

# Memorandum 5

**To:** The Expert Panel for the Ashbourne Fast-Track Application

**From:** Bronwyn Rhynd/ John Sternberg (CKL Consultants Ltd) and  
Tony Cowbourne (Terrane Consultants Ltd) and

**Date:** 27 November 2025



## **Fast Track Application FTAA-2507-1087: Ashbourne Development, Matamata**

### **Minute 3 of the Expert Panel dated 21 November 2025 - Response to Request for Information on behalf of Matamata-Piako District Council (wastewater disposal).**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This Memorandum has been prepared for the Matamata-Piako District Council in response to the Expert Panel's request as set out in Minute 3 dated 21 November 2025, for information pursuant to section 67 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 20024 (FTAA).

The Memorandum addresses matters pertaining to wastewater disposal.

The numbering below refers to the paragraph numbers in the Expert Panel's Minute 3.

#### **2.0 Wastewater disposal**

##### **2.1 Information request**

*[22] Does the revised disposal system incorporating raising of ground levels to ensure 600 mm clearance above peak groundwater levels address previous concerns about this proposed wastewater discharge?*

*[23] The revised engineering plans show that the wastewater field will be elevated to 600mm above the highest groundwater level. The Panel queries whether this can be specified on the plans to a precise minimum RL for the wastewater field, noting that this should be based on recent (elevated) measurements (i.e., XXXm + 0.6m = RLXXX).*

*[24] The 28 October Response advises that the wastewater disposal field will be grassed. Please confirm that this approach would be compliant with the planting requirements of TP58 (per the notation on Maven Drawing C5000A), and/or whether there is an opportunity for landscape planting of this disposal field.*

##### **2.2 Response**

###### **2.2.1 [22] Revised disposal system – raising of ground levels**

- *The recommended (AS-NZS 5417, TP-58) minimum 600mm clearance from bottom of treated wastewater disposal beds to highest GWL is particularly relevant in light of the large size of the bed. However, concerns have been previously raised (Terrane) relating to uncertainty of interpolated maximum groundwater levels (GWL) and also the potential for water table mounding.*
- *As a result of recent discussions in this regard with Maven, CMW, Terane and WGA we understand that;*
  - *Maximum GWL assessment (WGA) of 0.5m below ground level (BGL) is based on interpretation of piezo data and excludes allowance for mounding. However, WGA note that GWL in the vicinity of the treated wastewater disposal bed should not rise above their 0.5m BGL finding as a result of local drainage.*

- *The applicants proposal is to raise the treated wastewater disposal bed with excess topsoil on the site to achieve the minimum of 600mm clearance. However, consideration needs to be given to the practicality of placing a large amount of topsoil without over-compaction of the bed and/or subsoil i.e. to ensure the integrity/efficacy of bed drainage is conserved.*
- *Design changes to stormwater management (to incorporate sub-surface drainage rather than soakage) are underway which may impact on maximum GWL estimates. The detail design of the treated wastewater disposal beds therefore needs further holistic consideration of stormwater/ground water management once finalised.*
- *Given the residual uncertainty around GWL and the lack of detailed design information for the treated wastewater disposal bed, I recommend that 100% reserve area be provided.*

#### **2.2.2 [23] Minimum RL for wastewater field**

- *Given the above, I agree that the RL's assumed for the bottom of the treated wastewater disposal bed (min. 600mm above max GWL) should be specified on any related designs and drawings. This can be reviewed at detail design stage.*

#### **2.2.3 [24] Compliance with TP58/ landscape planting**

- To minimise compaction and disturbance of the disposal field, and hence disposal efficacy, construction and maintenance requirements should be carefully considered. As regards the latter, it is recommended that grass and/or plants for the disposal bed be selected that assist with soil aeration/ evapotranspiration and nutrient uptake as well as offering low maintenance requirements. TP-58 and AS NZS 5417 offer suggestions about assessing local conditions and knowledge in this respect. However, this is best further advised by a landscaping specialist, considering the above points.

### **4.0 Conclusion**

Further detail will be required at detail design stage to confirm the design details of the treated wastewater disposal bed.

A reserve wastewater disposal area of 100% should allocated to allow for added contingency, considering;

- Clarity regarding SW and groundwater management
- Final design details for the wastewater treatment plant and treated wastewater discharge field.

Refer Appended commentary on DRAFT conditions.

**Appendix - Comments on draft conditions (W and WW)**

- The *Conditions of Consent – Wastewater Discharge* – may need updating, following further responses and clarity around the design of the disposal field.
- An *additional condition* should be added relating to the monitoring of bore water quality. Should an unacceptable rise in nitrates be detected, further steps would need to be put in place to de-nitrify wastewater to an acceptable level before discharge to land. The specified wastewater treatment system should be designed to allow for this upgrade, if necessary.
- The *Water Permit - Groundwater Take* condition needs to be more specific on limits for both temporary and permanent takes.
- *Water supply* – treated water quality (for the retirement village) is to be in compliance with the NZ Drinking Water Standards 2022
- *Producer statements* (PS-1 and 4) be provided for the design, construction and commissioning of the wastewater treatment and treated wastewater disposal beds.
- Similarly, *producer statements* (PS-1 and 4) be provided for the design, installation and commissioning of the extraction (bore), treatment, storage and reticulation facilities.