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# Economic Assessment of Proposed Awanui Links Development for Fast-track Referral

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# 1. Executive Summary

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## Context

Awanui Links is a comprehensively master-planned mixed-use development in the Waikato District that integrates high-end tourism, lifestyle living, retirement accommodation, and light-industrial activity around an 18-hole championship golf course (the **proposal**). The project includes extensive visitor infrastructure, wellness and hospitality facilities, luxury villas, rural-residential lots, an integrated retirement village and care facility, and a dedicated light-industrial precinct. Consent is sought under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (**FTAA**) to accelerate delivery and unlock the project's regional benefits.

## Key Findings

### ***Significant One-Time Economic Impacts***

Development of Awanui Links will require substantial investment in planning, civil works, construction, and golf-course establishment over the anticipated five-year build period. Based on the project's indicative development costs, construction activity is expected to generate the following regional economic benefits:

- Approximately **1,305 FTE-years of employment** (equivalent to around 261 full-time workers employed for five years);
- Around **\$194 million** in GDP; and
- Approximately **\$113 million** in household incomes.

### ***Substantial Ongoing Economic Activity***

Once fully operational, the proposal's accommodation, recreation, tourism, hospitality, wellness, industrial, and retirement-living components will sustain significant long-term economic activity. At steady-state maturity, the development is estimated to support:

- **228 ongoing FTEs**;
- Over **\$29 million** in annual GDP; and
- More than **\$17 million** in annual wages and salaries.

### ***Expanding Local Employment and Skill Opportunities***

The development will support a wide range of employment opportunities across hospitality, accommodation, recreation, wellness, aged care, and light industry. These sectors offer pathways for entry-level workers, youth, and those seeking retraining or flexible roles, alongside skilled and managerial positions. This breadth of opportunities strengthens local labour-market participation and contributes to long-term workforce development in the sub-region.

### ***Integrated and Self-Reinforcing Development***

Awanui Links delivers a uniquely integrated mix of tourism, residential, retirement, recreation, and employment activities. This co-location of complementary land uses creates strong internal synergies with each element supporting the others, resulting in a development whose overall economic contribution is greater than the sum of its individual parts.

### ***Boosting Regional Tourism and Recreation***

Awanui Links will materially expand Waikato's tourism offering. The golf course, accommodation, hospitality, and wellness facilities complement the region's existing marquee and experience golf network, strengthening the central North Island's position as a high-quality golf destination. Visitors travelling from outside the region are also likely to generate additional off-site spending on accommodation, food and beverage, retail, and transport, providing further regional uplift.

### ***Responding to Housing, Retirement and Care Needs***

The project delivers 70 rural-residential lots and a comprehensive retirement village with an integrated care facility. This helps meet sustained demand for both lifestyle housing and specialised older-person accommodation in the Future Proof sub-region. The retirement village also improves housing-market efficiency by enabling older residents to downsize, thereby freeing up existing homes for other households.

### ***Diversifying the Regional Economic Base***

Awanui Links will help diversify the Waikato regional economy by introducing a broader mix of activities into an area currently dominated by agriculture, construction, and manufacturing. This wider economic footprint reduces exposure to sector-specific cycles and supports a more resilient employment base. The development's mix of industries also strengthens local supply chains and expands the region's capability in high-value service sectors.

### ***Minimal Economic Costs***

Potential economic costs, such as foregone rural production and infrastructure-related risks, are low. The existing dairy operation likely generates limited economic activity compared to the proposal, and all required infrastructure within the site will be funded and delivered by the applicant. The small solar farm will further enhance resilience by partially offsetting onsite energy demand.

### ***Accelerated Delivery via FTAA***

The FTAA provides a streamlined approval pathway with tighter statutory timeframes and no merits-based appeals, reducing consenting risk and bringing forward both construction activity and long-term operational benefits. This materially accelerates delivery compared to traditional RMA processes.

### ***Conclusion***

Awanui Links will deliver significant and wide-ranging benefits to the Waikato region. It expands housing choice, responds to retirement and care needs, strengthens regional tourism, diversifies the economic base, and sustains substantial employment during both construction and operation. With minimal economic downside and accelerated delivery via the FTAA, the proposal is supported on economic grounds.

## 2. Introduction

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### 2.1. Context

Awanui Links is a comprehensively master-planned, mixed-use development in the Waikato region that combines high-end tourism, lifestyle living, retirement accommodation, and employment-generating industrial land uses within a rural setting (the **proposal**). Anchored by an 18-hole golf course, the development includes extensive visitor infrastructure such as a clubhouse, proshop, virtual golf centre, driving range, wellness centre, fine dining venue, hotel and event centre, and a café. Accommodation offerings comprise 10 large and 52 small luxury villas. The residential component includes 70 rural residential lots and a retirement village with a dedicated care facility. The project also features 9 light industrial lots, a solar farm, landscaped open spaces, wetlands, and integrated infrastructure, delivering a destination that supports regional growth, tourism, housing diversity, and environmental resilience.

To expedite development of the proposal, the applicant is seeking consent under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (**FTAA**). To assist, this report provides a high-level assessment of the likely economic effects of the proposal.

### 2.2. Criteria for Assessing Referral Applications

The FTAA is a new, permanent fast-track approvals regime. The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure or development projects with significant regional or national benefits. Under section 22 of the Act, proposals may be referred to an expert panel for fast-track consenting where the Minister is satisfied that the project meets the purpose of the Act.

In considering whether to refer a project, the Minister may consider a range of factors set out in Section 22(2)(a). To assist decision makers, this report provides an assessment of the proposal against two of those criteria from an economic perspective. Specifically, it considers whether the project:

- ii. Will increase the supply of housing, address housing needs, or contribute to a well-functioning urban environment (within the meaning of policy 1 of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020).
- iii. Will deliver significant economic benefits.

### 2.3. Scope and Structure of this Document

The remainder of this document is structured as follows:

- **Section 3** identifies the subject site and provides indicative development yields.
- **Section 4** estimates the one-time impacts of the proposal's future development.
- **Section 5** estimates the annual impacts of non-residential activities sustained on-site.
- **Section 6** outlines the likely agglomeration effects arising from the proposal.

- **Section 7** assesses the likely impacts of the proposal on the property market.
- **Section 8** considers a range of wider economic impacts of the proposal.
- **Section 9** describes how the FTAA process would accelerate delivery of the proposal.
- **Section 9** provides a conclusion and checklist against the FTAA referral criteria.



## 3. About the Proposal

This section identifies the subject site and provides indicative development yields.

### 3.1. Site Location and Description

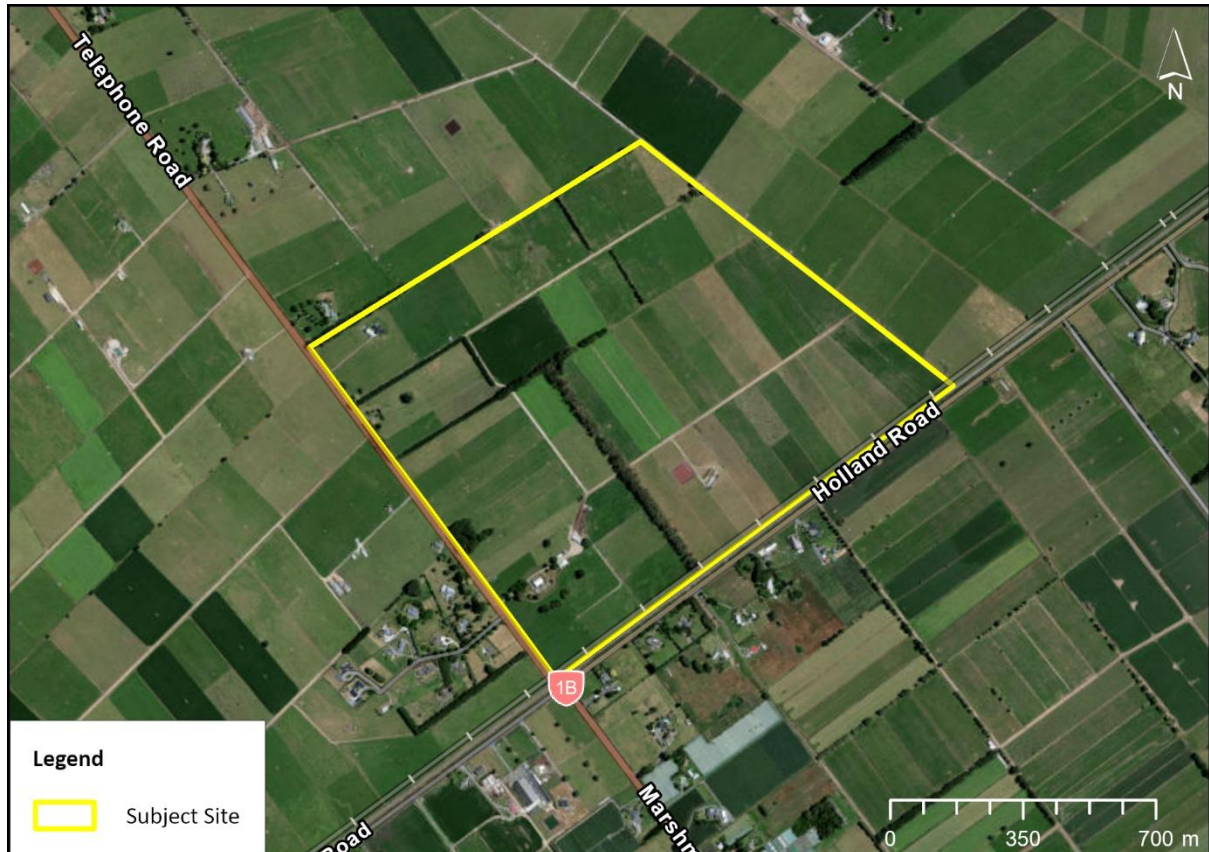
The subject site is located in Puketaha, approximately six kilometres east of the edge of the Hamilton City boundary in the Waikato District. Its location is denoted by the blue dot in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Location of Subject Site



The site is bound by Holland Road to the south, Telephone Road to the west, and rural land to the north and east. A railway line runs parallel to Holland Road along the southern boundary. The site spans an area of approximately 121 hectares and is zoned General Rural under the Waikato District Plan. It accommodates a single dwelling and has most recently been used as a dairy farm. Figure 2 below shows the site in its immediate receiving environment, which comprises a mix of lifestyle blocks and rural activities.

Figure 2: Receiving Environment



### 3.2. About the Proposal

Awanui Links is a comprehensively master planned, mixed-use development in the Waikato region that combines high-end tourism, lifestyle living, retirement accommodation, and employment-generating industrial land uses within a rural setting. Anchored by an 18-hole golf course, the development includes extensive visitor infrastructure such as a clubhouse, proshop, virtual golf centre, driving range, wellness centre, fine dining venue, hotel and event centre, and a café. Accommodation offerings comprise 10 large and 52 small luxury villas. The residential component includes 70 rural residential lots and a retirement village with a dedicated care facility. The project also features 9 light industrial lots, a solar farm, landscaped open spaces, wetlands, and integrated infrastructure, delivering a destination that supports regional growth, tourism, housing diversity, and environmental resilience.

An indicative masterplan is provided in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Indicative Masterplan



### 3.3. Anticipated Development Yields

Table 1 summarises the development yields anticipated by the masterplan above. All yields are indicative and subject to change during detailed design.

Table 1: Indicative Development Yields

| Component                       | Description                      | Indicative Yield / Area            |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Tourism &amp; Recreation</b> | 18-hole championship golf course | n/a                                |
|                                 | Wellness Centre / Fine Dining    | 3,500 m <sup>2</sup> GFA           |
|                                 | Event Centre / Hotel             | 3,500 m <sup>2</sup> GFA           |
|                                 | Clubhouse / Club                 | 2,550 m <sup>2</sup> GFA           |
|                                 | Proshop                          | 800 m <sup>2</sup> GFA             |
|                                 | Virtual Golf / Sims              | 800 m <sup>2</sup> GFA             |
|                                 | Cart Storage                     | 1,000 m <sup>2</sup> GFA           |
|                                 | Storage Shed                     | 1,000 m <sup>2</sup> GFA           |
|                                 | Café                             | 800 m <sup>2</sup> GFA             |
| <b>Visitor Accommodation</b>    | Large Luxury Villas              | 10 villas                          |
|                                 | Small Luxury Villas              | 52 villas                          |
| <b>Residential</b>              | Rural Residential Lots           | 70 dwellings                       |
| <b>Retirement Village</b>       | Independent-Living Units         | 137 units                          |
|                                 | Dedicated Care Facility          | 50 beds / 3,000 m <sup>2</sup> GFA |
| <b>Industrial</b>               | Light Industrial Lots            | 9 lots / 4 ha land area            |
| <b>Renewable Energy</b>         | Solar Farm                       | 3,000 m <sup>2</sup> land area     |



## 4. One-Time Impacts of Development

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This section estimates the one-time impacts of the Awanui Links development.

### 4.1. Introduction

In the previous section we showed that the proposed development delivers an 18-hole golf course, a range of tourism, recreation and hospitality services, a retirement village and care home, rural residential lots, industrial lots and a small solar farm. A significant body of work will be required to transform the site from its current state into the form envisaged by the proposal. This includes further planning/design/consent work, vegetation clearance and bulk earthworks, infrastructure provision, establishing the golf course (including shaping, installing irrigation and drainage, course sow out and grow in), preparing the land for development and constructing the various new buildings proposed. Overall, this will have significant one-time economic impacts on GDP, jobs, and wages.

### 4.2. Methodology

We quantified these one-time economic impacts using a technique called multiplier analysis, which traces the impacts of additional economic activity in one sector – such as construction – through its supply chain to estimate the overall impacts, including flow-on effects. These comprise two parts:<sup>1</sup>

- **Direct impacts** – which capture all on-site and off-site activities directly related to the proposal's development, e.g., home builders and their various subcontractors and suppliers, some of which will be on-site, and some of which will be off-site.
- **Indirect effects** – which capture additional (supply-chain) impacts arising when businesses working directly on the project source goods and services from their suppliers, who in turn may need to source goods and services from their own suppliers, and so on.

These economic impacts are measured in various ways, including:

- **Contributions to GDP (or value-added)** – GDP measures the difference between a business' inputs (excluding wages and salaries) and the value of its outputs. It captures the value that a business adds to its inputs to create its own outputs, hence the term "value-added."
- **Total FTEs** – which equals the total number of full-time equivalent (**FTE**) workers employed.
- **Total Jobs** – which is the total number of people employed, i.e., including both part-time and full-time workers.

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<sup>1</sup> In some applications of multiplier analysis, induced impacts are also reported. These represent the additional economic activity generated when workers employed directly or indirectly by a proposal spend their wages and salaries in the wider economy. While such spending does create some additional demand, much of it would have occurred anyway, since many workers (particularly those with specialist skills) would likely be employed elsewhere in New Zealand absent the proposal. For this reason, induced effects tend to overstate the economic benefits. Including them can also lead to implausible results, such as suggesting that every dollar of expenditure generates more than one dollar of GDP. In practice, the economy cannot expand indefinitely, as firms face limits on available labour and resources. These constraints, along with rising prices, prevent such outcomes. Accordingly, this assessment reports only direct and indirect effects.

- **Total wages and salaries** – which equals the total amount paid in wages and salaries.

For example, when a construction firm wins a new project, they will subcontract various parts of the build to other companies, such as glaziers, tilers, plumbers, electricians, etc. Those subcontractors, in turn, will then usually need to source additional materials and services from their suppliers, who may then need to source materials and services from their suppliers, and so on. Multiplier analysis enables the impacts of these supply chain interactions to be captured to estimate the overall impact of the new building project, including its direct and flow-on (supply chain) effects.

### 4.3. Limitations

While multiplier analysis is a widely used tool for estimating the wider economic effects of industry activity, it has several limitations that should be borne in mind when interpreting results:

- **Fixed relationships:** Models assume fixed input-output ratios between industries and do not capture technological change, substitution, or efficiency improvements over time.
- **No price or capacity constraints:** The framework assumes that supply can expand to meet increased demand without affecting prices, wages, or resource availability. In reality, constraints (e.g., limited skilled labour) may dampen the scale of impacts.
- **Average industry structure:** Input-output coefficients are based on national industry averages. Where a project's cost structure differs materially relative to industry norms, results may diverge from actual outcomes.
- **No feedback effects:** Broader economy-wide feedback loops (such as inflationary pressures or exchange rate effects) are not captured.

These limitations mean that multiplier analysis should be viewed as providing indicative estimates of the scale and distribution of economic impacts, rather than precise forecasts.

### 4.4. Development Assumptions

Based on the location and nature of the proposal, we assume that 85% of the direct and indirect national one-time impacts accrue to the Waikato region.<sup>2</sup>

Our analysis incorporates various assumptions about the likely scale and cost of future development. Because reliable information was available on likely residential and non-residential building yields, we started with those. Specifically, we first estimated the costs of all residential and non-residential construction. Then, we estimated planning/consenting and earthworks/infrastructure costs as percentages of those. Specifically, we estimated planning and consenting costs equal to 2% of total

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<sup>2</sup> In some countries, regional I-O tables are commonly used to estimate subnational economic impacts. However, in New Zealand, the regions are generally too small and economically interlinked to produce reliable standalone I-O tables. Regional data is often sparse, outdated, or lacks the industry granularity required for robust modelling. Accordingly, we have used national multipliers and attributed a share of national impacts to the Waikato region.

construction costs, and earthworks/infrastructure equal to 20% of construction costs (based on our experience with similar developments elsewhere in New Zealand).

In contrast to the residential and non-residential building components, less certainty exists around the design and delivery of the golf course. As a result, cost estimates for the golf course are subject to a higher degree of uncertainty than those applied to the buildings. Golf course development costs vary widely depending on factors such as design ambition, soil conditions and the level of specialised construction required. For this reason, we have estimated the golf course development separately from the other components and applied a notional per-hectare cost framework based on a review of various benchmark data for a high-quality 18-hole course of a semi-compact size.<sup>3</sup> These estimates provide a reasonable planning allowance but should be interpreted as indicative only. Actual costs may differ once a detailed design is prepared and site-specific construction requirements are known.

Table 2 displays our notional residential development assumptions, which include average dwelling sizes<sup>4</sup> and associated build costs,<sup>5</sup> for the 319 new dwellings units enabled. Overall, residential construction costs are estimated at \$154 million in today's dollars.

Table 2: Residential Development Assumptions

| Category                    | # of New Dwellings | Average Size GFA m <sup>2</sup> | Build Cost \$/m <sup>2</sup> GFA | Total Build Cost \$m |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Large Luxury Villas         | 10                 | 200                             | \$4,700                          | \$9                  |
| Small Luxury Villas         | 52                 | 75                              | \$4,700                          | \$18                 |
| Rural Residential Dwellings | 70                 | 220                             | \$3,200                          | \$49                 |
| Independent-Living Units    | 137                | 155                             | \$3,000                          | \$64                 |
| Dedicated Care Facility     | 50                 | 60                              | \$4,300                          | \$13                 |
| <b>Total / Average</b>      | <b>319</b>         | <b>143</b>                      | <b>\$3,374</b>                   | <b>\$154</b>         |

Next, Table 3 combines our notional estimates of non-residential floorspace with associated build costs to yield estimated total construction costs of \$84 million in today's dollars.

Table 3: Indicative Non-Residential Development Assumptions<sup>6</sup>

| Activity                      | Total GFA m <sup>2</sup> | Build Cost \$/m <sup>2</sup> GFA | Total Build Cost \$m |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Light Industrial <sup>7</sup> | 12,800                   | \$2,350                          | \$30                 |
| Wellness Centre / Fine Dining | 3,500                    | \$3,800                          | \$13                 |
| Event Centre / Hotel          | 3,500                    | \$4,700                          | \$16                 |
| Clubhouse / Club              | 2,550                    | \$4,700                          | \$12                 |
| Pro Shop                      | 800                      | \$3,800                          | \$3                  |
| Virtual Golf / Sims           | 800                      | \$3,800                          | \$3                  |
| Cart Storage                  | 1,000                    | \$1,550                          | \$2                  |

<sup>3</sup> For example: [Golf Course Development: Costs, Stages, and Timeline](#)

<sup>4</sup> Rural residential dwelling sizes are based on the average GFA of comparable properties in the Waikato District (similar section size and zoning, built since 2015). Average GFA assumptions for the villas, and care facility are based on information provided by the applicant, while the independent-living unit size is based on average GFA reported in Waikato building consents over the year to September 2025.

<sup>5</sup> Build costs were based on average values over the year to September 2025 in the Waikato Region, as reported in building consent data.

<sup>6</sup> Excludes construction costs associated with the solar farm. As such, total non-residential build costs are likely to be conservative.

<sup>7</sup> Industrial floorspace has been estimated by applying the following assumptions: (i) approximately 20% of the gross land area is set aside for roads, access, and servicing infrastructure; and (ii) an average floor area ratio of 0.4 across the net developable area.

|                        |               |                |             |
|------------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------|
| Storage Shed           | 1,000         | \$1,550        | \$2         |
| Café                   | 800           | \$3,800        | \$3         |
| <b>Total / Average</b> | <b>26,750</b> | <b>\$3,140</b> | <b>\$84</b> |

Based on the tables above, total construction costs, excluding golf course development, equal \$238 million, from which we then derived:

- \$5 million for planning, designing, and consenting costs (i.e., 2% of build costs); and
- \$48 million for infrastructure and civil works costs (i.e., 20% of build costs).

Next, Table 4 summarises our indicative assumptions for developing the golf course. These figures relate only to the course itself and exclude the clubhouse, pro shop, and other built structures captured within the non-residential construction estimates above.<sup>8</sup> For modelling purposes, we assume the course covers approximately 50 hectares of gross land area, with costs allocated across typical components such as design, earthworks, drainage, irrigation, turf establishment and grow-in.

Table 4: Indicative Golf Course Development Assumptions

| Activity                        | Avg. Cost \$/ha  | Total Cost \$m | Share of Cost |
|---------------------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Planning & Design               | \$19,850         | \$1.0          | 10%           |
| Permits & Approvals             | \$5,950          | \$0.3          | 3%            |
| Earthworks & Shaping            | \$49,600         | \$2.5          | 24%           |
| Drainage & Irrigation           | \$50,550         | \$2.5          | 25%           |
| Turf & Landscaping              | \$41,200         | \$2.1          | 20%           |
| Grow-In & Maintenance (Initial) | \$37,050         | \$1.9          | 18%           |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>\$204,200</b> | <b>\$10.2</b>  | <b>100%</b>   |

## 4.5. Summary of Development Costs

Table 5 summarises the estimated total cost of the proposal across the five key activities based on the assumptions set out above, which equal \$300 million in today's dollars.

Table 5: Summary of Estimated Development Costs (\$ millions)

| Development Activity                   | \$ millions  |
|----------------------------------------|--------------|
| Planning / Design / Consent            | \$5          |
| Civil Works & Infrastructure Provision | \$48         |
| Residential Construction               | \$154        |
| Non-Residential Construction           | \$84         |
| Golf Course Development                | \$10         |
| <b>Total Development Cost</b>          | <b>\$300</b> |

<sup>8</sup> While the golf course allowance in Table 4 is conservative when viewed in isolation, all associated built facilities are captured within the non-residential construction estimates.

Finally, these costs were mapped to sectors of the national economy then overlaid with the latest economic multipliers<sup>9</sup> to derive the one-off impacts of development, as set out below.

## 4.6. Estimated Impacts on GDP, Jobs, and Wages

Table 6 presents the one-time impacts of the proposal based on the methodology, inputs, and assumptions described above. All activities are assumed to occur over a 5-year period.

Table 6: One-Time Economic Impacts of Development by Activity (spread over 5 years)

|                        | Planning & Design | Infra. & Civil Works | Residential Construction | Non-Resi Construction | Golf Course Development | Development Totals |
|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Annual Jobs</b>     |                   |                      |                          |                       |                         |                    |
| Direct impacts         | 3                 | 19                   | 37                       | 20                    | 5                       | 84                 |
| Indirect impacts       | 2                 | 25                   | 107                      | 56                    | 5                       | 195                |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>5</b>          | <b>44</b>            | <b>144</b>               | <b>76</b>             | <b>10</b>               | <b>279</b>         |
| <b>Annual FTEs</b>     |                   |                      |                          |                       |                         |                    |
| Direct impacts         | 3                 | 18                   | 35                       | 19                    | 4                       | 79                 |
| Indirect impacts       | 2                 | 23                   | 100                      | 53                    | 4                       | 182                |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>5</b>          | <b>41</b>            | <b>135</b>               | <b>72</b>             | <b>8</b>                | <b>261</b>         |
| <b>Total Wages \$m</b> |                   |                      |                          |                       |                         |                    |
| Direct impacts         | \$1               | \$9                  | \$14                     | \$9                   | \$2                     | \$35               |
| Indirect impacts       | \$1               | \$10                 | \$42                     | \$23                  | \$2                     | \$78               |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>\$2</b>        | <b>\$19</b>          | <b>\$56</b>              | <b>\$32</b>           | <b>\$4</b>              | <b>\$113</b>       |
| <b>Total GDP \$m</b>   |                   |                      |                          |                       |                         |                    |
| Direct impacts         | \$2               | \$13                 | \$22                     | \$15                  | \$4                     | \$56               |
| Indirect impacts       | \$1               | \$19                 | \$74                     | \$41                  | \$3                     | \$138              |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>\$3</b>        | <b>\$32</b>          | <b>\$96</b>              | <b>\$56</b>           | <b>\$7</b>              | <b>\$194</b>       |

In summary, we estimate that:

- Future planning/design/consenting will create full-time employment for 5 people over the 5-year development period, generating total wages and salaries of \$2 million;
- Land development (excluding golf course development) will create full-time work for 41 people, with \$19 million paid in wages and salaries;
- Residential construction will provide full-time work for 135 people, with \$56 million paid in wages and salaries;
- Non-residential construction will provide full-time work for 72 people, with \$32 million paid in wages and salaries; and

<sup>9</sup> Multipliers were derived by Insight Economics using Stats NZ source data, including the Annual Enterprise Survey, Linked Employer-Employee Data, Quarterly Employment Survey, and Monthly Employment Indicators.



- Development of the golf course will provide full-time work for 8 people, with \$4 million paid in wages and salaries.

Overall, the proposal's development is estimated to provide full-time work for more than 260 people for 5 years, generating \$113 million in wages and salaries, and boosting GDP by \$194 million.

## 4.7. Top 10 Industries by FTEs Employed

To better understand the likely impacts of the proposal, Table 7 reveals the 10 industries likely to experience the greatest employment boosts. Those top 10 industries account for nearly three-quarters of all full-time employment generated by the proposal's development, with the balance spread across numerous other sectors.

Table 7: Top 10 Industries by Annual FTEs Generated during Development

| Industries                                          | Annual FTEs | Shares      |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Construction services                               | 64          | 24%         |
| Residential building construction                   | 40          | 15%         |
| Heavy and civil engineering construction            | 24          | 9%          |
| Non-residential building construction               | 16          | 6%          |
| Scientific, architectural, and engineering services | 12          | 5%          |
| Fabricated metal product manufacturing              | 10          | 4%          |
| Public order, safety, and regulatory services       | 9           | 3%          |
| Wood product manufacturing                          | 7           | 3%          |
| Legal and accounting services                       | 5           | 2%          |
| Employment and other administrative services        | 5           | 2%          |
| <b>Top 10 Subtotal</b>                              | <b>192</b>  | <b>74%</b>  |
|                                                     |             |             |
| All Other Industries                                | 69          | 26%         |
| <b>Total FTE-years (all industries)</b>             | <b>261</b>  | <b>100%</b> |

## 5. Ongoing Impacts of Future Uses

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This section estimates the annual impacts of the proposal's future non-residential uses once built out.

### 5.1. Introduction

In addition to the one-off economic impacts of the proposal's development just estimated, the various non-residential components of the project will also sustain significant ongoing economic activity over time. Accordingly, this section briefly estimates those impacts in terms of annual contributions to GDP, jobs, and wages.

### 5.2. Limitations

All figures represent the total scale of economic activity that could occur onsite once fully established. It is important to note that the results presented here are **gross impacts**, a portion of which would have occurred elsewhere in the absence of the proposal. We have not attempted to quantifying the extent of this displacement.

### 5.3. Methodology

Two complementary approaches were adopted, reflecting the differing nature of the proposed land uses.

- **Bottom-up Revenue Approach:** For the golf course, visitor accommodation, wellness centre, event and dining facilities, and other onsite amenities, annual operating revenues were estimated using a bottom-up approach.

Each component was modelled according to its capacity (e.g., number of rooms, seats, or treatment areas), expected utilisation rates, and typical pricing benchmarks drawn from comparable facilities in New Zealand. These revenue estimates represent realistic steady-state operating conditions.

Revenue estimates were then translated to GDP, employment, and wage impacts using the same economic multipliers from the previous section.

- **Employment-based Approach:** For the light-industrial area, retirement village, and care facility, economic impacts were estimated using an employment-density framework.

Industrial jobs were derived by applying GFA-per-worker ratios to the floorspace enabled by the proposal.<sup>10</sup> Employment in the retirement village was estimated directly based on typical staffing levels observed in comparable New Zealand villages. Staffing for the aged-care facility was based on the national average of 1.02 employees per care bed.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> GFA-per-worker ratios were sourced from the latest Business Capacity Assessment (BCA). Available here: [www.futureproof.org.nz/assets/Future-Proof/Resources/BusinessDevelopmentCapacityReportApril24.pdf](http://www.futureproof.org.nz/assets/Future-Proof/Resources/BusinessDevelopmentCapacityReportApril24.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Estimated using 2023 - 2024 data from Stats NZ Business Demography (ANZSIC Q860100) and JLL's Aged-Care Database (NZACD). This ratio reflects total staff headcount (not FTEs) and assumes one bed per aged-care unit.

Finally, these job estimates were then converted to corresponding GDP and wage impacts using the same economic multipliers used throughout.

## 5.4. Inputs and Assumptions

Table 8 summarises the methodology adopted for each component of the project and lists the key modelling inputs. To be conservative, the economic impacts of the event centre and solar farm are not quantified.

Table 8: Ongoing Impacts Methodology and Key Assumptions

| Component                              | Method            | Key Assumptions                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Golf course                            | Bottom-up revenue | Rounds played, average green fees, utilisation rate                                  |
| Pro shop                               | Bottom-up revenue | Rounds played, average spend per player, player origin                               |
| Club house                             | Bottom-up revenue | Rounds played, average spend per player, player origin                               |
| Visitor accommodation (hotel + villas) | Bottom-up revenue | Number of rooms / villas, nightly rate, average occupancy                            |
| Wellness centre                        | Bottom-up revenue | Number of treatment rooms, average hourly rate, utilisation (hours/day, occupancy %) |
| Fine dining restaurant                 | Bottom-up revenue | Seats, average spend per cover, occupancy %, services per day                        |
| Café / casual dining                   | Bottom-up revenue | Seats, average spend per cover, turnover, occupancy %, services per day              |
| Driving range                          | Bottom-up revenue | Bays, average rate, utilisation (hours/day, occupancy %)                             |
| Virtual golf                           | Bottom-up revenue | Bays, average rate, utilisation (hours/day, occupancy %)                             |
| Light-industrial area                  | Employment-based  | Floor area ratio, GFA-per-worker ratio                                               |
| Retirement village                     | Employment-based  | Total FTEs                                                                           |
| Aged-care facility                     | Employment-based  | Worker-per-care-bed ratio                                                            |

It is important to note that these inputs are necessarily indicative. The detailed operational parameters of the development are not yet finalised, and several elements – including final building configurations, operating models, pricing structures, staffing levels, utilisation profiles, and management strategies – remain subject to detailed design and commercial decision-making. As a result:

- All inputs reflect reasonable, planning-stage assumptions informed by benchmark facilities and industry norms;
- Actual performance may differ materially depending on final operations, demand patterns, and market positioning;

- The results should be interpreted as providing an order-of-magnitude indication of potential activity rather than precise forecasts;
- Sensitivity to changes in assumptions is high for some components (e.g., accommodation occupancy, green fees, utilisation rates); and
- Where uncertainty is substantial (e.g., the event centre), impacts have deliberately not been quantified.

These caveats apply to all revenue-based and employment-based components described below and should be borne in mind when interpreting the results.

The estimates presented in this section also assume that the development has reached a steady state of operation. In practice, a project of this scale will take several years to become fully established, with utilisation, occupancy, visitor volumes, and operational performance ramping up progressively over time. For clarity, the results reported here represent the facility's likely ongoing impacts at maturity, rather than impacts in the initial establishment period.

Table 9 summarises the estimated annual revenue for each of the relevant components, while the key employment-based inputs are provided in Table 10.

Table 9: Summary of Bottom-Up Revenue Inputs

| Component              | Annual Revenue (\$m) |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Golf course            | \$2.4                |
| Pro shop               | \$0.4                |
| Club house             | \$0.4                |
| Visitor accommodation  | \$9.1                |
| Wellness centre        | \$0.5                |
| Fine dining restaurant | \$1.1                |
| Café / casual dining   | \$0.9                |
| Driving range          | \$0.3                |
| Virtual golf           | \$0.4                |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>\$15.6</b>        |

Table 10: Summary of Employment-Based Inputs

| Component             | Employment  |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| Light-industrial area | 107 workers |
| Retirement village    | 10 FTEs     |
| Aged-care facility    | 51 workers  |

## 5.5. Annual GDP, Jobs, and Wages

Next, Table 11 summarises the annual economic impacts of future activity sustained at Awanui Links in terms of FTEs employed, GDP contributed, and wages generated.

Table 11: Estimated Direct Annual Economic Impacts of Non-residential Areas (at full build-out)

| Component                                    | FTEs       | Wages \$m     | GDP \$m       |
|----------------------------------------------|------------|---------------|---------------|
| Golf course, pro shop, club house            | 17         | \$1.0         | \$1.4         |
| Visitor accommodation                        | 40         | \$2.6         | \$4.9         |
| Wellness centre, driving range, virtual golf | 8          | \$0.4         | \$0.6         |
| Fine dining, café                            | 12         | \$0.6         | \$0.8         |
| Retirement village, aged-care facility       | 52         | \$4.4         | \$6.1         |
| Light industrial                             | 99         | \$8.4         | \$15.6        |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>228</b> | <b>\$17.5</b> | <b>\$29.4</b> |

In summary, the development's non-residential areas could sustain the following activity at full build-out:

- Full-time employment for 228 people;
- Annual GDP of over \$29 million; and
- More than \$17 million paid annually in salaries and wages.

## 5.6. Wider Ongoing Employment Impacts

In addition to the direct economic impacts quantified above, the Awanui Links development will deliver a range of wider labour market benefits. These arise from the project's diverse mix of visitor, residential, and employment-generating activities, which together help sustain a resilient, place-based workforce and strengthen local supply chains.

Key benefits include:

- **Career development and training:** Employment opportunities will span hospitality, wellness, recreation, maintenance, care and light industry sectors – each offering pathways for training, apprenticeships and on-the-job progression.
- **Inclusive local workforce participation:** The breadth of roles – from entry-level to skilled trades and management – enables participation from a wide section of the regional labour market including younger workers and those seeking flexible roles.
- **Youth employment opportunities:** The Waikato Region currently records a NEET (not in employment, education, or training) rate of around 12 percent among 15–24-year-olds, meaning roughly one in eight young people are disengaged.<sup>12</sup> This highlights the value of the accessible entry-level and training-oriented roles created within the development.

<sup>12</sup> Source: Figure NZ (NEET Rate, Waikato Region, June 2025 Q2); Infometrics Quarterly Economic Monitor (NEET Rate, New Zealand, year to June 2025).

- **Skill diversification and labour mobility:** The co-location of tourism, wellness, residential living and light-industry uses promotes cross-sector exposure, supporting adaptability and up-skilling of the local workforce.
- **Stable, year-round employment:** Unlike purely seasonal visitor-facing facilities, components such as the retirement village, aged-care facility and light-industrial area provide ongoing demand for employment, supporting household income stability.
- **Supply-chain linkages:** The project's operational needs (hospitality, landscape, maintenance, logistics, professional services) will stimulate secondary business demand throughout the southern Hamilton growth corridor.

Together, these effects will help anchor long-term, place-based employment in the local area, enhancing workforce diversity, retention of talent and the region's productivity and resilience.

## 6. Agglomeration Effects

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This section outlines the likely agglomeration effects arising from the proposed development.

### 6.1. Onsite Agglomeration Effects

The proposed mix of land uses at Awanui Links will generate strong internal synergies, whereby the success of each component reinforces the others. These agglomeration effects stem from the project's integrated, master-planned structure, which allows complementary uses to co-locate and share infrastructure, customers, and amenity.

- **The golf course and visitor facilities** (clubhouse, pro-shop, café, fine dining, wellness centre) will generate direct demand for the onsite short-stay accommodation and, in turn, be supported by spending from residents and guests.
- **The retirement village and rural-residential community** will provide a stable, year-round user base for the recreation, hospitality, and wellness offerings, sustaining activity outside the peak visitor season. This synergy is particularly strong for the golf course: golf participation in New Zealand is highest among older adults, with more than 45% of total adult golf participants aged 65 or older, according to Sport NZ's *New Zealand Participation Survey 2021*.
- **The golf course, landscaped environment, and amenities** enhance the overall attractiveness of the site as a lifestyle and retirement destination. While golf courses often operate as breakeven propositions or loss leaders, their strategic value lies in anchoring the wider development, lifting amenity, and enabling higher levels of residential, accommodation, and hospitality activity than would otherwise be feasible.
- **The combination of residential, hospitality, and tourism uses** will generate demand for small-scale light-industrial activities – for example, maintenance, servicing, food and beverage production, and logistics – supporting a diverse mix of local enterprises.
- **The solar farm and integrated infrastructure systems** will help reduce operational energy demands and improve the environmental performance of the development, supporting long-term commercial viability.

Together, these relationships create a self-reinforcing cluster of complementary activities that operate more efficiently in combination than in isolation.

### 6.2. Offsite and Spillover Effects

The development is also likely to generate a range of wider agglomeration benefits in the surrounding area. By creating a high-quality destination with accommodation, recreation, and employment opportunities, Awanui Links may increase the attractiveness of nearby residential areas and strengthen demand for local services such as hospitality, retail, and trades.

In addition, visitors travelling from outside the Waikato region, particularly golf travellers, overnight guests, and event or conference attendees, are expected to generate substantial off-site expenditure.

Evidence from Golf New Zealand shows that golf tourists are high-value visitors, with around 80 percent of their total trip expenditure occurring off-course on accommodation, dining, shopping, transport, and other activities. In 2019, international visitors who travelled to New Zealand primarily to play golf spent more than \$400 million nationwide, illustrating the scale of off-site economic activity associated with golf-related travel. While these effects are not quantified in this assessment, they represent an additional source of regional economic uplift beyond the on-site impacts captured in Sections 4 and 5.

Together, these spillover effects can help build local critical mass, support new and existing businesses, and enhance productivity and visitor spending across the wider Waikato economy.



## 7. Property Market Impacts

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This section considers the impacts of the proposal on the residential and industrial property markets.

### 7.1. Boosting Housing Supply

The proposal provides new homes for approximately 207 households, excluding care beds (comprising 70 rural residential lots and 137 retirement village units). This represents a material uplift in dwelling capacity within the sub-region and will help narrow the gap between likely future housing supply and demand. All else being equal, this supply boost will help the market to be more responsive to growth in demand, thereby reducing the rate at which regional house prices grow over time (relative to the status quo).

This is important because affordability across the sub-region remains under sustained pressure. For Waikato District specifically, Cotality's most recent affordability report shows that median house values sit around 7-8 times median household income, and servicing a standard mortgage typically requires close to half of gross household income. With affordability well above long-term norms, and price growth continuing to outpace income growth, the addition of new dwellings in well-located areas is increasingly important for helping to stabilise housing costs over time.<sup>13</sup>

### 7.2. Supporting Housing Market Efficiency

The proposed retirement village at Awanui Links will also help improve the efficiency of the regional housing market by enabling older residents to transition into purpose-built accommodation better suited to their needs. Most future residents are likely to already live within the Waikato region, often in larger standalone homes that no longer match their lifestyle.

By providing an attractive local downsizing option, the proposal will free up existing dwellings for younger households and families, helping to realign housing supply with demand across age groups. In this way, Awanui Links supports greater housing fluidity and choice within the region while allowing older residents to remain connected to their communities.

### 7.3. Catering to a Variety of Needs and Preferences

Policy 1(a)(i) of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (**NPS-UD**) emphasises the importance of planning decisions that support well-functioning urban environments by meeting the diverse housing needs and preferences of different households. The proposal aligns with the intent of this policy in the following ways:

- **Tailored living for older people** – The inclusion of a comprehensive retirement village provides purpose-built accommodation and care facilities for older residents seeking a secure, community-oriented environment. It allows residents to age in place within a high-amenity setting, while maintaining proximity to Hamilton City. This is increasingly important as the

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<sup>13</sup> Based on indicators reported in *Cotality – New Zealand Housing Affordability Insights* (latest edition), Waikato District results.

region's population is ageing. According to official projections, the number of Waikato residents aged 75 and over is expected to grow by more than 47,000 by 2053.<sup>14</sup>

- **Lifestyle and semi-rural living options** – The rural-residential component of the proposal caters to households seeking larger lots and a more spacious, semi-rural environment, while remaining well connected to nearby employment and service centres. For example, this typology may suit families and professionals who value privacy, open space, and access to recreational opportunities without sacrificing accessibility.
- **Amenity-driven residential preferences** – The site's co-location with high-quality amenities – such as the golf course, wellness centre, and hospitality offerings – will appeal to residents who place a premium on lifestyle and leisure. This includes both permanent residents and second-home owners who are drawn to the recreational and social environment that Awanui Links provides.

Together, these housing types target specific demographic and lifestyle segments, offering meaningful choice for those seeking a distinctive semi-rural, amenity-rich living environment.

## 7.4. Boosting Industrial Supply

The proposal provides nine light industrial lots of various sizes and configurations, collectively enabling the development of approximately 12,800 m<sup>2</sup> of industrial floorspace.

Given their scale and strategic positioning within the wider Awanui Links master plan, these lots are expected to primarily accommodate local and service-oriented industrial activities that directly support the day-to-day operation of the development and its immediate surrounds. Indicative occupiers include:

- **Building and property services** – contractor depots and workshops for trades such as plumbing, electrical, landscaping, and maintenance;
- **Automotive and equipment services** – vehicle repairers, golf-cart or machinery servicing, and equipment hire;
- **Light fabrication, storage, and logistics** – warehousing, goods storage, and small-scale distribution supporting on-site accommodation, hospitality, and recreation uses; and
- **Supportive production and processing** – for example, food and beverage preparation, laundry services, or other back-of-house operations linked to the tourism and hospitality components of the project.

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<sup>14</sup> Under the Stats NZ medium growth scenario.

Enabling activities like these to establish onsite will help internalise servicing functions that would otherwise occur elsewhere, improving operational efficiency, reducing vehicle movements, and strengthening the self-contained nature of the development

By facilitating this mix of complementary activities, the industrial component contributes to a well-functioning and resilient local economy, consistent with Policy 1(b) of the NPS-UD, which seeks to provide a range of sites to meet the needs of different business sectors.

## 8. Wider Economic Impacts

This section considers a range of wider economic impacts of the proposal.

### 8.1. Strengthening the Golf Tourism Network

Golf is one of New Zealand’s most popular sports and an important contributor to the national and regional economy. Golf New Zealand estimates that the sport supports more than 2,000 jobs nationwide and contributes more than \$1 billion per annum to GDP. High-quality courses also attract a niche but high-spending segment of international visitors, whose expenditure supports a wide range of accommodation, hospitality, and transport providers.

The New Zealand International Golf Tourism Strategy encourages investment that strengthens the country’s network of marquee and experience courses.<sup>15</sup> These clusters help create compelling multi-course itineraries for visitors and channel tourism activity more evenly across regions. As shown in Figure 4, the national marquee network currently includes twelve courses in the North Island.

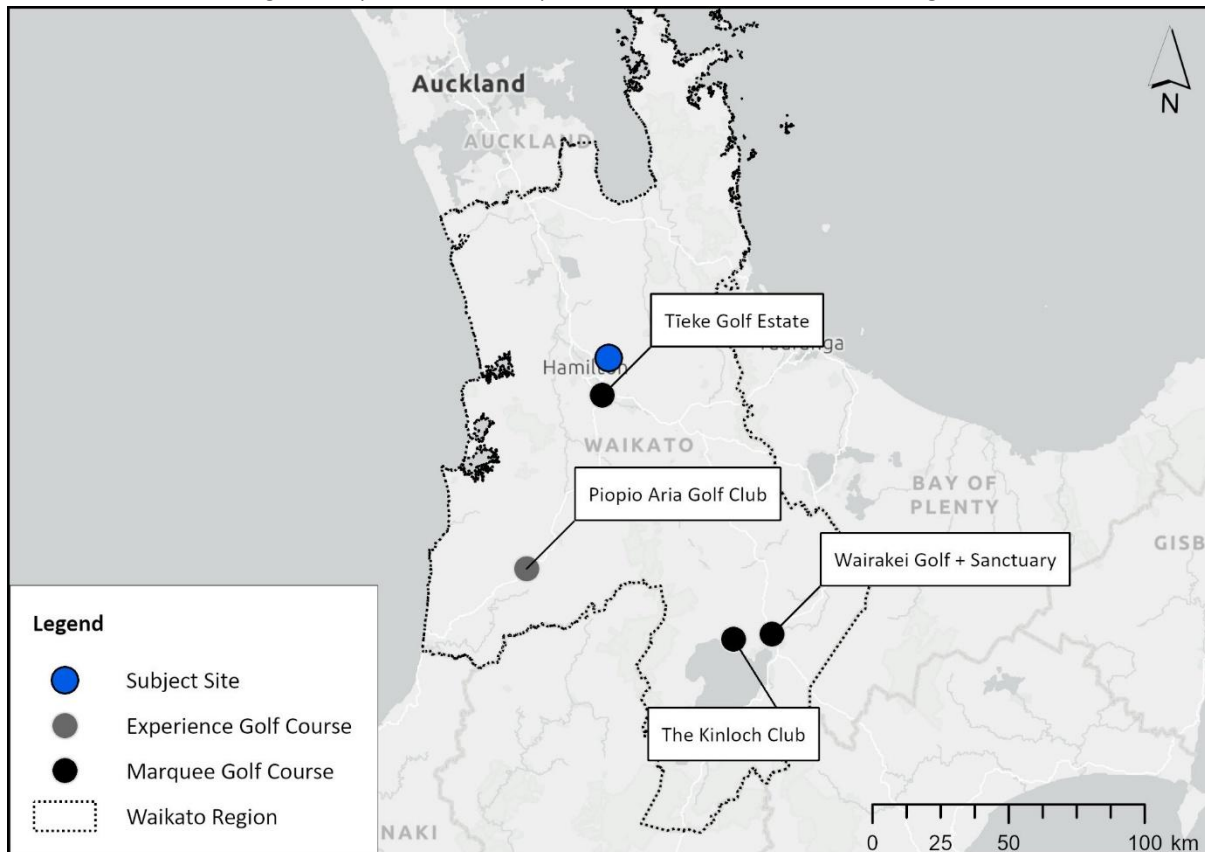
Figure 4: Marquee Golf Course Network – North Island



<sup>15</sup> “Marquee” courses are high-quality, architecturally significant golf courses recognised for their design, setting, and ability to deliver a premium playing experience. They form the flagship tier of New Zealand’s golf tourism network and act as key anchors for international and domestic golf travellers. “Experience” courses sit just below this level and offer distinctive, well-regarded golf destinations that broaden regional itineraries and support multi-course travel. Together, these tiers form the structured network promoted in the New Zealand International Golf Tourism Strategy (2013).

Within the Waikato, the existing golf network comprises three marquee courses (Tieke Golf Estate, The Kinloch Club, and Wairakei Golf + Sanctuary), as well as one experience-level course, Piopio Aria Golf Club (Figure 5). Collectively, these courses already form a strong corridor for golf-driven visitation between Auckland and Taupō.

Figure 5: Experience and Marquee Golf Course Network – Waikato Region



While the proposed course at Awanui Links is not seeking formal designation, it is clearly positioned toward the higher end of the market and would add depth and variety to this established network. By pairing a high-quality golf experience with onsite luxury accommodation, wellness facilities, and fine dining, the development strengthens the Waikato’s appeal as a multi-course destination for both domestic and visiting golfers.

In doing so, Awanui Links will contribute not only a distinctive recreation offering within the Waikato, but also support greater regional connectivity, longer visitor stays, and complementary tourism activity across the central North Island.

## 8.2. Responding to the Need for Care Beds

Demand for aged-care beds in the Waikato and wider Hamilton sub-region is rising sharply as the population aged 75+ grows, yet recent analysis shows that the supply of care beds is not keeping pace. The *Retirement Living Market Analysis* prepared by Formative for the Future Proof Partnership highlights that care-bed penetration rates in the sub-region have declined over the past decade,

reflecting both strong population growth and limited reinvestment in new or upgraded care facilities.<sup>16</sup> This is consistent with national evidence showing that new care-only facilities are now rare, and many older, smaller homes have closed due to persistent financial pressures.<sup>17</sup>

A major contributing factor is the challenging viability within the aged-care sector. The Formative paper notes that assisted-living rarely turns a profit and aged care almost always operates at a loss, reducing operators' ability and incentive to add new beds. This trend is reinforced by industry-wide evidence that the large "Big-6" retirement village operators (who dominate development of independent-living units) are not expanding care capacity at the same rate, and in some cases are actively leaning away from providing care beds due to cost-pressure and funding uncertainty.<sup>18</sup>

In this context, the provision of a modern, integrated care facility at Awanui Links is particularly important. It delivers new capacity in a region where demand is rising<sup>19</sup> but investment in new care beds is waning. By adding purpose-built facilities in a high-amenity setting, the project makes a clear and measurable contribution to meeting identified regional need.

### **8.3. Providing Socio-Economic Benefits for Older Residents**

The proposed retirement village at Awanui Links will generate a range of social and wellbeing benefits that extend beyond housing provision. Purpose-built, accessible dwellings and high-quality communal spaces will promote safety, independence, and regular social interaction – all important contributors to physical and mental wellbeing.

By integrating independent-living units with a dedicated care facility, the village will also enable residents to age in place and transition smoothly as their needs evolve, reducing disruption and supporting continuity of care.

Overall, the village will provide older residents with a secure, socially connected, and supportive environment, enhancing quality of life while contributing to more efficient delivery of local health and support services.

### **8.4. Diversifying the Regional Economy**

The Waikato regional economy is currently characterised by a relatively high concentration of employment in a small number of traditional sectors – particularly agriculture, construction, manufacturing, and retail trade. Together, these industries account for approximately 40 percent of total employment, compared with around 31 percent nationally.<sup>20</sup> This indicates that the region is

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<sup>16</sup> *Retirement Living Market Analysis* (Formative, prepared for the Future Proof Partnership, 2023–2024), analysis of aged-care penetration rates and sub-regional supply dynamics.

<sup>17</sup> JLL, *Retirement Villages Whitepaper 2024*, discussion of closures of small care-only facilities and lack of new standalone care-home development.

<sup>18</sup> JLL, *Retirement Villages Whitepaper 2024*, showing Big-6 operators provide 66% of independent-living units but only 36% of care beds, and emphasising the growing reluctance of large operators to expand care capacity.

<sup>19</sup> Stats NZ population projections indicate rapid ageing in the Waikato Region. Under the medium growth scenario, the population aged 75 years and over is projected to increase from approximately 38,000 people in 2023 to around 86,000 by 2053, an increase of about 126 percent. Under the high growth scenario this increases to around 158 percent. Growth is strongest in the older cohorts, with the population aged 85 years and over projected to more than triple by 2053.

<sup>20</sup> Source: Statistics NZ Business Demography (2025 Employment by Industry, Waikato Region and New Zealand; "Employment Data 2025").

more exposed than the country as a whole to fluctuations in commodity prices, climatic events, construction cycles, and manufacturing demand.

While these sectors remain important pillars of the Waikato economy, such concentration can heighten vulnerability to sector-specific shocks and constrain longer-term resilience. In contrast, service-based industries such as tourism, hospitality, aged care, wellness, and recreation are comparatively under-represented in the regional employment profile.<sup>21</sup>

The Awanui Links development directly contributes to addressing this imbalance. By introducing a mix of tourism, accommodation, wellness, hospitality, and care services, the proposal helps to broaden the structure of the local economy and reduces its dependence on a narrow set of traditional industries. This mix supports a wider range of occupations, diversifies sources of regional income, and enhances overall economic resilience.

## **8.5. Putting Land to Higher and Better Uses**

The proposal will also enable the land to be put to higher and better uses, which is a precondition for economic efficiency to hold in the underlying land market.

## **8.6. Investment Signal Effects**

Further, the development will provide a strong signal of confidence in the district economy, which may help spur on, accelerate, or bring forward other developments.

## **8.7. Foregone Rural Production**

The main potential economic cost of the proposal is forfeiting the subject land for alternative uses, such as rural production. The site's soils are classified as Land Use Capability Class 2, meaning they are considered highly versatile and fall within the scope of the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land (**NPS-HPL**).

A full assessment of the proposal against the NPS-HPL is beyond the scope of this report. However, from an economic perspective, the opportunity cost of foregone dairying (the most recent use of the site) is expected to be minor when compared to the scale and diversity of economic activity enabled by the proposed development, as assessed in Sections 4 and 5.

Further detail on the productive capacity of the site and characteristics of the existing dairy operation can be found in the accompanying agricultural specialist report.

## **8.8. Infrastructure Servicing Cost and Risk**

Finally, we have considered whether the proposal might impose unwarranted costs on the wider community via the infrastructure required to service it. In our view, this risk is minimal because we would expect the applicant to fund and deliver all infrastructure works within the site boundary, plus

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<sup>21</sup> Health care and social assistance, although a large local employer, is excluded from concentration commentary because its growth is primarily driven by demographic structure and is typically less cyclical than the primary and construction sectors.

any necessary infrastructure connections. Accordingly, any infrastructure-related costs or risks to Council – and by extension, the wider community – are expected to be minimal.

The proposal also includes a small on-site solar farm of approximately 3,000 m<sup>2</sup>, located adjacent to the light-industrial precinct. Although modest in scale, an installation of this size could accommodate around 400 solar panels, generating sufficient electricity to meet a portion of on-site demand. As an indication, such a system could offset the approximate annual consumption of 25-30 typical homes, or a meaningful share of the light-industrial activities located immediately alongside the array.<sup>22</sup> In this way, the solar farm will help reduce operational energy demand, improve the sustainability profile of the development, and modestly reduce reliance on external infrastructure networks over time.

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<sup>22</sup> Indicative generation estimates are based on assumptions of approximately 7-8 m<sup>2</sup> of panel area per kW of installed capacity and annual household consumption of 7,000-8,000 kWh. A 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> array could therefore support around 400 panels (depending on configuration), generating electricity equivalent to the annual use of 25-30 typical New Zealand homes.



## 9. Project Acceleration

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This section describes how the FTAA process would accelerate delivery of the proposal.

### 9.1. Timing of Economic Benefits

Not only will the proposal provide meaningful employment for a wide range of local workers, but it will also progress considerably faster through the FTAA than would otherwise be the case. The FTAA establishes a streamlined approvals pathway with tighter statutory timeframes, coordinated decision-making, and – importantly – no merits-based appeals on decisions made by Fast-track Panels.

In contrast, obtaining consent via the standard Resource Management Act pathways would likely involve a multi-stage and potentially appeal-prone process, resulting in substantial delays. Similar large and multi-faceted proposals often experience extended processing timeframes due to public notification, hearings, and Environment Court appeals.

The FTAA (as strengthened by the Fast-track Approvals Amendment Bill 2024) is specifically designed to accelerate nationally and regionally significant projects, reduce consenting uncertainty, and bring forward the timing of economic activity. For Awanui Links, this means enabling the project to commence much sooner than under a conventional consenting pathway, thereby pulling forward both the one-off construction-related stimulus and the ongoing operational economic benefits outlined in this report.

## 10. Conclusion and Checklist

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This section concludes the assessment by confirming the regional significance of the Awanui Links proposal and its alignment with the purpose of the FTAA.

### 10.1. Alignment with the Purpose of the FTAA

The Awanui Links proposal delivers significant regional economic benefits that align with the purpose of the FTAA. It enables the timely delivery of a large, integrated development that generates substantial one-time construction activity and enduring operational employment, while also responding to identified housing, retirement, and care needs within the Waikato region.

Acceleration through the FTAA materially advances the timing of these benefits relative to standard consenting pathways, bringing forward both construction-related economic activity and longer-term contributions to regional output and employment.

### 10.2. Regional Significance, Scale, and Reach

Awanui Links is regionally significant due to its scale, location, and diversity of land uses. At approximately 121 hectares, it is one of the larger master-planned developments proposed in the Waikato in recent years and combines multiple regionally relevant activities within a single, coordinated project.

The site is strategically located within the Waikato growth corridor, with direct access to State Highway 1B and strong connectivity to Hamilton City, Rototuna, Gordonton, and Cambridge. This positioning supports access to labour markets, visitor catchments, and supply chains, meaning the economic effects of the proposal extend well beyond the immediate locality.

### 10.3. Point of Difference Relative to Other Fast-track Proposals

While many Fast-track proposals in the region focus primarily on housing delivery or industrial land supply, Awanui Links offers a materially different economic profile.

The proposal integrates destination tourism, recreation, accommodation, retirement living, and employment-generating land uses within a single master-planned framework. This level of functional integration is uncommon among recent Fast-track applications and will generate a broader and more diverse set of economic effects than single-use developments.

In particular, the inclusion of a high-quality golf course supported by accommodation, hospitality, and wellness facilities introduces a strong visitor economy dimension, with associated off-site spending and spillover benefits that complement, rather than substitute for, more traditional residential and industrial activity.

### 10.4. Economic Diversification, Resilience, and Delivery

The proposal supports diversification of the Waikato economy by expanding activity in tourism, recreation, hospitality, wellness, and aged care. These sectors are currently under-represented relative to the region's traditional strengths in agriculture, construction, and manufacturing.

This diversification supports a wider range of employment opportunities and skill types, reduces exposure to sector-specific cycles, and enhances the resilience of the regional economy over time. The inclusion of a retirement village and integrated care facility further contributes to stability by supporting year-round employment and responding directly to demographic-driven demand.

The master-planned and staged nature of the proposal provides confidence that these benefits can be realised progressively, rather than being contingent on a single development outcome.

## 10.5. Overall Conclusion

Taken together, Awanui Links represents a large, integrated, and strategically located investment that delivers significant regional economic benefits. It provides a clear point of difference relative to other Fast-track proposals, diversifies the Waikato economy, and brings forward substantial one-time and ongoing economic activity through accelerated delivery under the FTAA.

On this basis, the proposal is supported on economic grounds.

## 10.6. FTAA Criteria Checklist

The following table provides a signpost to where each of the relevant criteria listed in Section 22(2)(a) of the FTAA are addressed in this report.

Table 12: Assessment Against Section 22(2)(a) Criteria of FTAA

| Ref    | Criterion                                                                                                 | Signpost       | Assessment Summary |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| (i)    | Identified as a priority project in government plans or strategies                                        | Not assessed   | n/a                |
| (ii)   | Delivers new or supports existing regionally/nationally significant infrastructure                        | Not assessed   | n/a                |
| (iii)  | Increases housing supply, addresses housing needs, or contributes to a well-functioning urban environment | Sections 7 & 8 | ■■■■■              |
| (iv)   | Delivers significant economic benefits                                                                    | Sections 4 - 8 | ■■■■■              |
| (v)    | Supports primary industries, including aquaculture                                                        | Not assessed   | n/a                |
| (vi)   | Supports development of natural resources, including minerals and petroleum                               | Not assessed   | n/a                |
| (vii)  | Supports climate change mitigation (e.g., reducing greenhouse gas emissions)                              | Not assessed   | n/a                |
| (viii) | Supports climate change adaptation, reduces risk from natural hazards                                     | Not assessed   | n/a                |
| (ix)   | Addresses significant environmental issues                                                                | Not assessed   | n/a                |
| (x)    | Consistent with local/regional planning documents and spatial strategies                                  | Not assessed   | n/a                |

Legend:

■■■■■ = Strong  
■■■■□ = Moderate

■■■□□ = Limited  
■■□□□ = Minor

■□□□□ = Very minor