



Hastings/Havelock North Branch of Forest & Bird Society

14th July 2025

To whom it may concern,

We are writing in relation to Arataki (The Project) currently being progressed through the Fast Track Approval process, details of which we have located at <https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals/fast-track-projects/arataki-the-project/#application-and-supporting-documents>

Forest & Bird Hastings Havelock North branch are an interested party to this development as we lease part of the property currently identified as "Shaggy Range" on the plans lodged to date. In that capacity, we support the owners of Shaggy Range in trying to achieve good environmental outcomes for this development.

More generally, we believe that good residential development planning should incorporate biodiversity goals and nature-based solutions to not only create more resilient urban environments but to improve the wellbeing and quality of life of residents. We would specifically mention here the set of principles under the Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD), an approach that is being adopted across other councils in Aotearoa New Zealand including the Wellington City Council - <https://wellington.govt.nz/climate-change-sustainability-environment/water/stormwater/water-sensitive-urban-design-guide>.

We have reviewed documents lodged via the FastTrack Approval process to date, as well as the consultation letter provided by Woods to affected residents dated 5 May 2025, and have identified a number ways that good biodiversity and nature-based solutions could be easily incorporated into the development.

1. Achieving good biodiversity outcomes

The site runs somewhat parallel to the Karituwhenua Stream and it offers a natural stepping stone from Te Mata Peak, i.e. past the existing Arataki Link Reserve, to enable birdlife to travel across the motu. We believe the presence of native birdlife will significantly add to the quality of life of people residing in the area, which will indeed add value to the properties themselves. Our specific recommendations include:

- a. That consideration be given by Hastings District Council to plant their existing 10metre reserve that extends from Brookvale Road through to the property identified as "Shaggy Range" in native trees. We encourage the developer to push for this outcome and to take on the responsibility of planting out this section of the north/east boundary as part of their biodiversity and quality of life objectives for this project.
- b. We encourage the developer to plant native trees along the 10metre vegetated buffer zone that runs along the boundaries of Shaggy Range and the adjacent orchard
- c. We encourage the developer to plant out the drainage reserves in native trees

The cumulative effect of 'a', 'b' and 'c' is to create a significant swathe of native plantings that will go a long way to attracting native bird life to the area.

- d. We encourage the adoption of best practice when planting out the above areas in natives, and we suggest these be incorporated into the planning process and consent conditions:
 - i. Plantings no more than 1 metre apart (this will likely require thousands not hundreds of plants)
 - ii. A range of plant types to be used (refer schedule 1) of no less than PB2 size
 - iii. Each plant to be encased with a cardboard protector to minimise animal damage and weed growth in the first year of planting
 - iv. A minimum 12 months of plant husbandry to give plants the best chance of survival, including weed releasing and watering during summer months

2. Storm water management and water retention

We note that the initial plans lodged show a great emphasis has been placed on the 3 "drainage" reserves to mitigate the effects of heavy rain fall. The consultation letter dated 5th May 2025 from Woods indicates these are being replaced with a single larger drainage reserve at the Brookvale Road end of the development. Whilst this may help to service the development as a whole, we believe additional measures should be taken to manage water on each individual section/property through the requirement for water detention/retention systems. The benefits of this are not only to moderate water flows during periods of high rain fall, but to provide a secondary source of water in periods of low rain fall.

3. Minimising runoff of residential contaminants

Urban areas are a huge collector of contaminants that, without effective ways to capture and retain/manage in situ, will runoff into surrounding waterways affecting water quality. The development presented to date shows medium-density housing, with significant loss of permeable ground. All options should be considered to minimise runoff of residential contaminants. For example, driveway strips rather than fully concreted driveways.

In summary we urge the developer/technical experts, independent expert panel, and local authorities to consider the above when assessing and applying conditions to this development under the Fast Track Approval process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours faithfully,



Greg Donnison, Acting Chairperson

Forest & Bird Hastings/Havelock North Branch



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Schedule 1 – Plant Species

In order to provide a year-round source of food for native bird life a range of species should be accommodated. This could include:

Larger sized plants

Totara
Rimu
Miro
Matai
Titoki
Puriri
Pohutakawa
Kowhai
Kanuka
Karaka
Rewarewa
Putaputaweta
Wineberry
Whau
Cabbage trees

Medium sized plants:

Pittosporum
Five finger
Griselinia
Kawakawa
Red matipo
Manuka
Coprosma varieties
Corokia
Mahoe