

PRE-APPLICATION MEETING NOTES

To	Gordonton Country Estate Limited
From	Josef Holland , Senior Planner (consents)
Subject	Pre Application Advice for 57 Piako Road GORDONTON
File	PRE0022/25
Date	3 October 2024

Introduction

A meeting was held on the 26 September 2024 to discuss a proposal to a retirement village on the site legally described as LOT 3 DP 328606, LOT 4 DP 328606 and LOT 2 DP 481700.

In Attendance:

WDC

Deborah McIntosh – Consents Team Leader
Josef Holland – Senior Consents Planner
Matthew Horsfield – Reserves Planner
David Bastion – Land Development Team Leader
Justin Smit – Land Development Team Leader

Agents

Rebecca Shaw – Planner
Fraser McNutt – Associate

Agent's Overview

The proposed site is of irregular shape and is approximately 66.55Ha. The site has a relatively flat topography with no notable stands of vegetation. The site is identified to have a stream/ water body running along the west boundary adjoining with the Gordonton village.

The site is zoned as 'Rural' under the Waikato Operative District Plan (ODP) and General Rural Zone under the Waikato Proposed District Plan – Appeals Version (PDP-AV).

The site adjoins Gordonton Primary School to the north also identified as Designation C31 under the ODP and Designation MEDU-29 under the PDP-AV. The site is also applicable to a Site of Significance to Maaori (item 284) which is detailed to be the Otaahua Paa and is described as a Paa site with shallow ditch, depressions and a small terrace.



Proposal

It is sought to establish a retirement village/estate which has a point of difference to reflect the rural values and attributes of the site and surrounding locality. This shall include grazing land in and around the site to break up what would be the typical perception of a retirement village. An additional point of difference is also ensuring the site provides connectivity with the village of Gordonton through pedestrian walk ways and/or cycle ways.

The aim is creating a unique village/estate style layout with 7 or so 'clusters' of housing. Each cluster is intended to be of approximately 6Ha and having a density of approximately 15 -20 units per hectare (approximately 94 housings/ units per cluster (659 housings/units total)) as seen in Figure 5 below.

It is intended to provide on-site amenities/ facilities including a communal facility with the main centre offering typical village amenities, cafe, apartment style accommodation and further health care provision.

In terms of servicing Stormwater drainage can be provided for GRV, through wetlands, ground water recharge and piped stormwater networks. Overland flow paths will be managed through the development, and it will reduce any potential flooding risks. An overarching stormwater strategy has been developed, and this sets out the high-level, best practice approach for stormwater management within the catchment

Wastewater drainage can be provided for GRV, though piped networks that will drain to the onsite MBR plant for wastewater treatment. Treated greywater will discharge to the stormwater wetland and the treated sludge will be removed and disposed at the nearest landfill periodically.

Potable water supply GRV retirement village units roof water tank collection. Firefighting supply will be provided through a pressured firefighting watermain network through the development.

Matters arising from the Meeting:

Planning

National Policy Statement: Highly Productive Land (NPS-HPL)– Planning Pathway

The agents have engaged a soils specialist – this topic was not discussed in any further detail in the meeting. However, if the proposal is lodged as a land use consent, it will require a sufficiently detailed assessment – e.g. a Agri economist/ Soil Scientist (Soil and Land Use Assessment).

From an NPS-HPL perspective, Council did not indicate any degree of support for the proposal in the meeting. This would be a challenging application, and there is a risk that the application could be overall declined under s104, given the apparent likely high impact on productive land, which is also sought to be protected under both current district plans – in particular the Proposed District Plan.

Objectives and Policies

The Agents are aware of the strategic planning policy challenges of this proposal, given the activity is not anticipated or provided for in the rural zone. Although not discussed in the meeting, both our district plans contain strong provisions protecting rural land for rural purposes. On face value, it appears the proposal would likely be inconsistent with most or all relevant objectives and policies under the Proposed District Plan - appeals version (PDP).

If the application was lodged as a fast-track application with The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), Council is likely to be consulted as part of the process. Council's submission would likely include matters which would affect Council, including potential impacts on our existing planning framework (including the above).

Visual and Landscape

Given the site's location, the boundaries of the site will have an expansive interface with the rural environment. Given the scale and nature of the proposal, there will be a clear impact on rural character and amenity, in particular visual effects. Council will be interested to know the degree of effects, and any mitigation proposed such as landscaping. The assessment should consider the height of buildings, and if they will be visible within the wider environment.

Urban Design/Layout

It was briefly discussed the application would include some form of internal urban design assessment.

Noise

An acoustic report would be useful in order to understand the potential effects of the proposal, given the activity is not provided for or anticipated in this zone under both district plans (operative and proposed). There is potential for the proposal to impact on rural character and amenity – given this is not a rural land use.

Ecological

The agent has engaged an ecological expert, given it is likely that the proposal will trigger resource consent under the Waikato Regional Plan for matters such as bulk earthworks, an impacts on waterways.

Engineering

The LDE's noted that this subject site as well as neighbouring properties have been the subject of planning and zoning discussions in the recent past and with the recent District Plan Changes, it would be challenging to comment on the engineering, without first understanding the planning requirements as these rules would drive the ultimate engineering solution/s and therefore all discussions would be based on high level assumptions.

Wastewater

There is no Council wastewater network located nearby for this subject site to connect into.

The Applicant's agents have engaged with Waikato Regional Council, given the proposed wastewater system will trigger resource consent under the Waikato Regional Plan.

No indication of support for MBR Plant was indicated in the meeting by Council, and this would require further investigation and engagement with WRC and the Councils Water and Infrastructure Development Team.

Traffic and Roading

It appears the proposal will provide no pedestrian connection to the Gordonton urban area – given there is no footpath on Piako Road, noting that the Piako Road bridge near the site is too narrow for a footpath. The Applicant should investigate how a pedestrian could be created as part of the proposal.

If no pedestrian connection could be established, it is unclear how the proposal could plausibly be presented as integrating with the existing urban area, which is key reason for locating. The applicant was advised to engage Council's Roading and Infrastructure Development Team for further advice.

Stormwater and Flooding

The site is known to be subject to flooding based on WRC records, and will require further site-specific investigation including understanding soil compositions, seasonal peak water tables and infiltration.

The Applicant has engaged a suitable engineer to assess this. There is a farm drain located on the eastern boundary of the subject site which is under WRC control.

Water and Firefighting

The water supply in Gordonton is a mixture of full supply and restricted flow and managed by Hamilton City Council (HCC) via agreement with WDC. It is understood by the LDE team that any further connection from the restricted supply located in this supply zone would require HCC approval and that HCC had indicated they would not support further connections due to pressure and capacity concerns. The applicant was advised to engage Council's Water and Infrastructure Development Team.

It is recommended to seek comment from the NZ Fire service, given the lack of reticulated public water supply.

Public access points for walking & cycling

- Further details are needed on the connection/ infrastructure needed to provide cycling and walking connections from the development to the Gordonton Village centre via Piako Road.
- No pedestrian access is provided down Piako Road in the form of a footpath. Council would expect the developer to provide this.

Sightlines along Piako Road

- Council noted that there may be consent notice protecting the adjoining land and the sight lines along Piako Road. This relates to a granted subdivision consent, which may not have been given effect to as yet.

Parks & Open Space

The potential vesting of a reserve, and possible pedestrian connection through the site to Gordonton Reserve was discussed.

Council was interested to know the adjoining land ownership of LOT 5 DP 328606 BLK VI KOMAKORAU SD which is not owned by the Applicant. The footpath would not be able to connect with Gordonton Reserve, unless legal rights over this property were established. It is suggested the Applicant should discuss with this land owner, and then engage with council.

Hazardous Activities and Industries List (HAIL)

Given the change of use, the Application will need to include an appropriate expert assessment – as required by the Resource Management (National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health) Regulations 2011.

Cultural Impact and archaeology

The Applicant's agents have engaged an expert to investigate this.

Consultation

It is recommended that consultation is undertaken with;

- Council's transportation team and NZTA given the clear potential impacts (that will need to be quantified by a transportation engineer) on the transportation network, including state highway 1B. It is likely some form of intersection upgrade will be required due to potential safety impacts.
- Watercare

- Councils Reserves team
- Relevant Iwi/Hapu

If the application was lodged as a land use consent, there would be a high probability that the application would require some form of notification, which would most likely be publicly notification. Given the scale of the proposal, and that the site is zoned rural, the proposal is akin to the scale of a private plan change.

Development Contributions

Development contributions are a payment made to the Council to pay for the impact that new developments have on services and infrastructure, such as water supply and wastewater. Development contributions are set through the prescribed Local Government Act 2002 process.

For further information regarding development contributions please visit Council's website or send enquiries to developmentcontributions@waidc.govt.nz

Lodgement fee for a Resource Consent Application

The current lodgement fee for making the resource consent application is \$3,800.

Note: This fee is just a deposit and additional fees can be charged to recover the actual and reasonable costs incurred by the Council in receiving and processing the application and in issuing decisions and monitoring performance of consent conditions.

Please refer to Council's Fees and Charges Schedule immediately prior to lodging your application

Pre Application Fees

You have paid a lodgement fee for this application. However this is not a fixed fee and there will be additional charges.

An invoice will be sent to you at the completion of your request detailing the costs involved.

Disclaimer: The advice you will receive from Council is limited to the information you provide in this application, any further information you may supply at a pre application meeting and which is relevant to the provisions of any plan or proposed plan in existence at the time of the pre application meeting. Council does not accept any legal liability for any advice or view expressed by Council at the pre application meeting and any advice or view expressed is subject to further reconsideration by Council after the application is lodged. Prior to lodging any application under s88 of the RMA, applicants are advised to seek their own independent legal and planning advice in relation to all matters covered by the pre application meeting, and in the event the proposal changes or there is a delay in lodging any application. .