

7 February 2025

Ministry for the Environment
Attn: Listed Projects Team
Via email: listedprojects@mfe.govt.nz

To Whom It May Concern,

Ashbourne Fast Track Referral Application Covering Letter

This letter accompanies, and is in support of, the Fast Track Referral Application package for *Ashbourne*, on behalf of Unity Developments. We believe our application supports the delivery of a development and infrastructure project that will deliver significant regional benefits, including but are not limited to:

- Increasing housing supply in Matamata where a long-term housing shortfall has been identified¹;
- Delivery of multi-generational living with a diverse mix of housing typologies to suit families of various sizes and aged-care retirement village to address housing needs;
- Creation of a well-functioning urban environment with a neighbourhood centre and commercial node at the heart of the development, which will support the local economy beyond the construction of the project;
- Providing development in a rural Waikato town that has a strong sense of community, thriving commercial economy and a growing population;
- Enhancement of the natural environment through the design which seeks to weave natural space through the development via the greenway and shared spaces;
- Innovative design to address climate change and natural hazards, such as inclusion of two solar farms and stormwater design;
- Promotion of active modes of travel to address climate change, with walking and cycling connections across the development but specifically through the Greenway;
- Integration of cultural values through engagement of Mana Whenua, cultural design and cultural protocols ;
- Generation of a wide range of economic benefits, such as providing a direct boost in housing supply to meet growing demand, meeting the needs of an evolving population, and contributing to the recovery of significant infrastructure costs; and
- Alignment with local and regional planning documents, such as Waikato Regional Policy Statement, Future Proof Strategy, and Town Strategies 2013 – 2033 for Matamata.

¹ Housing Assessment 2022, Matamata-Piako District Council [June 2022].

Unity Developments

Unity Developments, the applicant, are a land development company who specialise in transforming greenfield areas into vibrant, developed sites in a sustainable and innovative way. Unity Developments is a collaboration of land development experts and investors, unified through a collective goal.

The vision of Unity Developments is to *create developments that are sympathetic to the area that harness existing natural land and features, identify opportunities for innovative design and establishing new neighbourhoods and communities people want to live in.*

The team behind Unity Developments have experience in delivering master planned residential communities, are well financed to deliver on their developments, and have formed strategic partnerships to bring in experts in specialised areas. Unity work collaboratively with local authorities, planners, architects, engineers and other specialists to provide high-quality developments with amenities and facilitates that will foster flourishing communities. At the forefront of their designs are their key brand pillars: Opportunity, Sustainability, and Innovation.

s 9(2)(b)(ii)

A number of letters accompany the referral application s 9(2)(b)(ii) to confirm this and outline their support for **Ashbourne** to proceed under the Fast-track Approvals Bill.

Ashbourne

Ashbourne is a multi-use urban development located on the fringes of Matamata, offering a balance of tranquillity and convenience for its future residents. The new community will enjoy the serene countryside of the Waikato, while having easy access to urban amenities as it sits just 1.8 kilometres to the south-west of the centre of Matamata.

Fresh and innovative thinking has formed the masterplan for **Ashbourne** which includes four key precincts:

- (1) A new residential community, comprising circa 520 new residential units with a variety of densities, a green space and a commercial node;
- (2) A multi-functional greenway that weaves from the neighbourhood centre and commercial node to the Waitoa River on the site's western boundary, with an active-mode pathway along the length;
- (3) A retirement living core, comprising 218 units, a hospital, and additional supporting facilities that will be provided across a staged development; and
- (4) Two solar farms which will provide a sustainable energy resource onsite, with the potential to integrate into the wider electricity network to generate energy outside of the immediate development.

Integration and interconnectedness underpins **Ashbourne**, with the branding reflecting this, as shown in **Figure 1**. The four studs symbolise the four distinct precincts of **Ashbourne** to recognise the dynamic and interconnected spaces that make it a truly unique and innovative place to live.

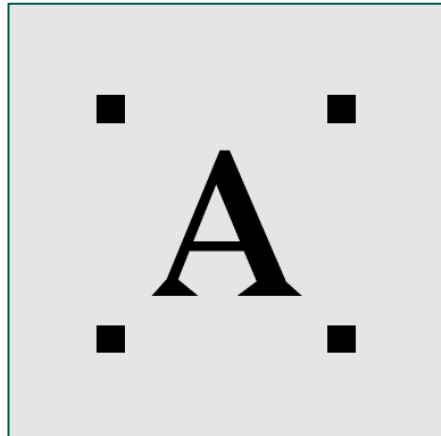


Figure 1: Ashbourne Studded Icon Logo.

Conclusion

The Fast Track Referral Application package for *Ashbourne*, is accompanied by a suite of specialist memorandums which summarise the specific aspects of the proposal, provide a high level assessment of statutory and non-statutory documents, consider the potential effects of the proposal and potential mitigation, and the deliverability of this project.

Our project team is ready to prepare a comprehensive resource consent application that best utilises the fast-track process to ensure *Ashbourne* is delivered in a more timely and cost-efficient way.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet and present our application in further detail along with continuing to working collaboratively with Ministry for the Environment and affected parties by the project.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please feel free to touch base.

Yours sincerely | Nā māua noa, nā

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s 9(2)(a)

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