zone standards in a District Plan land use zone might be. Would non compliance trigger a s.127 variation of the whole consent or would there be some other mechanism (or in real-world terms would there simply be no means of 'non compliance')? If a form of resource consent approval is envisaged, please identify the activity status and any other assessment framework that might apply.
9. Ultimately and for the purposes of monitoring the consent (and subject to item (7) above, I understand that there are no actual proposed built form outcomes other than the proposed development standards that the Council could independently monitor (i.e., the guidelines are understood to all ultimately just be suggestions to inspire allotment purchasers, not requirements that must be achieved). I do not understand what the guidelines mean when they refer lot developers to the need for both building *and* resource consents. Please explain what additional resource consents are envisaged.

10. The guidelines document generally is not always consistent in terms of how some outcomes are described as if they were fixed requirements, and others as if they are things that are promoted or encouraged more generally. Please clarify what aspects of the guideline are intended to be fixed requirements, and what are not.
11. Please confirm whether it is envisaged that the Council is being expected to assess proposals for Building Consent against the Guidelines document for full compliance as well as the stated conditions of consent.

Public open space

12. In the event that the Council declines to accept some or all the various open spaces proposed *for a recreation purpose*, would these remain privately owned or revert to something something different? Would additional recreation purpose open spaces then need to be provided?

Strategic urban design

13. The western side of Matamata has been to date largely developing as a countryside living / rural-residential type 'transition' out from the existing urban area east of that (including via the Eldonwood Structure Plan). The proposal would be substantially different to that, and this may present both positive and negative urban design outcomes for Matamata. The Council's planning to date appears to have focused most development of the densities proposed on the eastern side of the village including because that is where employment activities are occurring. Please provide an explanation of the Matamata-wide merits of the proposal including in terms of:
 - a. Any urban form, character, or functionality effects arising from introducing relatively high-density development in the western fringe of Matamata including in terms of its compatibility with the rural-residential development that has occurred previously.
 - b. Any urban form effects arising from the proposed commercial node as a de-facto centre for west Matamata;
 - c. Are the solar farms de-facto urban edges / barriers that would inhibit well-functioning urban form patterns beyond them;
 - d. Would the proposal proceeding warrant reconsideration of future growth for Matamata noting that much land identified by the Council to date has not yet been zoned;
 - e. How important are the proposed connections to the Site's Stage 1 eastern boundary (towards Firth Street) in the longer-term of integrating the proposal into the town? Or are those envisaged only as providing opportunity for an immediate neighbour to connect to the network rather than through to Firth Street?

Please feel welcome to contact me should you wish to discuss any aspect of the above further.

Yours sincerely,

**IAN MUNRO**

urban planner and urban designer

B.Plan (Hons); M.Plan (Hons); M.Arch [Urban Design] (Hons); M.EnvLS (Hons); M.EngSt
[Transport] (Hons); MNZPI(e) ian@ianmunro.nz

(m) 021 900 993



APPENDIX 3 – Urban Design references and limitations

- a. This report is limited by the information provided at the time of writing and any responsibility for ensuring the correctness of that information rests with the party or parties that produced it. Specific reliance has been placed on architectural, landscape, planning and engineering advice provided by the Applicant.
- b. This report has been prepared solely for use in the context of the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024 and the application made for fast track consent by Matamata Development Ltd at Station Road, Matamata. To that end:
 - i. The report focuses on whether the proposal is acceptable through an urban design lens, but only in terms of the RMA matters that apply and only to the extent that those matters reasonably provide for or seek urban design outcomes.
 - ii. The report does not offer a ‘pure’ urban design assessment based only on best-practice or ‘text-book’ urban design preferences that might otherwise generally apply.
 - iii. In consequence it could be possible at one extreme for support to be given to a proposal that was poor in general urban design terms but which satisfied all applicable RMA matters; and at the other extreme a proposal could be opposed even if it was quite successful in general urban design terms but failed the applicable RMA matters.
- c. Unless otherwise specified in this report due to the presence a superseding project-specific definition, “urban design” at a large spatial scale relates to configuring physical space and land use activities to maximise exchange opportunities between people and communities as efficiently and comfortably as possible (i.e., live, work, play, travel), whilst simultaneously providing for the highest possible levels of character and distinctiveness. At a detailed level, it relates to configuring physical space to maximise the quality, safety, and prominence of public (or publicly usable) spaces, including the integration of development on adjoining private spaces. Some contributing authorities are:
 - i. Carmona, M., et. al., 2021, *Public Places Urban Spaces: The Dimensions of Urban Design* (3rd ed.).
 - ii. Couch. C., 2016, *Urban Planning: An Introduction* (2nd ed).
 - iii. Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, State of Western Australia, *Liveable Neighbourhoods*, www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/liveable-neighbourhoods, January 2024.
 - iv. Department of Transport and Planning, State of Victoria, *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria*, www.planning.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources, January 2024.
 - v. Larice, M., and Macdonald, E., (editors), 2012, *The Urban Design Reader* (2nd ed).
 - vi. Miller. C., and Beatie. L., (editors) 2022, *Planning Practice in New Zealand* (chapter 14) (2nd ed).
 - vii. Ministry for the Environment, 2003, *People Places Spaces: A Design Guide for Urban New Zealand*.
 - viii. Ministry for the Environment, 2005, *Urban Design Protocol*.
 - ix. Ministry of Justice, 2005, National Guidelines for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design in New Zealand, *Part 1: Seven Qualities of Safer Places*.