

IN THE MATTER of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (**FTAA**)

AND

IN THE MATTER of an application for approvals by Winton Land Limited to subdivide and develop 244.5 hectares at Old Wairoa Road, Cosgrave Road, and Airfield Road between Takanini and Papakura, Auckland into approximately 3,854 homes, consisting of individual homes and 3 retirement villages containing independent living units and associated features such as a 7.5 hectare town centre, a school, 4 local hubs, open spaces, green links, recreation parks and reserves and ecological areas

MEMORANDUM OF STRATEGIC AND PLANNING MATTERS FOR AUCKLAND COUNCIL

Dated: 4 August 2025

SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

1. This Planning Memorandum sets out Auckland Council's Strategic and Statutory Planning Assessments of the substantive application for the Sunfield project (**Application**) lodged by Winton Land Limited (**Applicant**) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (**FTAA**), and a summary of assessment outcomes and "proportionality conclusions".
2. The **Section B** Strategic Planning Assessment has been prepared by Ms Ilze Gotelli, Principal Advisor- Growth and Spatial Strategy at Auckland Council and Ms Rachel Dimery Consultant Planner for Auckland Council.
3. The **Section C** Statutory Planning Assessment has been prepared by Mr Karl Anderson, Senior Planner, Resource Consents at Auckland Council. The summary of assessment outcomes and "proportionality conclusions" at **Section D** has been prepared by Mr Anderson, with input from Ms Gotelli and Ms Dimery. For the avoidance of doubt, where the Council has identified potentially significant adverse impacts arising from the proposal, it considers that a proportionality assessment must be undertaken to determine whether those adverse impacts potentially outweigh any regional or national benefits of the proposal (having considered conditions or modifications that may avoid, remedy, mitigate, offset, or compensate effects).
4. This Planning Memorandum should be read alongside the Legal Memorandum prepared by Brookfields Lawyers dated 4 August 2025, which addresses the legal framework for decision-making under the FTAA, including the statutory tests and considerations that apply to the Panel's assessment. To avoid duplication, legal framework matters are not restated in this memorandum but are incorporated by reference.
5. In addition, there are 25 accompanying annexures, as follows, which are referred to throughout this memorandum:
 - Funding and Financing – Brigid Duffield (**Annexure 1**)
 - Economics – Dr Richard Meade (**Annexure 2**)
 - Healthy Waters – Andrew Chin (**Annexure 3**)

- Stormwater (Regional Discharge Permit) – Martin Meyer (**Annexure 4**)
- Watercare Services Limited – Helen Shaw / Amber Taylor (**Annexure 5**)
- Veolia – Letter from Sanjeev Morar (**Annexure 6**)
- Auckland Transport – Neil Stone (**Annexure 7**), attaching consultant reports from:
 - Beca (Craig Richards)
 - Progressive Transport Solutions (Martin Peake)
 - Awa (Griffin Benton-Lynne) – stormwater review
- Transport (Auckland Council) – Kate Brill (**Annexure 8**)
- Parks – Lea van Heerden / Hester Gerber (**Annexure 9**)
- Development Engineering and Geotechnical – John Newsome / Maria Baring (**Annexure 10**)
- Land Contamination – Sharon Tang (**Annexure 11**)
- Regional Earthworks – Matthew Byrne (**Annexure 12**)
- Ecology and Streamworks – Jason Smith (**Annexure 13**)
- Groundwater and Dewatering – Andy Samaratunga (**Annexure 14**)
- Lighting – Domenico De Vincentis (**Annexure 15**)
- Rural Productivity / Highly Productive Land – Ruth Underwood (**Annexure 16**)
- Soil and Land Use Capability – Dr Dani Guinto (**Annexure 17**)
- Urban Design – Robert Mainwaring (**Annexure 18**)
- Landscape – Sally Peake (**Annexure 19**)
- Noise – Andrew Gordon (**Annexure 20**)
- Waste Planning – Jennifer Jack (**Annexure 21**)
- Air Quality – Marie Meredith (**Annexure 22**)
- Papakura Local Board (**Annexure 23**)
- Franklin Local Board (**Annexure 24**)
- Table detailing status of existing information requests / gaps the subject of section 67 requests (**Annexure 25**) (note: **Section D** outlines a number of **new** information gaps identified through subsequent assessment).

Qualifications and Relevant Experience

Ilze Gotelli

6. Ilze Gotelli is an urban and environmental policy advisor employed by Auckland Council. She holds a Masters of Arts in Urban and Environmental Policy from Tufts University (Boston, USA) and a Masters in International Law and Diplomacy from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy (Boston, USA). Her current role is Principal Advisor, Growth and Spatial Strategy at Auckland Council.
7. Ilze has over 30 years' experience in urban policy and infrastructure, with a focus on policy, institutional development, and regulation. Prior to joining Auckland Council, she was a Director at KPMG New Zealand in the infrastructure advisory team for almost three years and held various roles at Watercare Services Limited. Her roles included Head of Major Developments where she advised major developers in Auckland on water and wastewater requirements and funding arrangements. She also held the role of Policy Manager at Watercare, providing inputs to key planning documents.
8. Ilze has significant experience in planning and infrastructure in Auckland including supporting the development of the Auckland Unitary Plan, plan changes (both public and private), input to resource consents.

Rachel Dimery

9. Rachel Dimery is a planning consultant and the director of Dimery Consulting Limited. She holds a Master of Planning Practice (Honours) and Bachelor of Arts (Geography), both from the University of Auckland. She is a full member of the New Zealand Planning Institute and

has over 25 years' planning experience. During this time, she has held positions in local government (at the former Auckland City Council, Waitākere City Council and Auckland Council) and as a consultant planner.

10. Rachel has a wide range of experience in planning matters under the Resource Management Act (RMA) including plan preparation, resource consents (land use consents, subdivision consents and discharge permits), notices of requirement for the designation of large-scale infrastructure projects and outline plans of work. She has appeared as an expert witness at hearings before councils and the Environment Court. She is also an accredited hearings commissioner (chair endorsed). She is currently appointed to the panel of independent hearings commissioners for Queenstown Lakes District Council, Thames Coromandel District Council, Taupō District Council, Ōpōtiki District Council and Whangārei District Council and sits as a commissioner on a regular basis.
11. Rachel's experience that is relevant to this application includes preparing submissions and planning evidence on behalf of clients and sitting as a hearings commissioner on plan changes seeking the rezoning of greenfield land for urban development and the rezoning of existing urban areas for more intensive urban development. Most recently she has been involved in rezoning proposals in Auckland, Pōkeno, Hamilton, Wānaka and Whangārei. She was also involved in preparing submissions and evidence on behalf of clients in relation to Plan Change 80 to the Auckland Unity Plan Regional Policy Statement.
12. Between 2011 and 2016 Rachel had extensive involvement in the Auckland Unitary Plan, both as an author and later, as an independent peer reviewer. Rachel was the lead planner for the infrastructure, airport and national grid overlay topics, as well as the author of provisions for various precincts. Her role as a peer reviewer included the peer review of the precinct provisions for the greenfield areas at Long Bay, Silverdale North, Hobsonville, Westgate, Kumeu, Babich, Clevedon, Takaanini and Māngere Gateway.
13. Rachel's other relevant experience includes her roles as senior planner and subdivision team leader in the resource consents department at Waitākere City Council and Auckland Council. Rachel was involved in the initial stages of the preparation of the plan change for the urbanisation of Areas 6a and 6b of the Takaanini Structure Plan in 2005.

Karl Anderson

14. Karl Anderson is a Senior Planner in the Planning and Resource Consents Department at Auckland Council. Karl holds the qualification of Bachelor of Planning and has eleven years of planning experience, and two years of experience in property valuation. He has prepared expert evidence and technical assessments for resource consent applications, and has appeared as an expert witness before consent authorities and the Environment Court.
15. Karl's experience that is relevant to this application includes processing resource consent applications throughout the legacy Franklin District area with a focus on greenfield development, rural subdivision and land use, diversion and discharge in relation to freshwater, and consents on Highly Productive Land. Karl has also previously been involved as a consultant planner for housing development consents in the Grove Road-Cosgrave Road block (102 dwellings) during the development of Awakeri Wetland Stage 1, through the Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013.

Code of Conduct

16. Ilze Gotelli, Rachel Dimery and Karl Anderson confirm that they have read the Environment Court Practice Note 2023 – Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses (**Code**), and have complied with it in the preparation of this assessment. They also agree to follow the Code when participating in any subsequent processes, such as expert conferencing, directed by

the Panel. They confirm that the opinions they have expressed are within their area of expertise and are their own, except where they have stated that they are relying on the work or evidence of others, which they have specified.

SECTION B: STRATEGIC PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Overview of Strategic Planning Assessment

17. As noted, **Section B** has been prepared by Ilze Gotelli and Rachel Dimery.
18. The assessment in **Section B** reviews the Sunfield fast track application for development of 215.2 hectares of Future Urban Zoned (**FUZ**) and Mixed Rural Zoned (**MRZ**) land to provide the "Sunfield Community." The proposal comprises 3,854 homes, 460,000 sqm of employment/healthcare/education buildings, a 7.6 hectare town centre, and associated infrastructure.
19. The assessment finds that the proposal conflicts with multiple levels of the planning policy hierarchy and faces significant technical constraints that have led to the repeated rejection of this land for urban development over more than two decades. The development would contravene strategic growth directions and statutory planning provisions.
20. The Council family's Legal Memorandum addresses the continued relevance of planning instruments in the context of the FTAA framework (including in terms of section 85(4)).
21. Our key conclusions are that:
 - (a) The proposal is strongly inconsistent with the Auckland Future Development Strategy 2023 – 2053 (**FDS**).
 - (b) The proposal is contrary to, and highly inconsistent with, the Regional Policy Statement Chapters B2, B3, B9 and B10 of the Auckland Unitary Plan (**AUP**).
 - (c) The proposal is contrary to, and highly inconsistent with, the District Plan Chapters H18 Future Urban Zone and H19 Rural zones of the AUP.
22. The key reasons for our conclusions are that:
 - (a) The level of development proposed poses unacceptable risks to flood management, water quality and public safety. There is a high risk of significant adverse impacts, and worsening existing flood hazards in the downstream Papakura Stream catchment and Pahurehure Inlet catchment. (See the Healthy Waters memo at **Annexure 3** in relation to these matters.)
 - (b) The proposal does not integrate with Council's current planned and funded infrastructure projects for transport, wastewater, water and stormwater. There is a high degree of ambiguity around the level of infrastructure that will be funded by the applicant and there are no infrastructure funding agreements in place.
 - (c) The development will result in the permanent loss of highly productive land. The land is wholly classified as Land Use Capability 2 under the New Zealand Resource Inventory and there is no evidence of permanent of long-term constraints on the land mean use for land-based production is not economically viable.
23. If the application is approved, it is likely that there will be infrastructure deficiencies. Council has no plans to reprioritise funding to support infrastructure for the Mixed Rural Zone land. Without the required infrastructure in place, the development would proceed with inadequate servicing.

Documents reviewed

24. We have reviewed the Sunfield Fast-track Approval Substantive Application – Planning Report dated 31st March 2025, prepared by Tattico (the **Planning Report**). The Planning Report describes the proposal as a comprehensive master planned development over an area of approximately 244.5 hectares, of which, 215.2 hectares is owned, or contracted to purchase, by the applicant. It is proposed to undertake subdivision and development over a 10-to-15-year period, in approximately 25 stages.
25. We have also reviewed the following application documents:
 - (a) Winton Land Limited Statement of Intent
 - (b) Sunfield masterplanned community – Concept Masterplan prepared by Studio Pacific Architecture
 - (c) Residential Precinct plans prepared by Studio Pacific Architecture
 - (d) Employment Concept Masterplan
 - (e) Sunfield Design Controls & Design Guidelines for Residential Precincts, Employment Precinct, Town Centre Precinct, Aged Care Precincts and Local Hub Precincts.
 - (f) Economic Assessment prepared by Property Economics
 - (g) National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land assessment of the Sunfield site, Ardmore prepared by Landsystems
 - (h) Infrastructure Report prepared by Maven
 - (i) Integrated Transportation Assessment Report prepared by Commute Transportation Consultants
 - (j) Assessment of Noise Effects prepared by Styles Group Acoustics & Vibration Consultants
 - (k) Stormwater Management Plan prepared by Maven
 - (l) Three Waters Strategy Report prepared by Maven
 - (m) Sunfield Scheme Plans (including staging plan).
26. We have reviewed the technical memoranda prepared by officers and consultants for Auckland Council.

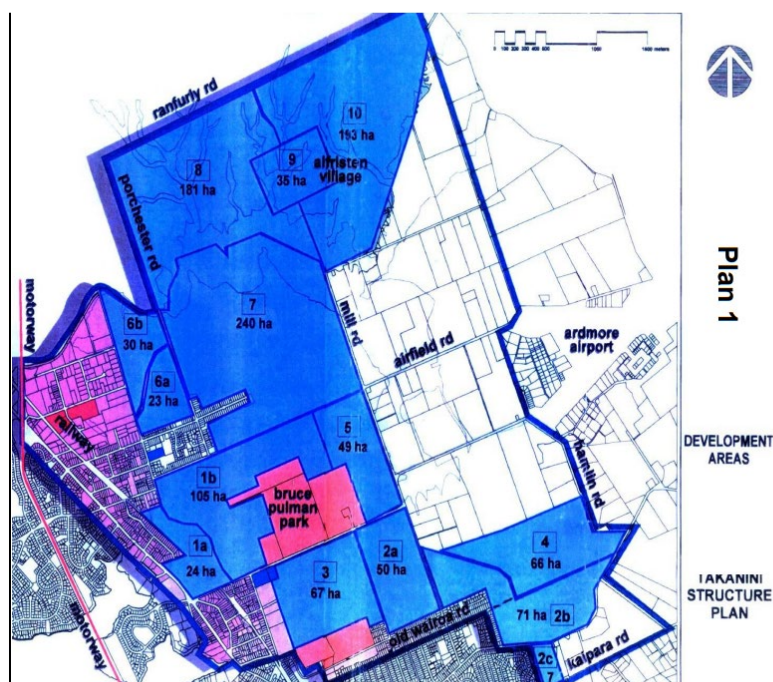
Planning History of the Site

27. The Application land has been considered multiple times for urban development through various council planning processes, with consistent concerns about its suitability.

Takanini Structure Plan (2000)

28. Before Auckland Council's formation, this area was part of Papakura District Council. The Takaanini area was identified as a greenfield area suitable for future urban expansion in the 1999 Auckland Regional Growth Strategy. Papakura District Council undertook planning to identify opportunities and constraints and establish a growth framework for the Takaanini area. The Takanini Structure Plan was adopted in November 2000. Through the structure plan process, only the area at the southern end of the Application site was considered suitable for urban development. This area is identified in the Structure Plan as part of area 2b and 4, **Figure 1**).

Figure 1: Takanini Structure Plan (2000)

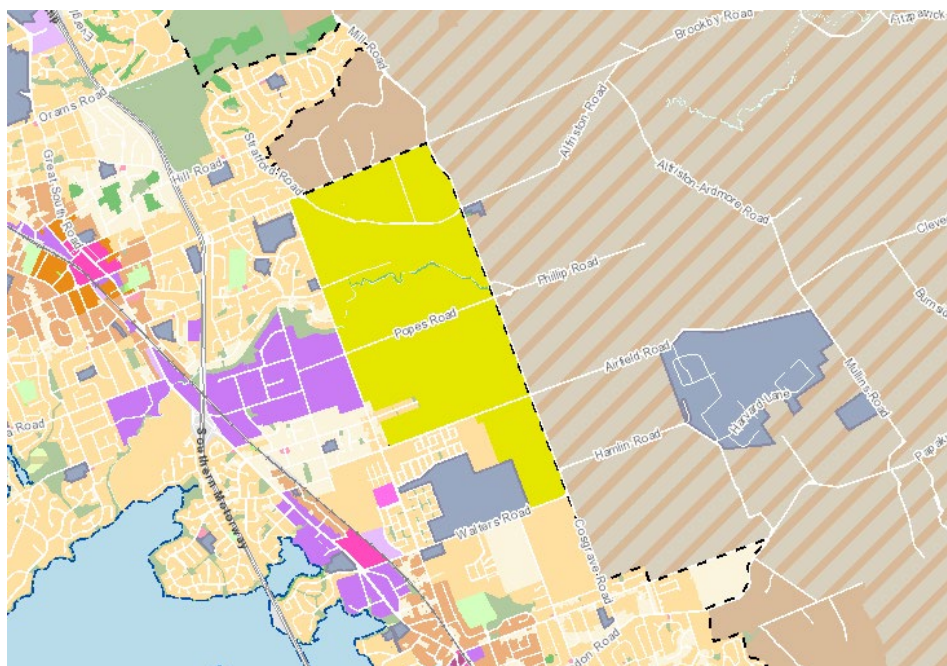


Auckland Unitary Plan Process

29. The area was reconsidered during the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan (**PAUP**) process. The consultation draft showed all of Takanini Structure Plan land that had not been urbanised as Mixed Rural. Significant feedback requested inclusion of either specific sites or the broader Takanini area in the Plan. In response, the Auckland Planning Committee directed council to include Takanini within the Rural Urban Boundary (**RUB**) in the PAUP.¹
30. Council assessed several options for extending the RUB. The preferred option was to extend the RUB to Mill Road and apply a Future Urban Zone (**FUZ**) to land west of Mill Road. This was included in the notified PAUP (see **Figure 2** below). This alignment was considered to provide appropriate buffer and separation from Ardmore Airport and was largely consistent with the 2000 Takanini Structure Plan. The FUZ zoning would provide opportunity for comprehensive structure planning to address Mill Road Corridor alignment and stormwater and flooding issues.

¹ The Committee's direction was that Takanini should be included within the RUB in the Proposed AUP at the time of notification, and officers were requested to identify options for a defensible boundary. It was the Committee's view that any existing issues could be resolved by identifying land as Future Urban zone and thus requiring a structure plan/plan change process to manage the release land for development following the resolution of infrastructure and natural hazard issues (Technical Report – Assessment of Edge Requests for Inclusion within the Rural Urban Boundary, Hill Young Cooper, August 2013, section 5.3.8).

Figure 2: Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan



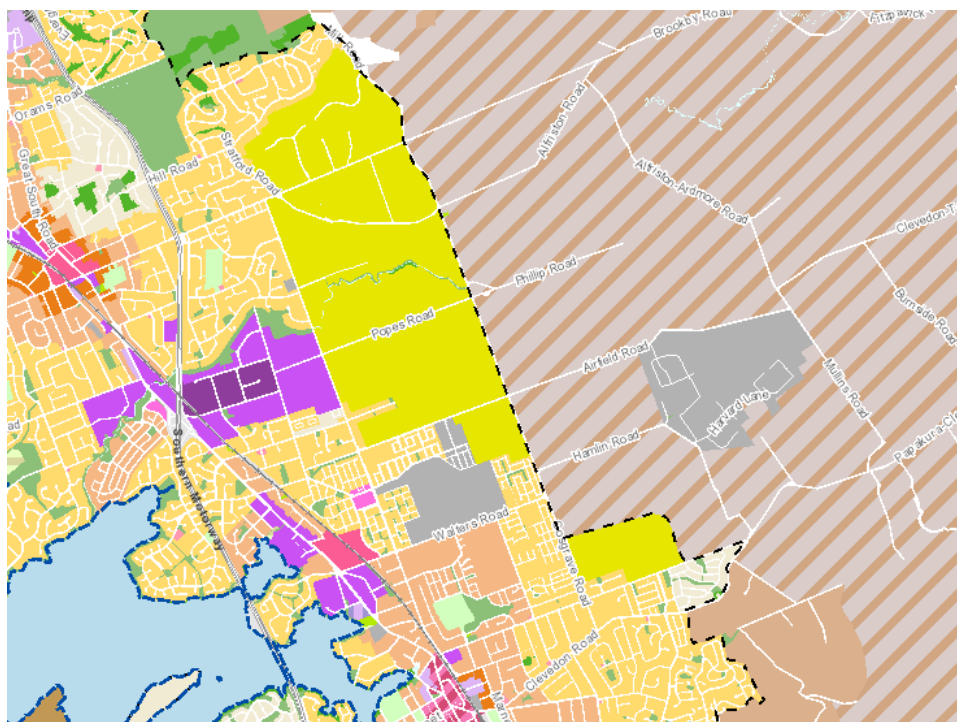
31. The RUB location and zoning were tested through consultation on the 2013 notified PAUP. Significant submissions were received requesting changes to zoning and RUB location, including submissions related to the Application site.
32. In the council planners' evidence to the PAUP hearing,² they recommended retaining the RUB as notified with one change to include 55ha to the east of Cosgrave Road within the RUB and zone the land FUZ.³ As set out in the evidence, the reasons for supporting the RUB location were:
- (a) As stated in Dr Fairgray's evidence, adequate capacity for urban growth can be provided within the RUB as notified, so this large land area is not required to provide for additional growth capacity within the RUB;
 - (b) The non-road boundaries of the land shown in the submission are not all defensible;
 - (c) The land is low lying and subject to flooding constraints. Development of the land would lead to downstream flood risks;
 - (d) The majority of the land has high settlement (particularly where these comprise peat/swamp deposits) and medium liquefaction potential. Much of the area also has a high overall development premium;
 - (e) The area is subject to significant infrastructure servicing constraints and costs, and
 - (f) The Ardmore Airport Noise Overlay contours restrict development sensitive to aircraft noise.⁴
33. This position regarding land near Ardmore airport was further reviewed through mediations with submitters. The Independent Hearing Panel accepted the council planners' recommendations and the land the subject of this application retained the Rural – Mixed Rural zone as notified. **Figure 3** below shows the operative AUP zoning.

² Joint Statement of Evidence of Joy Martha LaNauze and Trevor Graham Watson on Behalf of Auckland Council (Planning – Takanini), Presented to the Auckland Unitary Plan Independent Hearing Panel Topic 017 RUB South. 16 October 2015.

³ This land was included as FUZ land because of a major stormwater conveyance project proposed by Auckland Council's Stormwater unit that would enable the urban development of land within that part of the catchment.

⁴ Evidence of Joy Martha LaNauze and Trevor Graham Watson, p. 22-23.

Figure 3: Operative Auckland Unitary Plan



Future Development Strategy Process

34. The suitability of the future urban land in the Takaanini area was reassessed as part of the FDS. Through this process, the FDS provided direction that the southern portion of the FUZ land be removed because it is no longer considered appropriate for urban development. The reasons for this include: the land is within the 1% annual exceedance probability (**AEP**) floodplain and underlaid by peat soil and, due to the underlying geology, liquefaction is possible. As the majority of the Application land is outside of the FUZ land, it was not included in this assessment. However, this direction highlights council's concerns about development in areas with significant geological and hydrological constraints.

Summary of key strategies and policies contravened

35. The Sunfield fast track application proposes to develop land that has been repeatedly assessed and rejected for urban development due to known constraints. It contravenes multiple levels of the strategic and planning policy framework in significant and fundamental ways. The following is a summary of the key statutory strategies and policies that the proposal contravenes. Each of these documents is assessed in further detail in the subsequent sections.

Future Development Strategy 2023-2053:

36. The Proposal is contrary to the FDS as it:
- (a) Contradicts the strategic direction for minimal rural growth to retain rural environment and productivity.
 - (b) Proposes development of FUZ land 25+ years ahead of the planned 2050+ timeframe.

National Policy Statement on Urban Development:

37. The proposal fails to create a well-functioning urban environment due to:

- (a) Moderate aircraft noise exposure within the Outer Noise Boundary⁵ affecting outdoor amenity for future residents within both their homes and while using parks within the development, with a reliance on windows remaining closed at all times to achieve an adequate level of internal acoustic amenity
- (b) Uncertain and untested public transport system ('Sunbus')
- (c) Infrastructure sequencing incompatible with provider priorities and with no certainty that the applicant will fund all of the required infrastructure
- (d) Insufficient flood risk mitigation for rural-to-urban land use change.

National Policy Statement on Highly Productive Land:

38. The proposal is contrary to the NPS-HPL because:

- (a) It proposes permanent loss of 188ha of LUC Class 2 soil (highly productive land)
- (b) It does not provide comprehensive assessment under Clause 3.10 of NPS-HPL
- (c) Council's soil scientist and agricultural expert conclude limitations can be overcome and land should be protected from non-agricultural uses.

Regional Policy Statement

39. In respect of Chapter B2 (Urban Growth and Form), the proposal:

- (a) Does not achieve quality compact urban form by failing to consider value of maintaining rural areas
- (b) Proposes urbanisation outside RUB contrary to directive policies to avoid such development
- (c) Fails to avoid prime soils (LUC 2 and 3) significant for food production.

40. Under Chapter B3 (Infrastructure, Transport and Energy):

- (a) Infrastructure planning not integrated with land use planning
- (b) The proposal relies on untested technology (autonomous shuttles) without adequate contingencies
- (c) There is no comprehensive agreed plan for infrastructure financing and funding.

41. In respect of Chapter B9 (Rural Environment) the proposal:

- (a) Contravenes directive policy to avoid urbanisation of rural areas outside RUB
- (b) Results in significant adverse effects on rural area through loss of highly productive land
- (c) Increases pressure on surrounding productive land for further urbanisation.

42. In terms of Chapter B10 (Environmental Risk):

- (a) There is insufficient certainty that flood risk mitigation is adequate given 80% of site is in floodplains
- (b) The development proposes development in known hazard areas contrary to growth strategy direction.

Auckland Unitary Plan - Zone Provisions

43. The assessment of the MRZ portion of the proposal is that it:

- (a) Is contrary to zone objectives and policies to enable the continuation of rural production activities
- (b) Does not maintain rural character and amenity values

⁵ between the 55 dB Ldn and 60 dB Ldn countours.

(c) Introduces urban activities contrary to zone's purpose and principles.

44. The FUZ portion of the proposal:

- (a) Proposes urban development before rezoning through plan change process
- (b) Is contrary to objectives requiring land to remain rural until rezoned
- (c) Contravenes directive policies to "avoid" and "prevent" urban development prior to rezoning
- (d) No comprehensive structure planning undertaken.

Future Development Strategy 2023-2053

45. The FDS sets out Auckland Council's vision for how the region will grow and change over the next 30 years. The strategic direction is to provide for a greater degree of intensification in existing urban areas, some development in future urban areas (FUAs) and limited reliance on expansion into rural areas and satellite townships.⁶
46. The FDS is a relevant consideration in fast-track application decision-making under clause 17 of Schedule 5 to the FTAA, which 'imports' the decision-making provisions of the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**), including section 104 of the RMA. The FDS was prepared using the special consultative procedure in section 83 of the Local Government Act and is an important growth document required by the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (**NPS-UD**). It is a relevant planning document for the Panel to have regard to under section 104(1)(c) of the RMA. The Legal Memorandum from Brookfields Lawyers addresses the status of the FDS further.
47. The majority of the Application site is rural land. The FDS anticipates minimal growth in rural areas to retain the rural environment and rural productivity. The development of a large extent of rural land is not consistent with the strategic direction set out in the FDS. (See Principle 1(a)⁷ and section 4.1.1 of the FDS.⁸)
48. Development of the FUZ land is anticipated by Council. The FDS sets out the timing of when future urban areas will be ready for development, including having bulk infrastructure in place to service the area. The Takaanini (Cosgrove Rd) FUZ portion of Application site is anticipated for development in 2050+ due to the significant infrastructure requirements.
49. The FDS identifies Mill Road and Takaanini Frequent Transit Network (**FTN**) upgrade as infrastructure prerequisites needed to enable development in the Takaanini (Cosgrove Rd) future urban area. In addition, the Supporting Growth Alliance (**SGA**) has identified improvements for the area in their indicative strategic transport network, most notably upgrades Mahia Road and Popes Road (including a new grade separated rail and SH1 crossing) and Papakura-Clevedon Rd safety improvements.
50. The Sunfield Application Economic assessment states that: *"The FUZ extent of the Subject site had an identified timing of 2023-2037 in the FULSS and therefore the proposed development, at least the FUZ extent, fits in with the Council's outlined timing."* It goes on to state that: *"The adopted FDS has postponed this timing to 2050+, but that document is still to go through the statutory process and is subject to change."*⁹ This statement is incorrect. The FDS was adopted by the Auckland Council governing body in November 2023, replacing the Auckland Plan 2050 Development Strategy 2018 and the Future Urban Land Supply Strategy 2017 (FULSS). It is not subject to change until the next formal review. The FDS reassessed all FUAs that had not been live zoned as of 2023 to evaluate the appropriateness of each area for future urban growth. The timing for some of the future urban areas was

⁶ Future Development Strategy 2023-2053, p. 36.

⁷ FDS, page 16.

⁸ FDS, page 36.

⁹ Sunfield Application Economic Assessment, page 19.

updated in the FDS from the timing in the FULSS 2017 to reflect the realities of infrastructure funding and the provision.¹⁰ The Economic Assessment report later acknowledges that Council has adopted the FDS and that it does replace the FULSS but does not correct the assertion that the proposed development of the FUZ portion fits in with council's timing.¹¹

51. There is significant uncertainty and contradictory statements in the application material about the funding of infrastructure. At the time of writing, there is no Infrastructure Funding Agreement in place. On this basis, the application does not meet the infrastructure pre-requisites for development of either the FUZ portion of the application site, and nor does it demonstrate that the infrastructure pre-requisites for the MRZ portion of the application site can be satisfied. The proposal is strongly inconsistent with the FDS.

National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020

52. The NPS-UD seeks to ensure that New Zealand's towns and cities are well-functioning urban environments that meet the changing needs of diverse communities. It also seeks to remove barriers to development to allow growth 'up' and 'out' in locations that have good access to existing services, public transport networks and infrastructure.
53. The Applicant's Planning Report considers that the proposal is consistent with, and gives effect to, the NPS-UD, noting particularly that the proposal will:¹²
- (a) create a well-functioning urban environment;
 - (b) provide appropriate self-funded infrastructure;
 - (c) significantly contribute to development capacity in the region;
 - (d) support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions;
 - (e) be resilient to the current and future effects of climate change; and
 - (f) take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi).
54. The NPS-UD, through various objectives and policies, requires that planning decisions contribute to well-functioning urban environments. Policy 1 describes the minimum requirements for a well-functioning urban environment and requires that all planning decisions contribute to achieving this outcome. These requirements are the minimum requirements and are a non-exhaustive list. While the applicant claims the proposal would enable a variety of homes and sites for business,¹³ there are significant issues with the proposal that will not enable all people and communities to provide for their social or economic wellbeing nor their health and safety, now and into the future:

Aircraft Noise Exposure

- (a) The proposal to introduce significantly more activities sensitive to noise in areas adjacent to Ardmore Airport has the potential for reverse sensitivity effects on the on-going operation of airport and exposes future occupiers/residents to noise effects. Residents and visitors using parks and open spaces will also be subject to moderate aircraft noise. While it is acknowledged that a range of mitigation measures are proposed, such as a no-complaints covenant and acoustic insulation, the level of residential development proposed significantly increases the number of people exposed to aircraft noise and unavoidably reduces outdoor residential amenity, as well as the amenity of parks and open spaces. It also reduces residential amenity, as it relies on people keeping their windows shut and relying on mechanical ventilation. Reliance on mechanical ventilation will in turn increase energy use and will not support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Retaining the land around Ardmore Airport as Mixed Rural Zone would better protect the operations of the airport from reverse sensitivity

¹⁰ FDS, page 44.

¹¹ Sunfield Application Economic Assessment, page 29.

¹² Sunfield Application Planning Report, page 225.

¹³ Policy 1(a)(i) and 1(b)

effects and would avoid creating low amenity living environments that are reliant on mechanical ventilation with compromised ability to use outdoor living areas.

Public Transport and Accessibility

- (b) While the master-planned community intends to achieve a level of self-sufficiency through providing for areas of employment, healthcare, education, open space and local hubs, residents would still need to travel outwards and active and public transport options outside the community is very limited due to a lack of infrastructure and the distance to existing infrastructure. This is particularly important when the future community aims to achieve a reduction in reliance on private vehicle ownership. The applicant has proposed that a frequent public transport system ('Sunbus') that would continuously operate and link both internally within the site and wider network (including Takanini and Papakura town centres and train stations). There are several concerns around the viability of this service – addressed further in Auckland Transport's comments – which will be the backbone of the future network supporting this proposed community, including the viability of ongoing private funding, capacity of the buses, reliability, frequency of services and the infrastructure needed to support the service outside of the area.

Infrastructure Sequencing Issues

- (c) Although some infrastructure is proposed to be built or funded by the applicant, the infrastructure sequencing may be incompatible with the priorities of infrastructure providers. Further, additional upgrades, not proposed by the Applicant, would also be required. These issues are addressed in more detail by the Council family's other specialists.

Flood Risk Management

- (d) Although measures are proposed to improve flood resilience for the site and surrounding environment, it is unclear if this mitigation is sufficient, considering the proposed change in land use from rural to urban. These issues are addressed in more detail by Council's other specialists who conclude that the proposal poses a high risk of creating significant adverse impacts and exacerbating flood hazards in the downstream catchment.

National Policy Statement on Highly Productive Land

55. The NPS-Highly Productive Land (**NPS-HPL**) came into effect on 17 October 2022. The current version of the NPS-HPL is dated August 2024.
56. Highly productive land is land that is predominantly Land Use Capability (LUC) 1,2, or 3,¹⁴ is in a general rural or rural production zone and forms a large and geographically cohesive area. It must also be mapped by the regional council.
57. The objective of the NPS-HPL is to protect highly productive land for use in land-based primary production both now and for future generations. Key policies include:
- Policy 1: Highly productive land is recognised as a resource with finite characteristics and long-term values for land-based primary production.
 - Policy 4: The use of highly productive land for land-based primary production is prioritised and supported.

¹⁴ The government is currently consulting on a proposal to remove LUC 3 from the NPS-HPL.

- Policy 5: The urban rezoning of highly productive land is avoided, except as provided in this National Policy Statement.
 - Policy 7: The subdivision of highly productive land is avoided, except as provided in this National Policy Statement.
58. The rurally zoned part of the Application site (an estimated 188 ha) is currently identified on Auckland Council's Geomaps as LUC Class 2 soil.
59. The Applicant's Economics Assessment states:
- ... the LUC has several limitations when assessing a specific site, particularly the limited scale of mapping and its ability to be used at a local / property boundary level. Therefore, the NZLRI LUC classes should serve as a general guide rather than an exact representation of the practical land use status within the Subject site.¹⁵
60. The above assessment points to work conducted by Dr Singleton in 2020 (attached to the Landsystems report), which related to some, but not all, of the Application site. This work mapped the extent of the sub-categorisations of the LUC 2 (2w2 and 2s4) and 3 land. The AEE refers to this work, suggesting that the clay soil and wetness limitations render it more suitable for urbanisation.¹⁶
61. The Economics Assessment addresses incorrect provisions in the NPS-HPL (clause 3.6) relating to urban rezoning of highly productive land. This proposal does not involve any rezoning, rather it is a resource consent application. The relevant tests are located in clause 3.10. While the AEE addresses clause 3.10 at section 8.5, as Mr Anderson discusses in **Section C**, the analysis is brief and does not analyse all aspects of the tests.
62. For the Council, the NPS-HPL aspects of the proposal have been assessed by Dr Richard Meade (economics – **Annexure 2**), Dr Dani Guinto (soil science – **Annexure 17**), and Ruth Underwood (rural productivity – **Annexure 16**).
63. Dr Dani Guinto reviewed the soil mapping by Singleton (2020) and found that it adequately characterised the soil, noting that the areas omitted from the review require site-specific mapping. However, he concludes that limitations on productive use due to wetness or poor soil drainage can be overcome by proper drainage and good soil management, and thus these highly productive lands should be protected from non-agricultural uses in accordance with the HPS-HPL.¹⁷
64. In her assessment, Ruth Underwood notes that the Application documents do not provide a comprehensive assessment under Clause 3.10 of the NPS-HPL. However, in her opinion "the land use limitations on the Sunfield land do not appear to be severe, and if fully assessed, are unlikely to meet the high bar set by the NPS-HPL Clause 3.10." She points to a number of factors including:
- The site is a large land area with limited land titles (so is not fragmented)
 - The site is being used for land-based primary production
 - Limitations on the land are slight to moderate and are being managed with appropriate and existing technologies and practices.¹⁸

¹⁵ Sunfield Application Economic Assessment, page 77.

¹⁶ AEE, pages 228-229.

¹⁷ Review of the Soil/LUC Report: National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land Assessment of the Sunfield Site, Ardmore, review by Dr Dani Guinto, Senior Land and Soil Scientist, EEMU, EATA, Auckland Council, July 2025.

¹⁸ Specialist report – Highly Productive Land, Ruth Underwood, Horticultural Consultant.

Regional Policy Statement

65. Several chapters of the RPS are relevant to this application which are addressed in section 9.3 of the Planning Report. The most relevant chapters are:

- B2 Urban growth and form;
- B3 Infrastructure, transport and energy;
- B9 Rural Environment; and
- B10 Environmental Risk.

Chapter B2 Urban Growth and Form

66. Chapter B2 of the RPS establishes the AUP growth management strategy to achieve a quality compact urban form. Objective B2.2.1(1) is the overarching objective for urban growth and establishes the outcomes to be achieved, which are then delivered by the policy framework within B2.

67. To achieve a quality compact urban form, the RPS promotes urban growth and intensification within the existing urban area, enabling growth within the RUB and towns and villages and seeking to avoid urbanisation outside of these areas (Objectives B2.2.1(2) and (4) and Policy B2.2.2(4)).

68. The primary concerns with the application when assessed against B2 are set out below:

- (a) The Planning Report states that the proposal creates a 'logical expansion for growth adjacent to a significant existing edge of urban land' and that 'continuous growth' of a greenfield area in this location is appropriate. However, greenfield expansion in the area of MRZ will not deliver a 'compact urban form' as the proposal does not give adequate consideration to the contribution of the rural environment to achieving a quality compact urban form (Objective B2.2.1(1)). Achieving a quality compact urban form should not be solely focused on the future urban environment, but also needs to consider the value of maintaining the existing rural areas.
- (b) Objective B2.2.1(2) and Policy B2.2.2(4) focus growth in the main contiguous urban area that existed in 2016 and enable urban growth within other identified areas while being directive to avoid urbanisation outside these areas. Urbanisation within the area currently zoned MRZ and outside the RUB is not anticipated by the AUP, reflecting the need to contain urban expansion to not enable development which sprawls onto rural areas.

Objective B2.2.1(1) lists all outcomes required to achieve a quality compact urban form. This flows through the objectives and policies in Chapter B2. Policies B2.2.2(2) requires land suitable for urbanisation to be in locations that contribute to a well-functioning urban environment. The elements of a well-functioning urban environment include avoiding where practicable prime soils (Policy B2.2.2(2)(j)) and limiting or avoiding urbanisation where a "qualifying matter" such as the Ardmore Airport designation provides justification (B2.2.2(2)(n)).

- (c) Policy B2.4.2(6) is to ensure development is adequately serviced. In respect of the MRZ part of the site, Watercare has advised that there is no planned infrastructure and no demonstrated ability to service the site with wastewater from its network.

Chapter B3 Infrastructure, Transport and Energy

69. Chapter B3 addresses the management and investment of infrastructure. There are a number of issues that are pertinent in terms of resilience of infrastructure, ability to service and

upgrade infrastructure efficiently, dealing with reverse sensitivity and the integration of infrastructure with urban growth.

70. The following objectives and policies of Chapter B3 are relevant to the proposal:

Objective B3.2.1(5)

Infrastructure planning and land use planning are integrated to service growth efficiently.

Policy B3.2.2(4)

Avoid where practicable, or otherwise remedy or mitigate, adverse effects of subdivision, use and development on infrastructure.

Objective B3.1.1 (1)

(1) Effective, efficient and safe transport that:

- (a) supports the movement of people, goods and services;*
- (b) integrates with and supports a quality compact urban form;*
- (c) enables growth;*
- (d) avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects on the quality of the environment and amenity*
- (e) values and the health and safety of people and communities; and*
- (f) facilitates transport choices, recognises different trip characteristics and enables accessibility and mobility for all sectors of the community.*

Policy B3.3.2(5)

(5) Improve the integration of land use and transport by:

- (a) ensuring transport infrastructure is planned, funded and staged to integrate with urban growth;*
- (b) encouraging land use development and patterns that reduce the rate of growth in demand for private vehicle trips, especially during peak periods;*
- (c) locating high trip-generating activities so that they can be efficiently served by key public transport services and routes and complement surrounding activities by supporting accessibility to a range of transport modes;*
- (d) requiring proposals for high trip-generating activities which are not located in centres or on corridors or at public transport nodes to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the transport network;*
- (e) enabling the supply of parking and associated activities to reflect the demand while taking into account any adverse effects on the transport system; and*
- (f) requiring activities adjacent to transport infrastructure to avoid, remedy or mitigate effects which may compromise the efficient and safe operation of such infrastructure*

71. The applicant considers that the proposal is located within 'reasonably close proximity' to the RTN with it being 2km from Papakura train station and 2.2km from Takaanini Train station. The master planned community aims to move away from a reliance on private motor vehicles through compact living and 15-minute neighbourhoods. Significant employment growth is planned in close proximity to housing, as are open space and centres to achieve a level of self-sufficiency for the community. Public transport services (the Sun bus autonomous electric shuttle fleet) is proposed to allow for connections from Sunfield to the rail network.
72. The applicant has stated that the development will be fully provided with the infrastructure required to service it. However, the infrastructure funding and financing memorandum by Brigid Duffield that forms part of the Council's comments (**Annexure 1**) reaches a different conclusion.
73. The primary concerns in relation to the above objectives and policies are:
- (a) Whether the assumed changes in travel patterns, trip generation rates, behaviour (less private vehicle ownership) and external trips will eventuate. This issue is addressed in detail in the Auckland Transport memorandum and the supporting technical reports annexed thereto. If what is realised is different to the applicant's assumptions, this will have effects on the external road network, the integration of land use and transport, and the timing and nature of improvements required to the surrounding road network.
 - (b) The viability of the proposed public bus service and its ongoing funding and operation in perpetuity to serve the new community. A foundation of the applicant's proposal for future community is the 'Sunbus' service that would connect the community with the rail service and town centres to the west. This is an untested technology. This is not to say that it will not work, but that there are not sufficient contingencies in place should this technology not work as intended. This is a significant issue particularly given the proposal severely restricts the number of car-parking spaces available within the community in order to reduce reliance on private motor vehicles.
 - (c) The impact of unanticipated growth and the potential that it could divert capacity away from planned growth that must still be serviced. While the applicant has stated that financing and funding of infrastructure required to support the application will be addressed by themselves, Policy B3.3.2(5)(a) requires a level of certainty that is not available at this stage. Allowing the application to proceed without a comprehensive agreed plan for how the necessary infrastructure can be financed and funded presents a significant risk for council and infrastructure providers.

Chapter B9 Rural Environment

74. Chapter B9 focuses on the rural environment and the impacts of growth on these parts of the region in terms of amenity values, environment and the protecting of elite quality soils, fragmentation of sites and reverse sensitivity on rural production activities.
75. The applicant considers that urbanisation of the land is appropriate within the context of the productive soils assessment, and the other technical supports which support urbanisation of the land and demonstrate that this can be feasibly achieved.
76. Objectives B9.2.1(1) and (4) are relevant to the consideration of urbanising rural land. The RPS provisions recognise the significant productive potential of rural land and its contributions to wider economic productivity and food supply in Auckland and New Zealand. For this reason, the policies require that rural areas outside the RUB and rural and coastal towns and villages are to be protected from inappropriate urban use and development.

Objective B9.2.1(1) Rural areas make a significant contribution to the wider economic productivity of, and food supply for, Auckland and New Zealand.

Objective B9.2.1(4) Auckland's rural areas outside the Rural Urban Boundary and rural and coastal towns and villages are protected from inappropriate subdivision, urban use and development.

77. Urbanisation is addressed again in Policy B9.2.2(1) which establishes that rural areas are for rural activities, and it is directive in its requirement to avoid significant adverse effects and urbanisation.

Policy B9.2.2(1)

Enable a diverse range of activities while avoiding significant adverse effects on and urbanisation of rural areas, including within the coastal environment, and avoiding, remedying, or mitigating other adverse effects on rural character, amenity, landscape and biodiversity values.

78. Objectives B9.3.1(2) are focused on the management of land containing prime soils to protect and manage prime soils for primary production. Policy B9.3.2(2) encourages activities that do not depend on land with high productive potential to be located outside these areas.
79. Objective 9.4.1(3) and its associated policies relate to the subdivision of rural land. The policies do not contemplate subdivision other than for specified purposes including the provision of esplanade reserves, infrastructure, rural production purposes and marae. There is provision for subdivision in special circumstances that benefits the rural community under B9.4.2(2).
80. The RPS is very clear that land containing prime soil is for primary production and should not be urbanised. The policy framework recognises and supports the productive potential of all rural land, including land that does not contain elite or prime soil. None of the policies contemplate urban subdivision or development of rural land. The applicant's proposal to urbanise the existing MRZ land would have a significant adverse effect on the rural area with the loss of highly productive land that cannot be mitigated and potentially increasing pressure on surrounding highly productive land for further urbanisation.

Chapter B10 Environmental Risk

81. Chapter B10.2 Natural hazards and climate change within the RPS provides the broad direction and framework for the management of natural hazard risk within the Auckland region. The objectives seek to ensure that:
- (a) communities are more resilient to natural hazards and the effects of climate change.
 - (b) risks to people, property, infrastructure and the environment from natural hazards are not increased in existing developed areas.
 - (c) new subdivision, use and development avoid the creation of new risks to people, property and infrastructure.
 - (d) the effects of climate change on natural hazards are recognised and provided for
 - (e) the functions of natural systems, including floodplains and overland flow paths are protected and maintained.
82. As acknowledged in the Applicant's Planning Report, most of the area subject to the proposal is overlaid with flood plains and has several overland flow paths running across the land, as per the AUP planning maps. The applicant anticipates that there are feasible solutions available (such as delivery of the Awakeri Wetlands project) to alleviate flooding and manage stormwater.
83. Although measures are proposed to improve flood resilience for the site and surrounding environment, the robustness of these mitigation measures and whether they are sufficient to manage risks to people, property, infrastructure and the environment from development is

highly uncertain. Healthy Waters concludes that there is a high risk of creating significant adverse impacts and worsening existing flood hazards in the downstream catchment. The resilience of communities to natural hazards and avoidance of creating new risks to people, property and infrastructure is not assured (Objectives B10.2.1(1), (2), (3) and (5)).

Strategic Planning Considerations

84. The proposed development of the Applicant site raises a number of strategic matters that have been ongoing concerns throughout the planning history of this land.

Stormwater and Flooding

85. A core direction of Auckland's growth strategy is to avoid enabling growth in places that will put current and future Aucklanders in harm's way. Principle 2(a) of the Future Development Strategy directs council to: "Avoid further growth in areas exposed to hazards and promote resilient design solutions." This means that growth should not be enabled in known hazard areas.
86. Hazards associated with flooding, both at the Application site and downstream, have been a significant consideration in previous assessments of the suitability of the Application land for urban development.
87. The majority of the Application site (approximately 80%) is located within a flood plain, underlain by complex peat soils, with flat topography, and high groundwater levels. The Mixed Rural Zone area of the Application site drains to the north to the Papakura Stream catchment while the southern area of the site zoned FUZ drains south to the Pahurehure inlet catchment. Both catchments have existing flooding issues.
88. The Applicant has proposed a complex stormwater management scheme that includes stormwater attenuation ponds and catchment diversions. Auckland Council's Healthy Waters team has identified a number of challenges in the proposed approach that require further resolution (**Annexure 3**). Key issues include:
- (a) Stormwater Management Plan (SMP) and Network Discharge Consent (NDC) compliance, and the consequent need for a private discharge consent
 - (b) Dependence on stormwater basins
 - (c) Inadequate conveyance via informal drainage network
 - (d) Ground settlement risks from earthworks and groundwater drawdown
 - (e) Unassessed catchment diversion impacts
 - (f) Lack of consideration for overland flow paths
 - (g) Incomplete stormwater quality strategy.
89. At this stage, there is insufficient evidence that the proposed development will mitigate the natural hazard risks associated with flooding both for the future residents of the development and the existing communities located downstream. Auckland Council's Healthy Waters and Flood Resilience does not support the urban development of the catchment beyond the existing Future Urban Zone, stating in the Executive Summary that *"Expansion beyond this boundary without comprehensive assessment and confirmation of infrastructure feasibility poses unacceptable risks to flood management, water quality, and public safety."*
90. The Healthy Waters team notes that the Mill Road NoR overlaps a critical area of the proposed stormwater system; therefore, a fundamental reconsideration of the stormwater scheme is required.

Geotechnical Constraints

91. The largely agricultural land of the Application site is underlain with peat soils. Areas with peat soils are subject to well recognised challenges, including subsidence. They also have a

high-water content and low bearing capacity making them prone to compression under heavy loads. This can lead to short and long-term settlement risks that can cause structure damage to houses and infrastructure over time. Due to this underlying geology, there is also a risk of liquefaction.

92. Auckland Council's soil scientist (Dr Guinto – **Annexure 17**) notes that the *"presence of peat soils presents significant challenges for residential development, including subsidence risks and greenhouse gas emissions. The soils are best suited to remain in agricultural use under proper water table management."*¹⁹
93. Auckland Council's development engineer John Newsome considers that challenges associated with peat soils can be overcome with appropriate investigations of specific ground conditions and engineering design solutions (see the Development Engineering and Geotechnical Report, **Annexure 10**). He notes that for residential development, stormwater recharge of peat soils can be achieved through stormwater management methodologies with each site having a recharge pit or similar. Based on his preliminary review, Mr Newsome considers that the geotechnical report demonstrates adequate investigation and engineering commentary, indicating the site is suitable for the proposed development. However, he has identified that a further geotechnical review must be undertaken using the latest earthworks plans to confirm that the assessment, recommendations, and conclusions in the geotechnical report remain relevant. This review should also examine concerns raised in the Healthy Waters assessment regarding groundwater management, consolidation settlement analysis, and ground settlement risks from bulk earthworks and groundwater drawdown.

Mill Road Corridor

94. One of the strategic considerations in establishing the RUB is providing a clear boundary between the urban and rural areas. In light of the other constraints, the current alignment of Mill Road was considered a clear boundary to delineate the future urban area from the rural area.
95. Mill Road has long been considered as a key strategic corridor that will provide an alternative corridor for the Southern Motorway. It was withdrawn as a Road of National Significance (**RON**) by the previous government but was reintroduced as a RON by the current Government. One of the considerations in the development of the Takaanini area is the new route for Mill Road.
96. Planning work on Stage 1 (Manukau to Alfriston) is well advanced with construction to begin in mid-2026. It was anticipated that technical work for Stages 2 and 3 would begin in mid-2026.
97. On 13 June 2025, New Zealand Transport Agency / Waka Kotahi (**NZTA**) lodged a Notice of Requirement (**NoR**) for the Takaanini section of Stage 2. This is a 5km extent that runs from the end of the Stage 1 works at the intersection of Mill Road and Alfriston Road to a new intersection with Papakura-Clevedon Road between Takaanini and Ardmore. A number of alignment options were considered. Rather than upgrading the existing corridor, an offline alignment was chosen to be 'isolated from urban pressures and congestion, ensuring that it remains a dependable route even under stress.'²⁰ The proposed route that passes largely on the eastern boundary of the Subject Site. The proposal incorporates raised road levels to ensure that it will be above predicted future floodplains and is designed to convey flows without worsening flood impacts upstream or downstream of the works.

¹⁹ Review of the Soil/LUC Report, Dani Guinto, Senior Land and Soil Scientist, EEMU, EATA, Auckland Council.

²⁰ NZTA. Assessment of Effects on the Environment, page 35.

98. The NoR acknowledges that the project traverses part of the landholding of the Sunfield development.²¹ However, it does not discuss the interface with the project other than reference to increased travel demand from the proposed development. As proposed, it will have limited access points for local traffic.

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

99. Watercare is responsible for providing bulk water and wastewater to the region, including the wider Takaanini area. However, retail water and wastewater services are provided by Veolia Water under a franchise agreement with Watercare within the boundaries of the former Papakura District Council (referred to as the Veolia service area).
100. Watercare aligns its bulk infrastructure planning with the FDS. As Watercare's memo records (**Annexure 5**), Watercare does not support or plan to provide services to rural zoned land. It also does not support out-of-sequence connections in FUZ areas where providing those connections would affect its ability to service development in existing live zone areas.
101. The Applicant has incorrectly assumed public water and wastewater servicing is available.
102. Watercare has stated that no bulk water or wastewater capacity is available to service the area outside of the current RUB.
103. With respect to the FUZ land within the Application site, Watercare has confirmed that there is sufficient capacity in the bulk water network to service the site without affecting other live zone land. However, neither of the Bulk Supply Points (**BSPs**) identified by the Applicant has capacity to service the site; therefore, a new BSP will be required. However, this will require a shutdown of the Waikato-1 watermain which will only be possible following the construction and commissioning of the Waikato-2 watermain, which is currently anticipated by 2034 at the earliest.
104. The wastewater transmission network does not have capacity to service the FUZ land without an extension of the Takanini Branch sewer. This is not planned or funded within Watercare's 10-year business plan. An upgrade of the Takaanini Branch sewer is dependent on upgrades to the Southern Interceptor which are also not planned or funded. The two required upgrades would also need to be undertaken in conjunction with the planned duplication of the Southwestern Interceptor. This is not planned until the late 2030s. Further, the out of sequence and unanticipated wastewater flows as described in this Fast Track Application may require upgrades to the Māngere WWTP to be brought forward, which would need to be done in accordance with the existing and future discharge consent.

Urban Form

105. The overall masterplan has sought to incorporate aspects that contribute to a well-functioning urban environment. However, because of the peat soils, the urban form is likely to be relatively low density.
106. The proposal includes its own town centre and local centres. The proposed town centre is approximately 2.5km from the Papakura Town Centre. This will add a town centre in Auckland. However, the height of the building is proposed to be limited to two or three levels with a maximum height of 9m. The Assessment of Environmental Effects states that the Town Centre will be able to accommodate larger buildings in scale and height due to the presence of improved subgrade soils in the area proposed for the town centre.²²
107. In the residential areas, dwellings will be limited to two-stories because of the geotechnical conditions. The Assessment of Environmental Effects states that the proposal is for one to

²¹ NZTA, page 17.

²² Assessment of Environmental Effects, page 174.

two storey light weight timber frame construction as that is what the geotechnical conditions can cater for and accommodate.²³

Development Capacity

108. The Applicant seeks to develop 3,854 residential lots and units, as well as a range of retail and commercial activities.
109. The Applicant's Economics Assessment contends that the development of the Application site would partially replace the capacity lost from future urban areas identified for removal in the FDS: the southern portion of the Takaanini FUA, areas in the 1% AEP of Otūwairoa Stream (Slippery Creek), and areas east of the 1% AEP floodplain.
110. The FULSS 2017 suggested a potential dwelling capacity of approximately 4,500 in the Takaanini FUA. However, it noted that due to the environmental constraints, it was likely that the urban form in this area would have relatively low density, unless there was significant investment in stormwater infrastructure. The 1% AEP floodplain in the Takaanini FUA is significant in extent, covering more than 50% of the entire Takaanini FUA.²⁴ The potential dwelling capacity of 1% AEP floodplain of Otūwairoa Stream and adjacent area was included in the total potential dwelling capacity for the Drury-Ōpaheke FUA and was not separated out from the wider area. The 2019 Drury-Ōpaheke Structure plan stated that much of the 260Hha Otūwairoa Stream flood plan may be unsuitable for urban growth.
111. The Application site would not 'replace' the loss of development capacity in these areas as further assessment has confirmed that they are not suitable for urban development. Following their proposed removal, the growth forecast in the Auckland Growth Scenario (AGS) has been updated.

Rural Zone Assessment

112. The subject land is predominantly zoned MRZ²⁵ with 77% being outside the RUB. This area is identified as outside the RUB due to stormwater and flooding constraints.
113. The MRZ is one of five rural zones within the AUP. The overarching policy direction for all rural zones is to enable activities based on the land resource. Unsurprisingly, urban subdivision and land use activities are not anticipated in the objectives and policies, and the proposal does not find support in the objectives and policies that apply to all rural zones, nor does it find support in the MRZ objectives and policies.
114. The MRZ policies provide for a mix of rural production, rural industry, rural commercial activities non-residential, and rural lifestyle activities. It most closely resembles the Rural Production Zone which has a particular focus for rural production activities. The other three rural zones are more focused on rural character and environmental values (Rural Coastal Zone and Rural Conservation Zone), or rural-lifestyle living (Countryside Living Zone).
115. Many of the activities provided for in the zone are also provided for in the Rural Production Zone. The AUP does not treat the MRZ any differently from the Rural Production Zone in terms of the rules and standards, which are largely the same. The key difference relates to the subdivision provisions. In the Rural Production Zone, the minimum average site size is 100 ha and minimum site size is 80 ha. In contrast, the MRZ has a minimum average site size of 50 ha and a minimum site size of 40 ha.
116. The MRZ is described in the AUP (Chapter H19.4.1) as providing for rural production, generally on smaller rural sites and non-residential activities of a scale compatible with

²³ Assessment of Environmental Effects, page 174.

²⁴ Economics Assessment, page 12.

²⁵ 188 hectares is Mixed Rural Zone, while the balance of 56.5 hectares is Future Urban Zone.

smaller sites. The zone description identifies that these areas often have a history of use for horticulture, viticulture, intensive farming and equine-related activities. The zone provides flexibility for a range of rural production activities and associated non-residential activities.

Mixed Rural Zone Objectives and Policies

117. The following objectives and policies apply to the MRZ:

H19.4.2 Objectives

(1) The existing subdivision pattern is used by a range of rural production activities and non-residential activities that support them.

(2) The continuation of rural production and associated non-residential activities in the zone is not adversely affected by inappropriate rural lifestyle activity.

(3) Rural character and amenity values of the zone are maintained while anticipating a mix of rural production, non-residential and rural lifestyle activities.

H.19.4.3 Policies

(1) Enable rural production, rural industries and rural commercial services that are compatible with the existing subdivision pattern and recognise that these activities are significant elements of, and primary contributors to, rural character and amenity values.

(2) Manage reverse sensitivity effects by: limiting the size, scale and type of non-rural production activities; retaining the larger site sizes within this zone; limiting further subdivision for new rural lifestyle sites; and acknowledging a level of amenity that reflects the presence of:

(i) rural production and processing activities that generate rural odours, noise from stock and the use of machinery, and the movement of commercial vehicles on the local road network; and H19 Rural zones Auckland Unitary Plan Operative in part 7

(ii) non-residential activities which may generate noise, light and traffic levels greater than those normally found in areas set aside for rural lifestyle activities.

118. The application recognises that the proposal does not align with the primary functions of a rural area. The application states that given Sunfield is a master planned community with a range of urban activities, these do not align with the envisaged activities and services of a rural area.

119. The proposal does not retain rural character and amenity and the proposed residential development does not provide any rural production, or rural lifestyle activities. The proposal is contrary to the MRZ objectives and policies as set out above, in particular Objectives 1 and 3 and policy 1.

120. In terms of objective 2, there is no continuation of rural production and associated non-residential activities and therefore the principle of the proposal does not align or complement the existing wider character of the area. The residential and urban characteristics proposed

as part of the proposed Sunfield development is contrary to the policy direction which is to provide for rural production activities.

121. In terms of policy 2, it is noted that the areas proposed to be adjacent to rural areas comprise the employment precinct which include industrial activities and areas of open space. This would provide a buffer zone to residential areas in order to minimise reverse sensitivity effects. However, the potential management of reverse sensitivity effects, provision of appropriate infrastructure and enhancement of biodiversity and the land generally not being of high production value does not counter the fundamental incompatibility of the proposal with the intended outcomes of the MRZ.
122. The applicant has argued that the application needs to be considered in the context of the objectives and policies of the AUP as a whole. The proposal is contrary to both the general objectives and policies for rural zones, as well as the specific objectives and policies for the MRZ. As is discussed in the following section, it is also contrary to the objectives and policies for the FUZ.

Future Urban Zone Assessment

123. The southern portion of the subject site is zoned FUZ in the AUP and located within the RUB. (56.5 ha). The zone statement states that the FUZ is a transitional zone. Land may be used for a range of general rural activities but cannot be used for urban activities.
124. The FUZ includes objectives and policies that seek to protect the land for future urbanisation and retain its use as rural until it is rezoned through a plan change process. They are:

H18.2 Objectives

- (1) Land is used and developed to achieve the objectives of the Rural – Rural Production Zone until it has been rezoned for urban purposes.*
- (2) Rural activities and services are provided for to support the rural community until the land is rezoned for urban purposes.*
- (3) Future urban development is not compromised by premature subdivision, use or development.*
- (4) Urbanisation on sites zoned Future Urban Zone is avoided until the sites have been rezoned for urban purposes.*

H18.3 Policies

- (1) Provide for use and development which supports the policies of the Rural – Rural Production Zone unless that use and development is inconsistent with policies H18.3(2) to (6).*
- (2) Enable activities that are reliant on the quality of the soil or require a rural location to operate or which provide for the day to day needs of the local rural community.*
- (3) Require subdivision, use and development to maintain and complement rural character and amenity.*

- (4) *Avoid subdivision that will result in the fragmentation of land and compromise future urban development.*
 - (5) *Prevent the establishment of more than one dwelling on a site except for the provision for minor dwellings and workers' accommodation.*
 - (6) *Avoid subdivision, use and development of land that may result in one or more of the following:*
 - (a) *structures and buildings of a scale and form that will hinder or prevent future urban development;*
 - (b) *compromise the efficient and effective operation of the local and wider transport network;*
 - (c) *require significant upgrades, provisions or extension to the wastewater, water supply, or stormwater networks or other infrastructure;*
 - (d) *inhibit the efficient provision of infrastructure;*
 - (e) *give rise to reverse sensitivity effects when urban development occurs;*
 - (f) *give rise to reverse sensitivity effects in relation to existing rural activities or infrastructure; or*
 - (g) *undermine the form or nature of future urban development.*
125. Read in the round, the FUZ policies are directed at maintaining rural use and development until such time as rezoning occurs. The proposal is contrary to this and has not undertaken a structure planning process as required under the AUP Appendix 1 Structure Plan guidelines. The master planning documents are not a structure plan and there is no consideration of the Auckland Council's 10-year budget and implementation programmes thereunder.
126. The proposal is specifically contrary to Objectives (1) (2) and (4) and is urban development occurring before the land is rezoned for urban purposes. In respect of Objective (3) the application is proposing urban development of the site, but it is unclear whether it compromises future development of adjoining FUZ land because there is no comprehensive structure plan.
127. The proposal is clearly contrary to Policies (1), (2), (3) and (5) as it is not retaining rural activities. In respect of Policy (4), this issue is addressed above in relation to Objective (3).
128. Policy (6) is strongly directive, with the use of "avoid". Council specialists have addressed the provision of infrastructure and transport effects. The absence of funding and financing agreements for infrastructure is a particular concern. If this results in Council needing to reprioritise funding to assist with provision of the requisite infrastructure it may pose a significant risk to the viability of rezoning "in sequence" FUZ land, due to reallocation of funds. Other areas of concern are that the proposal will result in several intersections operating at a Level of Service F, which is not acceptable²⁶; it will pose a high risk of creating significant adverse impacts, and worsening existing flood hazards in the downstream Papakura Stream

²⁶ Transport Planning Memorandum prepared by Kate Brill (**Annexure 8**).
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catchment; and it will potentially give rise to reverse sensitivity effects on the on-going operation of airport, and exposes future occupiers/residents to noise effects.

Conclusion

129. The proposal conflicts with multiple levels of the planning policy hierarchy and faces significant technical constraints that are not resolved. The urbanisation of the FUZ land is well in advance of the strategic growth directions in Council's FDS, while the urbanisation of the MRZ land is strongly contrary to the FDS. Overall, the proposal finds little support in the relevant statutory planning provisions including the NPS-UD and RPS and is strongly contrary to the NPS-HPL.

SECTION C: STATUTORY PLANNING ASSESSMENT

130. **Section C** assesses the statutory planning considerations for the Sunfield fast track proposal. This section has been prepared by Karl Anderson.
131. The Council and consultant memoranda, as listed in paragraph 5, have informed the overall statutory planning assessment.

Outstanding Material from Applicant and Review Limitations

132. The Applicant did not undertake any significant levels of pre-lodgement engagement with the Auckland Council Planning & Resource Consents department. In order to satisfy their 'pre-lodgement' requirements under section 29 of the FTAA, a meeting was held between the Applicant, their planning consultants and Auckland Council's Principal Project Lead on 11 December 2024. Despite the Council indicating that further meetings between the applicant and the Council's specialist teams and CCOs would be necessary in advance of the fast-track application being lodged, no further pre-lodgement engagement was requested by the applicant team.
133. It is noted that for a proposal of this scale (which would constitute one of the largest comprehensive development proposals the Council has ever received), the Council would generally expect an applicant to take part in a detailed and collaborative pre-lodgement process that would involve, among other things, engagement with CCOs and asset owners, presentation before the Auckland Urban Design Panel, and sharing of draft technical reports for review. Whilst the applicant may have 'ticked the box' in terms of the pre-lodgement consultation requirements under 29 of the FTAA, the discussions that took place were not in any way meaningful and fell significantly short of the Council's expectations.
134. Auckland Council issued a memo to the Panel on 16 June 2025 identifying initial concerns and information needs in relation to the proposal and where it considered the Expert Panel may wish to formally request further information under s67 of the FTAA. The Panel in its Minute 3 considered it appropriate to provide the Applicant with an opportunity to respond to the memo, and this response was provided on 17 July 2025.
135. The updated information provided on 17 July 2025 has been reviewed and considered as part of this memo.
136. As noted earlier, a NoR was lodged by NZTA for Mill Road Stage 2 on Friday 13 June 2025. The alignment of the NoR encompasses a portion of the site along its eastern boundary. The designation has interim immediate effect. While the Applicant has stated (in their s67 response) that they are working collaboratively with NZTA, the proposal and supporting information has not been updated to take the impact of the NoR into account, and Council have therefore not been able to review the proposal's integration with the proposed Mill Road Stage 2.

137. It is highlighted that the full draft proposed conditions have not been commented on by Council, as there are a significant number of information gaps identified – both existing and new – that necessitate updates to the proposal design and reporting (for example, the changes necessary to integrate with the Mill Road Stage 2 NoR). A full review will be undertaken by Council following a receipt of the full updated documents and draft condition set. Notwithstanding this, where relevant, initial comments on the proposed conditions as lodged have been provided within the memoranda by each Council family specialist. These include identification of where proposed conditions are deficient, where additional consent conditions are required, and changes are required to proposed conditions.
138. To the extent that the process may allow for it (e.g. through the Panel's use of its section 67 power), a supplementary review of any updated material is considered necessary to ensure all relevant matters have been properly considered in the Council family's assessment of the Application.

SECTION C.1 STORMWATER AND FLOODING

Applicant's Assessment

139. A Stormwater Management Plan (**SMP**) has been prepared by Maven Associates Ltd on behalf of the Applicant. The application originally incorrectly asserted that the diversion and discharge of stormwater from the proposed development could be authorised under Auckland Council's Network Discharge Consent (**NDC**). The Applicant has since revised the proposal to state that they are seeking a private diversion and discharge consent under Chapter E8 of the AUP.
140. The proposal involves large scale stormwater and flood diversions into a series of stormwater and flood management corridors, attenuation ponds, devices, streams and wetlands. This includes Stages 2 and 3 of the Awakeri Wetland project that the Applicant has already entered into an agreement with Healthy Waters to design and deliver.
141. An additional 54.9 hectares of the Papakura Stream catchment is proposed to be diverted to the Pahurehure Catchment. The Healthy Waters memo (**Annexure 3**) notes that, on 23 July 2025, representatives from the Healthy Waters Flood and Resilience Department, NZTA, and the Applicant met to discuss the challenges and opportunities associated with integrating the stormwater management strategies of the NoR and the Sunfield development. It is understood that the meeting concluded with a shared intention to begin formalising a collaborative approach toward developing a coordinated, catchment-wide solution that could address existing infrastructure constraints and support resilient, future-proofed outcomes for both transport and urban development. Healthy Waters foreshadow that realising this opportunity may require additional downstream land acquisition to accommodate both the Mill Road corridor and the necessary stormwater infrastructure.

Council's Assessment

142. Andrew Chin on behalf of Council's Healthy Waters has identified the following fundamental stormwater and flooding matters which are described in further detail in his memo (**Annexure 3**):
- A SMP can only be formally adopted under the NDC following a plan change. The proposal therefore cannot be accepted under the NDC.
 - Flood risk mitigation for the site is entirely reliant on four large stormwater attenuation basins. There are design issues, they lack redundancy, and the feasibility of accommodating these basins within the allocated space has not been confirmed. Any failure in the design, construction or operation could represent a fatal flaw in the overall flood management approach.

- The proposed drainage strategy in the Papakura Stream catchment relies on discharging stormwater through an informal network of farm drains and roadside table drains. These are known to be under capacity, overtopping during 2-year rainfall events and resulting in flooding across Airfield Road and Hamlin Road. The proposed development will increase the use of these roads, thereby presenting a serious risk to public safety and network reliability.
 - No assessment has been provided regarding the potential effects of groundwater drawdown on the settlement of peat soils from the extensive earthworks. This poses a risk to infrastructure and private property.
 - The proposed diversion of a 54.9 ha catchment into the existing McLennan Dam has not been evaluated, and this dam provides mitigation of flood hazards and water quality treatment for the existing catchment.
 - Local overland flowpaths have not been considered or designed for.
 - The proposed use of existing downstream infrastructure as tertiary treatment devices is not supported by capacity assessments or hydraulic modelling.
143. Mr Chin has advised that during a 100-year Average Recurrence Interval (**ARI**) future climate storm event, downstream properties from the development are already predicted to be exposed to moderate or higher flood hazards. This includes 442 properties in the Papakura Stream Catchment (including 263 habitable floors and commercial buildings) and 108 properties in the Pahurehure Inlet Catchment (including 60 residential and commercial buildings). Without effective mitigation, the flood risk and hazards to existing downstream properties and communities will increase as a result of the development. As described in Mr Chin's memo, effective mitigation has not been sufficiently demonstrated.
144. The Application proposes to vest land containing stormwater channels as Local Purpose Reserve (Drainage). Mr Chin has stated that the supporting documents do not sufficiently demonstrate whether the extent of the proposed land to vest is appropriate and will deliver additional public benefit that cannot otherwise be achieved through private ownership and maintenance. The vesting of far larger areas than required for drainage purposes can have significant impacts on maintenance and funding obligations for Council. In its current form, it is unlikely that the full extent of land proposed for vesting would be accepted.
145. Overall, Mr Chin has identified that there is a need for a stormwater and flood design to be progressed in significantly more detail than is present in the application. This also needs to consider the implications of other projects in the vicinity (particularly the NoR), and further discussions are needed between the Applicant's engineers and Healthy Waters. It is not acceptable to defer these important matters to consent conditions, and they are critical matters to be resolved as part of this Application.
146. Council's Stormwater Specialist Martin Meyer has also reviewed the regional stormwater discharge consent aspects of the proposal (**Annexure 4**), and has echoed similar concerns to Mr Chin. Mr Meyer has further identified that there is an information gap in terms of no assessment provided on high contaminant generating areas (i.e. roads, lanes, carparks) and that these areas need to have adequate treatment to protect the environment from heavy metals, total suspended solids (**TSS**) and hydrocarbons.
147. Mr Meyer has also raised concerns in relation to groundwater levels and the risk to the peat soils and to consolidation. Information gaps in this regard are identified in Council's Groundwater assessment (**Annexure 14**).
148. Council's Development Engineer Maria Baring (**Annexure 10**) has identified a need for specific additional consent conditions around local overland flowpaths, including as-built and

information requirements that will be necessary during/post construction. These are outlined in her and Mr Newsome's joint memo.

149. A further stormwater review by Awa is provided as Annexure 4 to Auckland Transport's comments (**Annexure 7**). Similar to the reporting referred to above, Awa's report concludes that:
- (a) The stormwater design as currently proposed does not demonstrate sufficient technical robustness or flexibility to mitigate flood and safety risks to acceptable levels.
 - (b) The gaps in modelling, infrastructure detailing, and conflict with strategic transport infrastructure (Mill Road NoR) raise significant concerns.
 - (c) Without substantial revision and further detailed assessment, the application cannot be supported from a flood risk or stormwater management perspective.

Conclusions on Stormwater and Flooding Effects

150. There are significant information gaps that result in technical uncertainties and unresolved issues, preventing a full assessment of the proposals stormwater and flooding impacts from being undertaken. The overlap with NZTA's NoR also necessitates a fundamental reconsideration of Sunfield's stormwater management approach. As it currently stands, the Application presents a significant environmental risk, and there is a clear risk to human life, safety and property. The proposal would be unable to satisfy section 106 of the RMA as it relates to natural hazards as the likelihood of natural hazards and associated material damage to the land being exacerbated by the proposal without appropriate control is high.
151. There are significant stormwater and flooding impacts that require a proportionality assessment in terms of the section 85(3) of the FTAA.

SECTION C.2 WATER SUPPLY

Applicant's Assessment

152. The applicant proposes to connect the site to the existing public water supply network via a new connection to the nearest Bulk Supply Point (**BSP**), or to a new BSP on the existing 450mm diameter transmission main in Airfield Road.

Council's Assessment

153. Watercare's bulk infrastructure programme is planned, funded and sequenced in line with the Auckland Plan 2050 and the Auckland Council Future Development Strategy (**FDS**). The Future Urban Zone (**FUZ**) portion of the site is programmed for development in 2050+, and the remaining MRZ portion of the site is not anticipated for development.
154. Watercare has advised (**Annexure 5**) that development of FUZ areas ahead of the completion of bulk infrastructure required to support growth in those areas exacerbates infrastructure capacity issues, and can impact the ability to deliver services to existing live zoned land (which already has enabled development capacity), and can lead to water pressure dropping below adequate levels of service for key purposes such as firefighting.
155. Both the Airfield Road and Porchester Road BSP's identified by the Applicant are at full capacity and cannot accommodate new connections. Watercare has undertaken a preliminary assessment which indicates that there is sufficient capacity within the bulk water supply network to supply the FUZ area development only (without precluding development of the existing live zoned land in the surrounding area). However, there are significant limitations in accessing this bulk network until the Waikato-2 Watermain is operational (likely 2034+).

156. Watercare states that the construction of a new BSP to access the bulk water supply available from the Waikato-1 Watermain is restricted due to the shutdown limitations for this watermain. The next scheduled shutdown will occur in late 2025 at Quarry Road. After this, Watercare will not allow any further shutdowns of the Waikato-1 Watermain until the Waikato-2 Watermain is operational.
157. Watercare explains that, following recent shutdowns on the Waikato-1 Watermain, Watercare has experienced recurring difficulties in restoring adequate storage levels in the Redoubt Reservoir Complex. An operational decision has since been made to defer all non-essential shutdowns for the Waikato-1 Watermain until the Waikato-2 Watermain is commissioned.
158. Maven state in their July memo that access constraints are readily resolved through “Developer-funded interim BSPs or live-tap connections that do not require watermain shutdowns”. In response, Watercare confirm that live-tap solutions are not acceptable on strategic transmission infrastructure such as the Waikato-1 Watermain due to unacceptable risk of failure. Further, Watercare advises that all new BSPs on major transmission watermain must be accompanied by a new line valve to provide operational flexibility for these major assets. Installation of a line valve is not possible when installing a live-tap BSP.
159. While there is theoretical capacity to service the FUZ portion of the site with water supply, there are timing limitations that would prevent development from taking place until either an alternative private water supply service is provided, or until there is the ability to make this connection. If relying on the latter, the anticipated consent lapse date of 15 years would not be feasible.
160. Furthermore as the FUZ land is not anticipated for development until 2050+, advancement of this timing could only be on the basis of full funding from the Applicant for all required upgrades to service the site.
161. Turning to the Mixed Rural Zone (**MRZ**) portion of the site, Watercare comments that it plans for and supports areas of urban growth identified by the Council, which excludes rural zoned land, in accordance with its obligations. There is no planned infrastructure and there is no demonstrated ability to service the site with water supply from Watercare’s network. Previous comments highlighting concerns of the potential for a drop in servicing ability to existing live zoned land would be exacerbated significantly. Watercare have advised that even if the Application is granted, they may refuse water supply connections for the project.
162. The Applicant has not demonstrated a clear, technically robust and sustainable permanent private servicing solution for potable water supply for the development.

Conclusions on Water Supply Effects

163. The Application lacks a viable water supply solution, as:
- Public network connection is not available (for the FUZ portion of the site only) until the Waikato-2 Watermain is operational (likely 2034+).
 - No public network connection is available for the MRZ portion of the site, as this would compromise Watercare’s ability to service existing live zoned areas.
 - Watercare may refuse connection even if the consent is granted.
 - No private water supply option has been proposed or assessed.
164. There are significant water supply related impacts that require proportionality assessment.

SECTION C.3 WASTEWATER

Applicant's Assessment

165. The Applicant proposes a wastewater system utilising a Low-Pressure Sewer (**LPS**) design, aimed at minimising peak wet weather flows and addressing risks related to inflow and infiltration. The LPS is proposed to discharge flows to the downstream Takanini Branch Sewer.
166. The LPS is intended to be operated under a private ownership model, with homeowners being responsible for on-site infrastructure and management of their pumping equipment.

Council's Assessment

167. The comments above in reference to Watercare's bulk infrastructure programme also apply to wastewater infrastructure.
168. Watercare has advised (**Annexure 5**) that development of FUZ areas ahead of the completion of bulk infrastructure required to support growth in those areas exacerbates infrastructure capacity issues, and can impact the ability to deliver services to existing live zoned land (which already has enabled development capacity), and can lead to environmental impacts such as increased frequency and volume of untreated wastewater overflows.
169. Upgrades will be required to the transmission infrastructure in order to service this FUZ land. This would require an extension of the Takanini branch sewer, including upgrades to the existing sewer line and also upgrades to the Southern Interceptor. These upgrades would need to be funded by the Applicant for the same reasons outlined above.
170. As to the MRZ portion of the site, Watercare comments that it plans for and supports areas of urban growth identified by the Council, which excludes rural zoned land, in accordance with its obligations. There is no planned infrastructure and there is no demonstrated ability to service the site with wastewater from Watercare's network. Previous comments highlighting concerns for the ability to service existing live zoned land would be exacerbated significantly. Watercare have advised that even if the Application is granted, they may refuse wastewater connections for the project.
171. A further constraint on wastewater servicing is the Māngere Wastewater Treatment Plant (**WWTP**), which generally has capacity to support growth within its catchment but cannot necessarily support unanticipated or out of sequence growth. The existing resource consent for the Māngere WWTP expires in 2032 and has a maximum flow limit, which due to the system being strongly influenced by wet weather, was exceeded in 2023 for approximately seven months. Watercare needs to reconsult the discharge by 2032, which will need to give consideration for future growth in line with Council's growth forecast. This process will also confirm the discharge location and effluent quality, which will inform any future upgrades. There are no significant upgrades planned for Māngere WWTP between now and 2032 outside of those required to treat flows from the Central Interceptor. Additional unanticipated wastewater flows as described in Fast Track Application would need to be assessed in greater detail and may require upgrades to be brought forward, which would need to be done in accordance with the existing and future discharge consent.
172. Watercare considers the proposed LPS to manage wastewater load to be unacceptable, and that servicing should rely on a gravity network for developments of this magnitude. According to Watercare's Code of Practice, use of a LPS should be limited for up to 50 dwellings due to system risk to customer service under power failure. System failures such as spills or pipe breaks, in addition to power outage, could lead to significant environmental and health effects.

173. Veolia has also advised (**Annexure 6**) that a LPS is not supported due to long term maintenance requirements, and lack of demonstration of a need for this type of system over a traditional gravity network.
174. The overall development (including both the FUZ and the MRZ land) far exceeds the recommended LPS threshold and introduces significant operational risk. Furthermore, Watercare have doubts that the LPS would sufficiently reduce flow from the site to negate the need for upgrading the downstream infrastructure. Watercare have advised that even if the Application is granted, they may refuse wastewater connections for the project.
175. The Applicant has not demonstrated a clear, technically robust and sustainable permanent private servicing solution for wastewater disposal for the development.

Conclusions on Wastewater Effects

176. The Application lacks a viable wastewater solution, as:
- Public network connection is not available until completion of downstream transmission infrastructure upgrades, including potentially WWTP upgrades, are funded by the Applicant and completed. This applies to the FUZ portion of the site only with additional restrictions to the MRZ portion of the site.
 - No public network connection is available for the MRZ portion of the site, as this would compromise Watercare's ability to service existing live zoned areas and Watercare's policy is to treat rural land as being outside the area it serves.
 - A LPS is not an appropriate solution for servicing of a large scale development.
 - Watercare may refuse connection even if the consent is granted.
 - No private wastewater servicing option has been proposed or assessed.
177. There are significant wastewater related impacts that require proportionality assessment.

SECTION C.4 TRANSPORT

Applicant's Assessment

178. The proposal seeks to create a 'car-less' development, with significant limitations to car parking spaces (1 space per 10 dwellings, and 1 visitor space per 10 dwellings, plus some additional car share spaces). The overall design features a 'Sunfield Loop Road' and provision of a frequent public transport system 'Sunbus' that intends to operate within the site and to provide access to the Takanini and Papakura town centres and train stations.
179. The Applicant suggests that the proposal also involves provision of walkways and cycleways within the site, upgrades to intersections that interface with the site, and provision of upgrade cycle lanes to link the site to the Takaanini and Papakura town centres and train stations (although it is acknowledged that the only specific new shared path/cycle lane is proposed on Cosgrave Road between Walters Road and Clevedon Road, and on Okawa Avenue).
180. The masterplan and engineering plan sets show the indicative road networks (including the use of pedestrian lanes and shared spaces), and an Integrated Transportation Assessment (ITA) Report has been prepared by Commute to support the Application. A memorandum prepared by Commute dated 17 July 2025 has also been provided to respond to comments made by Auckland Council regarding identified information gaps.

Council's Assessment

181. The Application including the ITA and subsequent memorandum have been reviewed by Neil Stone on behalf of Auckland Transport. Technical details have also been reviewed by Beca and Progressive Transport Solutions (**PTS**) on behalf of Auckland Transport. The Beca review (Annexure 1 to Auckland Transport's comments) focusses on the potential for impacts on the surrounding transport network and whether the proposed conditions include adequate mitigation, or if there is a risk that Auckland Transport will be responsible for mitigating future impacts. PTS's review (Annexure 2 to Auckland Transport's comments) has sought to identify primarily those items that will have a bearing on the overall design of the roading layout, in particular intersections.
182. The Application has also been reviewed by Council's Consultant Traffic Engineer Kate Brill, who has assessed other traffic matters as they relate to internal transport design matters and site interfaces (such as intersection design). There are various overlaps between the reviews undertaken by Ms Brill and Mr Stone.
183. Mr Stone has identified the following fundamental transport matters which are described in further detail in his memo:
- The underlying assumptions, specifically the trip generation rate relied on in the transport assessment, are considered aspirational and unlikely to eventuate. Transport infrastructure required to support the proposal (specifically active modes and intersection upgrades) and sufficient land requirements for upgrades are therefore underestimated. Although the Applicant proposes some intersection upgrades, significant future congestion is expected on existing roads and intersections that do not anticipate future traffic from this proposed development.
 - There are concerns with the operation of a large, privately funded public transport service that is required to ensure the feasibility of the proposal. This is a significant undertaking and requires specialised expertise and ongoing regulatory compliance, and simply delegating responsibility to an incorporated society via consent conditions suggests that the importance is underestimated by the Applicant.
 - No investigation into the capacity of the Takaanini and Papakura rail stations capacity to accommodate additional bus services has been provided.
 - There are concerns with the ability of the existing public transport service to cater to the demand of the proposal before a frequent service is in place (as the proposed public transport service by the Applicant is not intended until completion of the first 890 dwellings).
 - There are major gaps in the stormwater and flooding assessment provided by the applicant. Auckland Transport's concern is road safety and asset damage, flooding effects both within the site and on adjacent neighbourhoods. A stormwater review by Awa is provided as Annexure 4 to Auckland Transport's comments.
 - There are detailed engineering design issues that could require amendments to the proposal, and this would not be appropriate to be deferred to consent conditions.
 - The transport assessment has not been updated to show integration with the Mill Road Stage 2 NoR.
184. Beca also conclude as follows in their report (at page 13):

In conclusion, there is high risk that the assumptions applied in the ITA are not achievable and if the development proceeds, then there is likely to be significant

adverse effects (and, in terms of section 85 of the FTAA, significant adverse impacts) on transportation safety and efficiency.

185. Auckland Transport has obligations to fund and support growth that is sequenced in line with the Auckland Plan 2050, the Regional Land Transport Plan (**RLTP**) and the FDS. Development of out-of-sequence or unanticipated development that puts pressure on Auckland Transport and Council to reallocate or reprioritise funding away from projects that support more development ready land (such as live zoned land) is not supported. The FDS sets out a requirement for both the Mill Road upgrade and a Frequent Transit Network (**FTN**) to be in place before development should proceed on the FUZ portion of this site. Auckland Transport also consider that the site should not be developed without these required transport upgrades in place, and these are described in the memo.
186. Due to the lack of viable public transport options in the initial stages of the development, and potentially inadequate walking and cycling facilities, private vehicle trips are likely to be higher than modelled. Further assessment and modelling is therefore required to reflect more realistic private vehicle use scenarios, and this presents as a significant information gap in the application.
187. The Applicant has also confirmed that they do not own all of the land required to provide the 'Sunfield Loop Road', and turning facilities are to be provided for vehicles and buses – in effect, not providing a full loop. Mr Stone has stated that this missing link would result in less reliance on active modes and public transport due to longer travel times.
188. As it has not been sufficiently demonstrated that viable alternatives are provided to private transport (especially during the initial stages of the development), Auckland Transport have concerns that uncontrolled parking will have impacts on the road network (for proposal and for adjacent neighbourhoods). Physical measures to avoid berm parking are not indicated on the Application plans, nor are they secured via the draft conditions.
189. Spill over parking in adjacent neighbourhoods has been acknowledged by the Applicant as a likely issue, but no attempts to address the concern have been made by the Applicant. Auckland Transport have confirmed that measures such as Council or Auckland Transport enforcement or 'residential parking zones' are not acceptable, and further that it is unlikely that Auckland Transport or local residents of surrounding communities would agree to such measures. Spill over parking will result in clear adverse safety and amenity impacts on existing surrounding neighbourhoods.
190. A Travel Demand Management Plan (**TDMP**) has been suggested in the Application material as being beneficial for the employment area of the site. Mr Stone agrees, and recommends that a wider TDMP be provided for all precincts, rather than just the employment area. A draft of this document should be provided for review as part of this application and it is also recommended that the TDMP be included as part of review and monitoring conditions.
191. Ms Brill has recommended that continuous monitoring be a conditioned requirement, to ensure that the highly ambitious modal share is achieved for the development. This should be accompanied by a robust set of monitoring and mitigation conditions in the event that the trip generation numbers exceed those anticipated in the ITA.
192. The Application does not assess construction traffic effects, particularly with regard to potential impacts on the pavement condition of existing roads that will carry earthwork and construction related heavy vehicles. There is a high likelihood of surrounding roads sustaining superficial and structure damage, and repair should be at the responsibility of the consent holder. Pre- and post-development assessments (such as a Pavement Impact Assessment (**PIA**)) should be required.

193. Ms Brill has raised concerns with the ambiguity of how emergency services, moving trucks, and other service vehicles will access dwellings. The Application documents state that they will utilise service hubs, but this could result in difficulties for moving furniture, repair work, and for emergency service access.
194. Uncontrolled parking issues as previously mentioned could further exacerbate these concerns (i.e. with residents resorting to parking within the pedestrian lanes).
195. Notwithstanding that Auckland Transport do not support the proposal, and that the proposal will generate significant adverse effects, they have included in their memo a number of additional consent conditions that would be necessary. Additional consent conditions have also been recommended by Council's Traffic Engineer.

Conclusions on Transport Effects

196. There are information gaps relating to transport matters that prevent a full assessment of the potential traffic and road flooding effects from being undertaken.
197. The proposal will result in significant transport effects including safety risks, poor transport outcomes, a lack of realistic alternative modes to private vehicle transport in the early stages of development (where private vehicle transport is also not catered to), unplanned cost burdens, and a lack of integration with the Mill Road Stage 2 NoR.
198. The scale and cost of, and required land for, the necessary infrastructure to allow the development to proceed has been significantly underestimated, and the Applicant has not committed to covering the full infrastructure cost.
199. There are significant transport impacts that require a proportionality assessment.

SECTION C.5 WASTE MANAGEMENT EFFECTS

Applicant's Assessment

200. The proposal involves communal rubbish and recycling areas within the Neighbourhood Service Hubs for each residential neighbourhood, requiring residents to bring their waste to these communal locations. A private waste collection service is proposed for the development, and the Application is supported by a letter provided from Rubbish Direct with waste management advice.

Council's Assessment

201. Council's Waste Planning Advisor Jennifer Jack (**Annexure 21**) has reviewed the proposal from a waste management perspective and has confirmed that the proposal is acceptable.
202. The Application includes a condition requiring a Waste Management Plan to be submitted to Council prior to commencement of construction. This is agreed to be appropriate.
203. It would likely be necessary for dwellings to have individual on-site rubbish and recycling storage areas given the significant distance between dwellings and Neighbourhood Service Hubs in some cases, as trips between dwellings and the hubs will be inconvenient for regular removal of refuse. Notwithstanding comments made in Council's Urban Design assessment in this regard (**Annexure 18**), this is not a matter that affects overall waste management (i.e. removal of waste from the site) and is a detail that can be deferred to the development stage without the need for specific Council control.

Conclusions on Waste Management Effects

204. There is agreement between the Applicant and Council in respect to waste management (via a private collection system) and the consent condition proposed is appropriate.
205. There are no significant waste management impacts that require a proportionality assessment, although further commentary is made from an Urban Design perspective in Section C.9.

SECTION C.6 ECOLOGY

206. This section addresses both:

- Freshwater Ecology
- Terrestrial Ecology.

Applicant's Assessment

207. An Ecological Impact Assessment (**EclA**) prepared by Biosearches has assessed the adverse effects on ecology values, including both terrestrial and freshwater ecology.
208. The EclA includes watercourse (stream and wetland) classifications, descriptions of the terrestrial vegetation and fauna, and overall current ecological values. The Applicant's Planning Report provides further assessment in terms of mitigation of effects, where it is concluded that significant planting and landscaping associated with the proposal will mitigate any loss of vegetation or modifications of artificial drains across the site. It also states that the retention of a watercourse and natural inland wetland will help mitigate any adverse effects.
209. Conditions are proposed to manage ecological effects (including management plans for fish, lizards, vegetation removal, and a stream riparian planting plan to be submitted prior to works).

Freshwater Ecology

Council's Assessment

210. The freshwater ecology matters have been reviewed by Council's consultant Ecologist Jason Smith, who has raised concerns regarding the clarity of information provided in the application. Mr Smith's full assessment can be found at **Annexure 13** of the Council's response.
211. Overall, Mr Smith agrees with the EclA's stream and wetland classifications, and the methods used to derive the current ecological value have been correctly applied.
212. However, the Application is vague and while it recognises a wide range of rules that could apply to works in streams (including new reclamation, new structures, and diversions), there is no identification of exactly what, if any, of these activities are proposed, nor any associated effects. The application also implies that there is the potential for harm and disturbance to any aquatic fish population in the watercourses.
213. The Applicant has since noted in their response to Council's s67 matters that consent is required for diversion of watercourses (streams 1-4) and for a culvert greater than 30m in length. However, this has not been assessed in the EclA in terms of ecological effects.
214. The length of the proposed diversion is not quantified. Mr Smith has measured based on Auckland Council Geomaps and the maps provided in the EclA, and has estimated an

approximate loss of 1,255m of stream length. Mr Smith has also concluded that there is likely a loss in stream ecological values as a result of this diversion. There could be further modifications to this proposal that would result from an updated design that takes into account the Mill Road NoR.

215. The Application relies on proposed conditions of consent to determine what adverse freshwater ecology effects will arise, and how these can be managed. The planting and landscaping associated with the proposal (including stream enhancements) are already proposed to address other adverse effects (such as landscape and urban design). It is not appropriate to re-utilise these enhancements for ecological compensation or offsetting.

216. Mr Smith has concluded that there is potentially a level of residual effect that has not been quantified or qualified. Provision of this information through subsequent assessments of effects through consent conditions is not appropriate, as it cannot be determined that the effects can be fully addressed.

Conclusions on Freshwater Ecology Effects

217. There are a number of information gaps in the Application which result in adverse freshwater ecology effects not being able to be fully assessed, and it cannot be determined that the proposal will result in a no net ecological loss. The Application material suggests that there will be a net loss in stream length, and there will likely be an associated net loss in ecological values.

218. The adverse freshwater ecological impacts are potentially significant, and these require a proportionality assessment to be undertaken.

Terrestrial Ecology

Council's Assessment

219. The terrestrial ecology matters have also been reviewed by Mr Smith (**Annexure 13**), who agrees with the EclA's description of terrestrial vegetation and fauna communities.

220. Mr Smith has stated that it can be inferred that there is potential for harm and disturbance, as well as a loss of habitat for native fauna. Lizard and bat surveys are recommended in the EclA, but these have not been undertaken. The draft Ecological Management Plan includes an appended Lizard Management Plan, although this does not cover the entire site.

221. While these surveys should be provided up front, Mr Smith considers that potential terrestrial ecology effects can still be appropriately addressed through conditions of consent. Specific comments to the ecological conditions proposed by the applicant are provided in Mr Smith's memo, as well as additional recommended conditions.

Conclusions on Terrestrial Ecology Effects

222. Conditions of consent can be appropriate to mitigate potential adverse terrestrial ecology effects.

223. The adverse impacts related to terrestrial ecology are not considered significant and no proportionality assessment is required.

SECTION C.7 RURAL PRODUCTION

224. This section includes:

- Soil Classification

- Effects of Loss of Highly Productive Land.

Soil Classification

Applicant's Assessment

225. An assessment with regard to the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land 2022 (**NPS-HPL**) was prepared by Dr Reece Hill of Landsystems (2024), on behalf of the Applicant. This report builds on site-specific soil and Land Use Capability (**LUC**) mapping previously completed by Dr Peter Singleton (2020) for the Applicant, with a desktop classification exercise for a further 40.7 ha that was not included in the 2020 report.
226. The soil mapping exercise concludes that highly productive classes 2 and 3 exist across the site, with some areas (such as roads/tracks, streams, existing buildings and a horse track) being denoted as non-productive land. The mapping shows the majority of the soils as being subject to 'wetness limitation'.

Council's Assessment

227. Council's Land & Soil Scientist, Dr. Dani Guinto, has undertaken a review of soil and LUC classification, and has concluded that the surveyed area in the Singleton (2020) report adequately characterised the soil and LUC units at the site (although with no scale indication provided). However, the additional 40.7 ha of land classified in the Landsystems (2024) report should have been subject to a survey and site-specific mapping, rather than a desktop exercise. Furthermore, the area labelled as non-productive in the 2024 report should have been given an LUC classification, as much of that area is currently under pastoral land use.
228. The Singleton (2020) report also classified 16.3 ha of the site soils as "Elite Land"²⁷ under the AUP(OP) definitions. However, this assessment also classified this same land as LUC class 2²⁸, which has been relied upon in the Landsystems (2024) report plus Dr. Guinto's assessment. The land is therefore not considered to be Elite Land, which is defined under the AUP(OP) as "Land classified as Land Use Capability Class 1 (LUC1)".
229. While the more detailed mapping has concluded that the MRZ portion of the site contains a mix of classes 2 and 3 soils (rather than the entire site being class 2 as shown on the New Zealand Land Resource Inventory (**NZLRI**) mapping), it is clear that the entirety of the site is considered HPL under the current NPS-HPL definitions, and it meets the definition of "Prime Land" under the AUP(OP). Wetness limitations are already considered as part of the classification, and these are sub-classes that do not serve to lower the primary class further.

Conclusions on Soil Classification

230. There is a partial agreement between the Applicant and Council as to the soil classification, however, site-specific mapping should be undertaken for the entirety of the MRZ portion of the subject site, including classification of areas that are labelled as 'non-productive'.
231. Overall the MRZ portion of the subject site is predominantly a mix of class 2 and 3 soils, and these are considered HPL under the current NPS-HPL and Prime Land under the AUP(OP).
232. Accordingly, the lack of a full agreement on the soil classification does not result in significant impacts and no proportionality assessment is required. The actual impacts of the

²⁷ Singleton, P. 2020. Land Use Capability and Soil Assessment – Hamlin Rd, Ardmore, page 16.

²⁸ Singleton, P. 2020. Land Use Capability and Soil Assessment – Hamlin Rd, Ardmore, page 9.

development on these soils however do require such an assessment, as discussed immediately below.

Effects of Loss of Highly Productive Land

Applicant's Assessment

233. The proposal seeks to develop the entire subject site, therefore removing all soils from rural use/potential. The Applicant has provided a range of assessments in this regard, including the reports referenced above, plus the Planning Report (in terms of the AUP(OP) and Clause 3.10 of the NPS-HPL) and commentary in the Property Economics report (in terms of Clause 3.6 of the NPS-HPL).
234. The Applicant's assessment states that the majority of the soils on site, while being classed as HPL, have heavy clay soil textures and/or wetness limitations that restrict the range of primary production land uses that would be viable. It opines that cultivation during wetter periods is not sustainable, and the soils are not suitable for deeper rooting horticultural crops. The Applicant considers that the land is generally not of high production value, and that the current rural use of the land is not an economically viable productive use. The Applicant also considers that the land meets the exemptions for HPL subject to permanent or long-term constraints as set out in Clause 3.10 of the NPS-HPL.

Council's Assessment

235. The Property Economics report is framed in terms of Clause 3.6 of the NPS-HPL, which applies to rezoning of land for urban use. This is not the correct application of the NPS-HPL in the current resource consenting context and Council's focus is therefore centred around the objectives and policies, clauses 3.8 to 3.10, the AUP(OP), and most importantly the actual impacts of a loss of highly productive land.
236. The effects of the loss of rural production land to urban development have been reviewed by Council's Horticultural Consultant Ruth Underwood (**Annexure 16**), Council's Consultant Economist Dr. Richard Meade (**Annexure 2**), and Dr Guinto (**Annexure 17**). These specialists have raised concerns in respect to the adequacy of the rural productivity assessments provided in the application.
237. Ms Underwood has acknowledged the soil wetness limitations and the seasonally high water table across parts of the site. The Applicant's assessment does not illustrate the severity of the limitation which could lead to a false impression that the land is of a higher severity than the 'slight' to 'moderate' limitations that are present based on the LUC classification.
238. As Ms Underwood discusses, there are means to work within these wetness limitations, such as different crop selection, timing of cultivation to periods where the water table and soil moisture content are suitable, maintaining drainage systems, and managing grazing and stocking levels in accordance with soil wetness. This is a key test under clause 3.10(2) of the NPS-HPL, and the application has not demonstrated that the land is subject to permanent or long-term constraints on economic viability as these reasonably practicable options to overcome constraints have not been evaluated. This conclusion is further supported by Dr. Guinto, who has confirmed that proper drainage and good soil management using current technology and farming practices can overcome wetness limitations.
239. The Applicant has placed reliance on there being no LUC class 1 land on the site, suggesting that the loss of LUC class 2 and 3 soils is more appropriate than the loss of class 1. Ms Underwood has identified that this understates the limited occurrence of LUC class 1 land, which represents under 1% of the total land area nationwide. A comparison to a loss of class 1 land does not provide a good baseline for assessment. There is a genuine need to protect prime soil classes in addition to elite soil.

240. The Applicant's assessment also relies heavily on limitations to horticulture in concluding that the land does not have high production value, and that urban development is appropriate. While there are clear management practices that can mitigate the impacts of these limitations, even if there are limits to horticulture, land-based primary production is wider ranging and includes agricultural, pastoral or even forestry activities. There are a range of equestrian-related activities that fall under the definition of 'farming' in the AUP(OP) that are permitted activities in rural zones, and these are therefore considered to fall under agricultural or pastoral uses. The subject site therefore reflects a large rural site that is able to support economically viable land-based primary production activities.
241. Ms Underwood has also pointed to a wide range of land-based primary production uses in the surrounding area, including the production of kiwifruit, commercial vegetable production, strawberry growing, outdoor nursery, indoor plant production, and grazing of stock on pasture. All of this production is taking place on land mostly classified as LUC 2 – the same as the NZLRI classification for the application site. Similar limitations present on other sites in the area are managed to continue to support rural production.
242. Dr Guinto has also reviewed available data to estimate dry matter yields for improved pasture, and has concluded that the majority of the site has an estimated pasture dry matter yield of between 10 to 12 t/ha/yr. Pasture dry matter yield above 10 t/ha/yr can be considered high, so the subject site soils are capable of good pasture production despite the wetness limitations present. At a minimum, this presents as a viable land-based primary production option for the site.
243. The removal of land from rural production, even in the case of agricultural or pastoral use, puts further demand on remaining areas of highly productive land that will need to absorb the demand for these displaced activities. This can result in highly productive land without further limitations for horticulture being used for pastoral or equestrian-related activities, further constraining horticultural opportunities in the region. The proposal is therefore considered to be not only a direct loss of a large area of LUC class 2 and 3 soils and the rural production opportunities available in-situ, but will also increase the pressures on an already diminished supply of remaining productive rural land.
244. The Application is clearly contrary to both the NPS-HPL and the AUP(OP) in this regard, which both set out a need to avoid inappropriate development on HPL and Prime Soils. There is both a regionally and nationally recognised need to protect highly productive land from inappropriate development, and once lost to development, the land cannot return to productive rural use.

Conclusions on Rural Production Effects

245. The Application site includes a large area (approximately 188 ha) of rural zoned land that is predominantly LUC class 2 and 3 soils, which can support economically viable land-based primary production activities. The proposal seeks to permanently remove these from rural production use entirely through urban development.
246. The adverse impacts of the loss of this highly productive land / prime soil are significant, and these require a proportionality assessment to be undertaken.

SECTION C.8 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

Applicant's Assessment

247. A Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment (**LVEA**) provided by Reset, and an Urban Design Assessment (**UDA**) prepared by Studio Pacific Architecture, have assessed the landscape and visual effects of the proposal (supported by the Planning Report, and other design plans/reports provided with the application). The LVEA concludes that the proposal

will result in overall low adverse landscape effects and low adverse visual effects, but low-moderate adverse visual effects from immediate views.

Council's Assessment

248. The Application has been reviewed by Council's Consultant Landscape Architect Sally Peake.
249. With regard to landscape matters, Ms Peake agrees with the Applicant's assessment in that the development will result in a significant change, but the response to the site including highlighting and enhancing natural features will create a new identity. The proposed planting buffers along the site's rural edges will also soften the extent of the proposal. However, Ms Peake disagrees that overall effects on rural landscape values can be aggregated to result in low-moderate adverse effects, and concludes that these effects on rural landscape values will be high.
250. The Applicant's assessment states that the development will present as a logical extension of the existing urban fabric and that the urban form will be contiguous with the existing surrounding environment, however there is a clear visual difference arising from any change from a rural land use to an urban land use. Ms Peake therefore disagrees with the Applicant's visual effects ratings.
251. The Applicant has proposed conditions requiring detailed landscaping design drawings to be provided prior to the commencement of any landscaping works. Ms Peake has confirmed that the detailed drawings should be provided up front. There is the potential that adverse visual and landscape effects may not be able to be appropriately mitigated, and therefore deferring review of these plans to consent conditions is not appropriate.

Conclusions on Landscape and Visual Effects

252. There are information gaps with regard to detailed landscaping information that result in uncertainties around how the development will function.
253. A proposed change from rural land use to urban land use undoubtedly results in a noticeable change to the landscape, and introduces a different level of visual effects. However, the adverse impacts related to landscape and visual effects are not considered significant, and no proportionality assessment is required to be undertaken.

SECTION C.9 URBAN FORM / DESIGN

Applicant's Assessment

254. The proposal is for an urban master-planned development and is accompanied by an Urban Design Assessment (**UDA**) prepared by Studio Pacific Architecture, a Planning Report prepared by Tattico, and a range of concept masterplans, design control and landscaping plans.
255. The Applicant's assessment states that Sunfield is a fundamentally different model of housing, based around eliminating private vehicles as the primary form of transport, providing car-less walkable neighbourhoods and greater provision of green spaces, with commercial, community facilities and employment opportunities.

Council's Assessment

256. Council's Urban Designer Robert Mainwaring has identified the following fundamental urban design matters which are described in further detail in his memo (**Annexure 18**):

- The site is not currently well-served by public transport, and while the proposal contains provision for public transport, it is unclear how effective this will be until full development is realised (or what may happen in the event of development stalling or halting). Notably, the Applicant does not own all of the land required to complete the proposed Sunfield Loop.
 - The location and development staging are likely to result in cars continuing to be used as a primary form of transport, at least until the development is completed and tested. The proposal is also likely to result in uncontrolled vehicle parking within and around the site, as described in the assessment by Auckland Transport (**Annexure 7**).
 - A detailed and comprehensive site-wide cycle network to support car-less living has not been provided.
 - Useable formal open spaces within the proposal are limited, and the function and amenity of the spaces provided are likely to be impacted by stormwater events, as described in the assessment by Council Parks (**Annexure 9**).
 - The structure and functionality of the residential neighbourhoods (including neighbourhood hubs and laneways) have not been demonstrated. There is a lack of detail including housing typologies, parking, road networks, public and private interfaces, services, deliveries, and emergency access.
 - The neighbourhoods rely heavily on commonly owned access lot environments which raises fundamental concerns with access and safety. A detailed Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (**CPTED**) assessment should support the application, but this has not been provided.
257. Mr Mainwaring has identified that the density of approximately 40 dwellings per hectare across the site is a relatively low density. Dwellings are typically limited to two-storey due to underlying ground conditions, and there are no terraces or apartment blocks of 3+ storeys that would otherwise be expected closer to neighbourhood centres or employment opportunities.
258. The staging plans indicate that 1,370 dwellings will be constructed in Stages 1-6, before construction of the town centre and healthcare facility (Stage 7). The school precinct is shown as Stage 13, and the employment area follows later. Mr Mainwaring has opined that the assumption that people will live and work within the Sunfield development may be unrealistic in both the long term and during the estimated 10-15 years delivery of the project. Furthermore, some of the critical social infrastructure such as healthcare and education provision would need to be delivered by others, which is outside of the control of the Applicant, and no guarantee is provided as to the timing of provision.
259. There will be a clear need for a large proportion of residents to work and travel outside of Sunfield, especially in the earlier stages of development. A lack of viable transport options and the high likelihood of uncontrolled parking will result in significant adverse impacts on residents of the site and existing residents in surrounding neighbourhoods who will see vastly increased numbers of on-street parking on existing roads that have not been designed for this level of development and use. Mr Mainwaring concludes that this will undermine the amenity of the development and will pose potential safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists, and potentially for Fire and Emergency access.
260. The structure of the neighbourhood concept revolves around neighbourhood hubs that will be the local rubbish/recycling point, post and courier boxes, pick-up and drop-off services, and loading bays. Residents will need to travel significant distances between their house and the hub facilities – which is impractical and will likely encourage vehicle use and loading within the pedestrian laneways. Mr Mainwaring has highlighted examples of this

impracticality, such as supermarket deliveries, service vans, furniture trucks, taxi for medical appointments/disabled access, couriers or deliveries, none of which would function well without being located in close proximity to the related dwelling.

261. Council's Noise Specialist Andrew Gordon has noted that acoustic design requirements do not remedy all aircraft noise concerns for the development, as when residents open windows or spend time outdoors (including balconies) there will be heightened aircraft noise effects. As outlined in Ms Gotelli and Ms Dimery's assessment in **Section B**, the proposed development significantly increases the number of people exposed to aircraft noise and unavoidably reduces outdoor residential amenity. It relies on people keeping windows shut, and contributes to the creation of a low amenity living environment with compromised ability to use outdoor living areas.

Conclusions on Urban Form Effects

262. There are information gaps in the Application as they relate to the structure and function of neighbourhood service hubs and residential laneways.
263. Council does not consider that the location and conditions of the site contribute to a well-functioning urban environment. The staging of the proposal undermines the ability to implement the goals of a car-less neighbourhood, public transport provision is not well demonstrated, and the response to difficult ground conditions results in an urban form that is lower density than expected near neighbourhood centres and employment locations.
264. The adverse impacts related to urban form are significant and these require a proportionality assessment to be undertaken.

SECTION C.10 PARKS AND RESERVES

Applicant's Assessment

265. The Applicant has proposed an open space strategy for the development that includes 27.7 ha of open space, with play spaces and a sports field. All proposed open space is centred around the drainage reserve network.
266. Neighbourhood Service Hubs and informal green spaces are distributed throughout the development, although these are not proposed to vest to Auckland Council as public reserves and they are proposed to be held in common ownership and managed by a resident's association (or similar).
267. The Applicant has verbally indicated that all open space and amenity assets (including playgrounds, recreation infrastructure, sports courts, greenways, landscaping, and other associated structures) will be delivered at their own cost. However, no formal written confirmation of this has been provided.

Council's Assessment

268. Council's Parks Planning Specialist Lea van Heerden has identified the following fundamental matters which are described in further detail in her memo (**Annexure 9**):
- No land is identified for vesting as formal recreation reserve. All proposed recreational assets are located within stormwater/drainage reserve land, which is not supported by Council for formal recreational use.
 - No parks are proposed for vesting in flood-free locations. A large proportion of the open space will be frequently inundated (1 in 2 to 1 in 10 year flood events), and these areas are therefore unsuitable for safe, year-round recreational use.

- Peat soils compromise the long-term stability of and introduce higher maintenance requirements for recreational infrastructure, and reduced landscaping opportunities.
 - The open space network is traversed by a 25-metre wide gas pipeline designation, reducing useable land and opportunities for park development. Formal recreation includes a broad range of structured, community-serving uses, such as clubrooms, libraries, and community buildings that are typically delivered through the parks and open space network.
 - The privately or communally owned green pockets do not guarantee long-term public access, recreational functionality and asset maintenance.
269. Ms van Heerden has concluded that there is a gap in formal recreation reserve provision, that without resolution, would be considered to have adverse effects on the wider and regional open space provision and the open space needs of this future community. Specific recommendations to address the lack of formal recreation reserve provision are detailed in her memo, with notable measures as follows:
- The sports field should be demonstrated to sit above the flood levels and should be vested as a recreation reserve.
 - Three additional neighbourhood parks should be provided, each with a minimum size of 2,500m² to 3,000m².
 - All formal recreation assets should be located on land that is suitable for formal recreation and acceptable for vesting as a recreation reserve (i.e. not located on land modelled to flood in 1 in 2 year events). Formal recreation infrastructure is not supported within drainage reserves.
 - Passive recreation and amenities within drainage reserves should have adequate freeboard to ensure safe and functional use. Where this cannot be met, drainage land should not be relied upon to deliver recreational outcomes.
270. The proposed reserve landscaping strategy along stream corridors and wetlands includes grassed depressions for stormwater attenuation. Ms van Heerden has stated that these areas are likely to remain consistently waterlogged due to the site and soil conditions, which will render them unsuitable for informal recreation and will make them more difficult to maintain. Turf species are unlikely to thrive, and it is recommended that areas subject to frequent or prolonged inundation be planted with appropriate wetland species.
271. As outlined in the comments made by Healthy Waters and summarised in Section C.1 above of this assessment, the Applicant's proposed drainage reserve network is unlikely to be accepted for vesting in its current form. There has not been a demonstrated need that the extent of this land needs to be vested for a public drainage benefit. Ms van Heerden has also expressed a clear outline of requirements for land to be vested for formal recreation, and much of the proposed drainage reserve does not meet this function. The overall open space network presented in the Application is therefore unlikely to be accepted for vesting without further refinement.
272. The street tree species proposed by the Applicant are not well-suited to the conditions (with the exception of species such as Titoki, Puriri and Pohutukawa). It is recommended that a greater variety of more appropriate street tree species be provided. This can be addressed through consent conditions and through detailed design at Engineering Approval Stage.

Conclusions on Parks and Reserves Effects

273. There are information gaps in the Application as they relate to detailed park design, updated scheme plans, retaining wall and interface details, and other reserve elements.

274. The proposal has not demonstrated a sufficient formal recreation open space network that can support the open space needs of the future community. The adverse impacts related to parks and reserves are significant, and these require a proportionality assessment to be undertaken.

SECTION C.11 CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

Earthworks (Erosion and Sediment)

Applicant's Assessment

275. The Application seeks consent for approximately 3,290,000m³ of cut to fill earthworks over an area of 244.5 ha (with an additional 100,000m³ of earthworks associated with pre-loading over the various stages). This is supported by the Planning Report prepared by Tattico, and the Infrastructure Report, Engineering Plans, and Draft Construction Management Plan prepared by Maven.
276. The proposed consent conditions provided with the Application detail a need for a finalised Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (**ESCP**) prior to construction.
277. In their response (on 17 July 2025) to initial information gaps raised by Council, the Applicant confirmed that they will agree to a condition of consent requiring an Adaptive Management Plan (**AMP**).
278. As previously stated, the NoR for Mill Road Stage 2 has not been considered in the design plans for the proposal. The proposed earthworks areas and volumes have not been updated accordingly.

Council's Assessment

279. Council's Consultant Regional Earthworks Specialist Matthew Byrne (**Annexure 12**) has reviewed the proposal from an erosion and sediment perspective, and has identified significant information gaps, as follows:
- The lack of any detail whatsoever surrounding the earthworks and erosion and sediment control (**ESC**) methodologies for the construction of the Awakeri Wetlands ahead of bulk earthworks commencing at the site.
 - The lack of an ESC methodology or plans for Stages 1 and 6 of the project's bulk earthworks, which covers an area of approximately 125ha.
 - The lack of an AMP and information pertaining to open area restrictions.
280. Given the extent and duration of the earthworks activity within the receiving environment containing wetlands and streams, Mr Byrne has advised that an AMP is fundamental and necessary, and that the proposal would not be supported in its current form without an AMP. A recommended consent condition in this regard is included in his memo, and the Applicant has signalled agreement to this type of condition.
281. Mr Byrne has also recommended a number of changes and additional consent conditions related to consent duration, consent review, more specific ESCP details at least 60 days prior to land disturbance for the Awakeri Wetland development, and more specific ESCP details and monitoring requirements. These are contained in his memo. The proposal would not be supported in its current form without these conditions.

Conclusions on Erosion and Sediment Effects

282. Significant information gaps have been identified, but this information is able to be provided by way of consent conditions.
283. Provided the specific and necessary changes to consent conditions are adopted, then significant adverse impacts can be avoided. A proportionality assessment is therefore not required, however, Council requests an opportunity to provide a supplementary review of any updated earthworks plans or conditions to ensure that all relevant matters have been properly considered.

Groundwater Effects

Applicant's Assessment

284. The proposal involves groundwater diversion and dewatering during construction, as a result of the large scale earthworks including the creation of stormwater/flood channels and ponds/wetlands, where earthworks in some locations will see cuts below existing groundwater levels with the intention for new long-term groundwater levels to form.
285. The Planning Report prepared by Tattico states that consent is required under Rule E7.44.1(A28) of the AUP(OP), although it does not explain why consent is needed.
286. The Application is supported by the Planning Report, a Geotechnical Assessment prepared by LDE, and a Groundwater Dewatering and Ground Settlement Effects Assessment prepared by Earthtech (limited specifically to the Awakeri Wetlands Stages 2 and 3).

Council's Assessment

287. Council's Groundwater Specialist Andy Samaratunga has reviewed the groundwater diversion and dewatering aspects of the proposal, and has identified significant information gaps as follows (**Annexure 14**):
- The LDE report only covers the effects anticipated as a result of proposed excavations for the Awakeri Wetlands project, and there is no commentary on groundwater drawdown settlement effects associated with the wider site development.
 - The engineering drawings (notably the earthworks and cut and fill plans) are dated February 2025, and were not available during preparation of the LDE report dated December 2024. The LDE report references plans that show different excavation levels. A geotechnical review of the latest proposal has therefore not been provided.
 - No assessment of mechanical settlement effects associated with proposed cut retaining structures has been provided. Settlement effects on third-party assets can therefore not be assessed.
 - The Earthtech reports are only relevant to the Awakeri Wetlands project, and no recommendations for dewatering and groundwater diversion monitoring have been provided for the wider site development.
288. Mr Samaratunga has confirmed that the scope of the investigations is too limited, and the adverse effects on the environment, structures and other assets have not been appropriately assessed. There is also insufficient geotechnical and hydrogeological investigation data available for groundwater modelling purposes.
289. The difficult ground conditions have been acknowledged in the Application, and this is repeated by a number of Council specialists. Based on the size of the excavation and the groundwater drawdown anticipated, there is a significant risk to the viability of the project,

future land stability, and on future private buildings and both private and public infrastructure. Mr Samaratunga concludes that the proposal cannot be supported in its current form.

Conclusions on Groundwater Effects

290. Significant information gaps have been identified.

291. There are significant groundwater impacts that require a proportionality assessment.

Geotechnical and Land Stability Effects

Applicant's Assessment

292. The geotechnical information provided to support the proposal is described in the Groundwater Effects subsection.

Council's Assessment

293. Council's Development Engineer John Newsome has reviewed the proposal from a geotechnical engineering perspective (**Annexure 10**). Mr Newsome has commented on the challenges related to urban development on peat soils, and acknowledges that these can be overcome with appropriate investigations and engineering design solutions. This includes a specific need for recharge of peat soils (i.e. through a recharge pit or similar).

294. Mr Newsome is satisfied that the LDE report covers all matters of importance and that adequate geotechnical expertise has been demonstrated, with further refined geotechnical information, supervision, monitoring and final certification able to be provided by way of consent conditions.

295. However, Mr Newsome agrees with the comments made by Mr Samaratunga in his groundwater memorandum (**Annexure 14**) that a further geotechnical review of the proposed works must be undertaken, with reference to the latest earthworks plans, which confirms if the assessment, recommendations, and conclusions in the Geotechnical Report remain relevant. Mr Newsome also considers that the concerns raised in the Healthy Waters assessment (at paragraphs 3.39 to 3.43) should be examined as part of the further geotechnical review referred to by Mr Samaratunga.

296. Further, Mr Newsome's conclusion does not negate other concerns with regard to potential increased maintenance costs or difficulties for Council owned infrastructure located in peat soils that are described throughout the various Council assessments. While it may be possible to develop safely on challenging peat soils as presented on the subject site, it is not cost effective or desirable when compared to more suitable soil types.

Conclusions on Geotechnical and Land Stability Effects

297. An information gap is identified in the form of the LDE report not being based on the latest design plans.

298. If the geotechnical report is updated and if groundwater impacts are satisfactorily resolved, including the matters raised by Healthy Waters, then there are no significant Geotechnical and Land Stability impacts that require proportionality assessment.

Land Contamination

Applicant's Assessment

299. The Application is accompanied by Preliminary Site Investigations (PSI) for each of the 19 sites involved in the application, and 8 Detailed Site Investigations (DSI) for sites where it is

likely that Hazardous Activities and Industries List (HAIL) activities have occurred or are occurring.

300. Where site investigations have identified soils that require remediation, Remedial Action Plans (RAP) have been provided, and the Application has identified reasons for consent for these works. A full suite of the required DSIs have not been commissioned/provided, and the Application therefore also seeks consent for development of the properties for which DSIs have not been conducted.

Council's Assessment

301. Council's Contaminated Land Specialist Sharon Tang has reviewed the available PSIs, DSIs and RAPs and has concluded that the development site can be made safe for the intended land use, and any potential health and environmental effects from the proposed remediation and other earthworks can be appropriately mitigated to an acceptable level.
302. This assessment is on the basis of the proposed conditions in the Application, plus additional recommended conditions found in Ms Tang's memo (**Annexure 11**).

Conclusions on Contaminated Land Effects

303. There are no significant contamination impacts that require a proportionality assessment.

SECTION C.12 ARDMORE AIRPORT EFFECTS

Air Discharge Effects

Applicant's Assessment

304. The proposal includes an employment precinct that could support light industrial activities, located in close proximity to Ardmore Airport and within the Ardmore Airport Airspace Restriction Designation (200) under the AUP(OP). The Applicant has proposed a condition (96) to the effect that no building, structure or mast, OR a discharge efflux at a velocity in excess of 4.3 metres per second is to penetrate any of the approach surfaces, transitional surfaces, horizontal surface or conical surface defined in the designation.

Council's Assessment

305. Council's Air Discharge Specialist Marie Meredith has reviewed the proposed condition (**Annexure 22**). It is unclear exactly what industrial activities may take place on the site given the nature of the Application. Policy E14.3(10) of the AUP(OP) "require[s] large scale combustion sources that discharge contaminants to air to avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects on aircraft safety". Ms Meredith recommends that the Applicant confirm whether all future industrial activities will comply with this policy, and provide evidence to support this.
306. The proposed condition is also vague in that it does not specify the actual height limit of any structure or point where a discharge velocity should be measured, as it will apply to any given lot created as part of the development. It is therefore recommended that the condition be expanded to provide a more descriptive height restriction / level.
307. Proposed Condition 97 expands on the limitation by stating that any proposal for a building or structure exceeding 4m in height above ground level will require the approval of and shall be referred for consent to the Airport Authority. Similarly, an activity that will generate airborne particulates that may impair visibility shall not be carried out within the Rural Aerodrome Protection Area without approval of the Ardmore Airport Limited. While this *Augier* condition introduces a reliance on third-party approval, the employment area can still function albeit

with buildings at a lower height than 4m in the event that the approval cannot be obtained. This presents a potential restriction, but not one that is insurmountable.

Conclusions on Air Discharge Effects

308. There are some minor information gaps with regard to proposed consent condition wording and clarity as to whether future industrial activities will be able to comply with AUP(OP) policies regarding discharge of contaminants to air.
309. However, there are no significant contamination impacts that require a proportionality assessment.

Noise Effects

Applicant's Assessment

310. The proposal is located adjacent to the Ardmore Airport, and is subject to Aircraft Noise Overlays under the AUP(OP). The Applicant has responded to this by positioning Activities Sensitive to Aircraft Noises outside of the 65 dB Air Noise Boundary, with dwellings and aged care facilities located in the 55 dB Outer Noise Boundary and beyond.
311. The Application is supported by an Acoustic Assessment prepared by Styles Group, and an Acoustic Review prepared by Hegley Acoustic Consultants.

Council's Assessment

312. Council's Noise Specialist Andrew Gordon has reviewed the proposal with regard to aircraft noise impacts, and has confirmed that the land use design has considered the noise contours to ensure that significant adverse effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated. This assessment is on the basis of the proposed conditions in the Application (with one modification), plus one additional recommended condition found in Mr Gordon's memo (**Annexure 20**).
313. Mr Gordon also notes that Policy D24.3(3)(a) requires that effects within the 55-65 dB Ldn noise contours can be adequately remedied or mitigated through both acoustic treatment AND restrictions on the numbers of people to be accommodated through zoning and density mechanisms. While Mr Gordon confirms that the acoustic treatment requirements for maintaining reasonable indoor noise levels can be satisfied, he notes that the adequacy of zoning and density restrictions falls outside his acoustic expertise.
314. As previously stated, outdoor noise effects cannot be mitigated by acoustic design requirements, and if residents prefer to open windows (rather than remaining in a sealed and mechanically ventilated room), the acoustic design measures will not function to the same degree.

Conclusions on Noise Effects

315. There are no significant noise impacts that require a proportionality assessment beyond those impacts that are already assessed as part of the Urban Form/Design assessment.

Lighting and Glare Effects

Applicant's Assessment

316. The Applicant has provided specialist reports with regard to impacts of lighting and glare effects (from lighting and solar panels) on the operation of Ardmore Airport. Their assessment has resulted in a range of proposed conditions that require final lighting plans and certifications, and conclude that overall subject to compliance there will be sufficient

mitigation of glare and related safety effects to pilots and Ardmore Airport air navigation in general.

Council's Assessment

317. Council's Consulting Lighting Specialist Domenico De Vincentis has reviewed the lighting and glare impacts of the proposal (**Annexure 15**). Mr De Vincentis has concluded that subject to the proposed consent conditions, with some minor changes and one additional certification condition, the lighting and glare effects can be appropriately mitigated to expected/permitted development levels and that there will not be adverse glare effects to air navigation.

Conclusions on Lighting and Glare Effects

318. There are no significant lighting and glare impacts that require a proportionality assessment.

SECTION D: SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES AND PROPORTIONALITY CONCLUSIONS

Overview

319. This concluding section provides a brief joint overview of the outcome of the overall Council assessment of the application, based on an objective assessment of the application material as at 4 August 2025.

320. The section is structured as follows:

- **Section 85 adverse impacts / proportionality assessment:** Analysis under section 85(3) of the Fast Track Approvals Act, examining whether adverse impacts are sufficiently significant to be out of proportion to the project's regional or national benefits.
- **Key information gaps:** Identification of information deficiencies (existing and new) and their implications for decision-making by the Panel.
- **Key findings:** Again, as at the date of providing these comments (4 August 2025), with our joint recommendation to the Panel.

Section 85 adverse impacts / proportionality assessment

321. Under section 85(3) of the FTAA, the Panel *may* decline an approval where adverse impacts are sufficiently significant to be out of proportion to the project's regional or national benefits. This assessment requires consideration of:

- The nature and significance of adverse impacts identified through the section 81(2) process;
- The project's regional or national benefits as assessed under section 81(4);
- Whether proposed conditions or Applicant modifications could adequately address adverse impacts;
- Whether the proportionality threshold is met even after accounting for mitigation measures, compensation etc.

322. For the avoidance of doubt, the Council's assessment has not identified any reasons why the application **must** be declined in terms of section 85(1) of the FTAA.

Headline issues identified

323. Based on the detailed analysis in **Sections B and C** above, the following 12 adverse impacts have been identified, individually and collectively, as potentially meeting the section 85(3) threshold:

- **Issue 1: Inadequate proposal for stormwater and flood management** – Significant information gaps result in technical uncertainties and unresolved issues regarding stormwater and flood management, and the proposal presents a significant environmental risk and there is a clear risk to public health, safety, and property.
- **Issue 2: No / inadequate proposal for water supply servicing** – Watercare has assessed the capacity of the existing and planned bulk water supply infrastructure required to support the FUZ portion of the proposal ahead of the 2050+ timing in the FDS. There are physical restrictions to providing connections until the Waikato-2 Watermain is operational (no earlier than 2034). No public water supply network is available to service the MRZ portion of the proposal. The absence of a clear and feasible proposal for water supply servicing is a key infrastructure deficit, creating significant uncertainty as to the feasibility of development, and concerns (if consent is granted) of potential public health risks for the future community.
- **Issue 3: No / inadequate proposal for wastewater servicing** – Watercare has assessed the capacity of the existing and planned bulk wastewater infrastructure required to support the FUZ portion of the proposal ahead of the 2050+ timing in the FDS. There are downstream infrastructure constraints that would require upgrades, including potentially WWTP upgrades, to support the development, and the Applicant has not proposed to undertake these upgrades at their cost. No public wastewater connections are available to service the MRZ portion of the proposal. The absence of a clear and feasible proposal for wastewater servicing is a key infrastructure deficit, creating significant uncertainty as to the feasibility of development, and concerns (if consent is granted) of potential public health risks for the future community.
- **Issue 4: Inadequate proposal for transport integration** – There are key information gaps relating to transport matters, and Auckland Transport have assessed the proposal in its current form as being likely to result in significant effects including safety risks, poor transport outcomes, a lack of realistic alternative modes to private vehicle transport in the early stages of development (where private vehicle transport is also not catered to), and unplanned cost burdens.
- **Issue 5: Potential ecological effects** – There are key information gaps which result in adverse freshwater ecology effects not being able to be fully assessed – namely with regard to stream diversion. The Application details infer a net loss in stream length and there will likely be an associated net loss in ecological values. Measures proposed to mitigate these specific effects have not been demonstrated.
- **Issue 6: Loss of highly productive rural land** – The proposal involves development over 188 hectares of LUC class 2 and 3 soils (HPL under the NPS-HPL and Prime Land under the AUP(OP)). These soils can support economically viable land-based primary

production activities, and loss of these soils further constrains an already rare resource in the Auckland region, and puts further pressure on remaining high-class soils due to the displacement of existing rural activities.

- **Issue 7: Low density urban form** – In response to difficult ground conditions and close proximity to Ardmore Airport, building heights and typology types are limited, with no provision for terraced housing or 3+ storey apartments that would be expected near neighbourhood centres and employment locations. Combined with the transport issues and staging of the proposal which undermines the goals of a car-less neighbourhood, and the impacts of aircraft noise on outdoor amenity (and the related reliance on mechanical ventilation for indoor spaces), the proposal does not contribute to a well-functioning urban environment.
- **Issue 8: Inadequate provision of formal recreation opportunities** – All proposed parks to vest are located within the wider drainage network, often with a dual-purpose flood management function. The proposal has not demonstrated a sufficient formal recreation open space network that can support the open space needs of the future community.
- **Issue 9: Potential groundwater drawdown and geotechnical effects** – There are key information gaps including insufficient hydrogeological data and geotechnical data available for groundwater modelling purposes, and the limited scope of the investigations provided do not enable the potential adverse effects on the environment, structures and other assets to be assessed. The geotechnical report has not been based on the current design plans. There is a potential significant risk to the viability of the project, future land stability, on future buildings and on both private and public infrastructure.
- **Issue 10: Inadequate provision for Mill Road Stage 2 NoR** – The proposal does not respond to the Mill Road Stage 2 NoR, and a large number of the application documents, plans and specialist reports need to be revised to take this reduction in land area into account. This includes updated traffic assumptions, revised employment area numbers, revised stormwater proposals, etc. The Application presents as a significant risk to the viability of the Mill Road Stage 2 project if approved without integration.
- **Issue 11: Impact on planned investment and infrastructure provision** - Bringing forward the timing of the proposed development comes at the expense of the delivery of other developments and is not possible without displacing planned investment and infrastructure service provision in existing live zoned areas and sequenced areas. There are significant infrastructure funding and financing gaps for the application and no agreements are in place to confirm the scope of proposed infrastructure and ongoing opex.
- **Issue 12: Uncertainty of infrastructure delivery and servicing** – The absence of resolved stormwater, water supply, wastewater and transport infrastructure delivery and servicing creates significant uncertainty and risk that, if the application is approved, interim solutions may be required. The Application does not adequately address these concerns, and there is insufficient certainty that Council will not bear (or be placed under pressure to bear) the short, medium or long term operational and capital costs, which Council is not in a position to absorb. Also see Issues 1, 2, 3 and 4 above.

324. Having identified the above headline issues, it is important that we signal that there is the potential for other material issues to arise as a result of further assessment. For example, headline **Issue 10** which is likely to necessitate a significant change in terms of stormwater, transport integration, urban design matters and even economic assumptions.

Project benefits summary

325. The Applicant contends that the project will deliver regional benefits through housing supply (3,854 dwellings), retail, commercial, medical, industrial, community and recreation land uses.

326. The Applicant also contends that the project will deliver national benefits through significant economic impacts, estimated to be around \$3.2 billion in net present value (NPV).

327. In Council's assessment, undertaken by Dr Richard Meade (**Annexure 2**), it is concluded that these alleged benefits have not been informed by appropriate methodologies, that the Applicant's assessment has inherent limitations, and that it systematically overstates the relevant benefits. The benefits have not been reliably established to have met the threshold of regional or national benefits under the FTAA.

328. The assessment of the claimed regional and national benefits has been considered holistically across all adverse impact assessments, and informs the tabular proportionality assessment below.

329. This assessment draws on:

- the Applicant's Substantive Application Planning Report and supporting technical reports, including the Applicant's economic assessment;
- The Council's economics review by Dr Meade (**Annexure 2**);
- The Council's report on rural productivity/highly productive land (**Annexure 16**);
- The Council's Strategic Planning Assessment in **Section B**.

330. In summary, our assessment is as follows.

331. The approach taken by the Applicant to determining the economic benefit is flawed. Dr Meade has concluded that a cost-benefit analysis (**CBA**) is a more appropriate method when compared to the economic impact analysis (**EIA**) provided by the Applicant. Even if an EIA was accepted, this particular approach has systematically overstated the relevant benefits, and has not considered benefits net of any relevant displacement effects or costs (including in adjoining regions).

332. A similar approach also needs to be applied to measures such as employment capacity (both for during and post-construction). The capacity needs to translate into actual jobs (and not just excess capacity) and could not simply 'cannibalise' jobs from other developments or regions if it is purported to be a net benefit.

- i. Any meaningful assessment of the Development's benefits must be relative to an appropriately-defined counterfactual (i.e. what happens absent the Development being fast-tracked), which the Applicant's analysis has not done.
- ii. It is unclear whether the Applicant's analysis has appropriately adjusted for the timing of the purported benefits. In addition, the benefits claimed hinge on future demand

forecasts, and there is a level of risk that has not been appropriately accounted for by way of a rigorous sensitivity analysis or similar.

- iii. Certain costs/adverse effects have not been adequately addressed in the Applicant's analysis, including costs relating to the loss of HPL, additional infrastructure costs, socio-economic costs to nearby residents, and opportunity costs relating to the development being relatively low-density, plus other costs due to developing on difficult peat soils.
- iv. Dr Meade has concluded that "[c]ertain benefits of the Development have been overstated, including overcounted employment benefits (including due to overstated industrial development area), overcounted housing supply impacts, failure to distinguish benefits to local parties from benefits to overseas ones, failure to demonstrate how the Development improves housing affordability (when in fact it could worsen it for certain parties), and presumption that providing space for healthcare facilities will by itself improve local accessibility to healthcare (when changes to primary healthcare funding formulas would also be required to do so)".

333. In summary, we accept Dr Meade's conclusions, in his section 4, that:

- i. The Applicant's analysis has used a methodology that inherently overstates the development's benefits;
- ii. Any assessment of the development's benefits requires a full CBA, including suitable sensitivity analysis and scenario modelling to test the importance to claimed benefits of key uncertainties, which have not been provided;
- iii. The Applicant's analysis fails to properly define the development's counterfactual, nor does it properly assess all relevant costs/adverse effects, and it overstates certain of the claimed benefits;
- iv. The Application's assessed benefits have not been reliably established, and not to the level of demonstrating significant regional or national benefits.

334. The Applicant's analysis makes reference to the benefits of partially replacing the loss of the capacity in areas now proposed in the FDS for removal from the FUZ (estimated by the Applicant at around 7,000 dwellings). This is an incorrect assumption, and as stated in **Section B**, the proposal will not 'replace' the loss of development capacity in these areas as further assessment confirmed that they are not suitable for urban development, and the growth forecast in the AGS has since been updated.

335. Furthermore, the proposed development of 3,854 dwellings (including retirement units) represents just 0.14% of the c. 2.8 million plan-enabled dwelling capacity Auckland-Wide under Plan Change 78 (**PC78**), for which capacity is required to be maintained under PC78's replacement. On a regional scale, this is not a significant capacity increase that would warrant urban expansion outside of areas that are already anticipated and planned for development, particularly when considering the considerable costs (that have not been accounted for as stated previously). The 15-year staging period, with 722 lots coming to market in stages 23, 24 and 25 at the end of the development period further calls into question the significance of the benefits of the project within the context of the Auckland housing market.

336. Having noted the above matters, even if the Panel were to accept the Applicant's assessment of regional or national benefits, the Council's assessment is that there remain a number of adverse impacts that are sufficiently significant to be out of proportion to those benefits (i.e. this conclusion applies regardless of whether benefits are assessed in accordance with the Applicant's assessment or Dr Meade's review).

Assessment

337. A detailed assessment is provided below in tabular form.

Adverse impacts	Section 85 assessment
<p>1. Inadequate proposal for stormwater and flood management</p>	<p>Significance Assessment: As noted in the Healthy Waters memo (Annexure 3) and Stormwater memo (Annexure 4), the Application has not demonstrated an appropriate stormwater and flood management solution, and the proposal presents as a significant environment risk and a risk to public health, safety and property (if consent is granted). There are also significant risks to public roads that would also experience more frequent and more severe flood risks as outlined in the Auckland Transport memo (Annexure 7).</p> <p>Regional/National Benefits Considered: See Project Benefits Summary above.</p> <p>Proposed Conditions/Mitigation/Compensation: The stormwater and flooding issues are significant, particularly given the large extent of flooding present on the site, difficult ground conditions, no allowance for a development of this scale in existing downstream infrastructure, and already at-risk downstream properties that are likely to face exacerbated flood effects. Consent conditions deferring detailed design are inappropriate, as the full extent of effects cannot be determined without comprehensive up-front information. Reliance on consent conditions carries a risk that the issues will not be satisfactorily dealt with, and in this regard conditions would also be unable to satisfy the requirements of s106 of the RMA.</p> <p>Proportionality Conclusion: Adverse impact remains significantly out of proportion to benefits. Stormwater and flood management cannot be practically resolved through conditions – either the conditions would frustrate the consent entirely or they could lead to design solutions that do not readily mitigate the potential significant effects. This conclusion applies regardless of whether economic benefits are assessed in accordance with the Applicant's assessment or Dr Meade's review, as the fundamental infrastructure constraint cannot be overcome without a comprehensive and integrated stormwater/flood design and a full technical analysis.</p>
<p>2. No / inadequate proposal for water supply servicing</p>	<p>Significance Assessment: As noted in the Watercare memo (Annexure 5), the absence of a clear proposal for water supply servicing is a key infrastructure deficit, creating significant uncertainty as to the feasibility of development, and concerns (if consent is granted) as potential public health risks for the future community.</p> <p>Regional/National Benefits Considered: See Project Benefits Summary above.</p> <p>Proposed Conditions/Mitigation/Compensation: There are physical restrictions to the access to the BSP for the FUZ portion of the development site that cannot be overcome by other means (with a physical connection unlikely until at least after 2034). No public water supply network is available to service the MRZ portion of the development. A condition precedent preventing development until water servicing is available would essentially frustrate the consent, making it unviable. Alternative measures (roof collection/tankered water) are not appropriate or sustainable options for large-scale new urban development. The proposed staged development cannot address the fundamental physical barriers to connection.</p> <p>Proportionality Conclusion: Adverse impact remains significantly out of proportion to benefits. The water servicing deficit cannot be practically resolved through conditions - either the conditions would frustrate the consent entirely or would rely on inappropriate interim measures unsuitable for urban development at this scale. This conclusion applies regardless of whether economic benefits are assessed in accordance with the Applicant's assessment or Dr Meade's review.</p>

<p>3. No / inadequate proposal for wastewater servicing</p>	<p>Significance Assessment: As noted in the Watercare memo (Annexure 5), the absence of a clear and feasible proposal for wastewater servicing is a key infrastructure deficit, creating significant uncertainty as to the feasibility of development, and concerns (if consent is granted) as potential public health risks for the future community.</p> <p>Regional/National Benefits Considered: See Project Benefits Summary above.</p> <p>Proposed Conditions/Mitigation/Compensation: There are downstream infrastructure constraints that would require upgrades, including potentially WWTP upgrades, to support the FUZ portion of the development ahead of the 2050+ timing in the FDS. Any consent condition would need to require the full extent of upgrades at the cost of the consent holder. The proposed LPS is inappropriate for a large scale urban development, and connection to the public network from such a system would not be accepted. There are also no public wastewater network connections available to service the MRZ portion of the development. No alternative sustainable measures for wastewater servicing have been demonstrated.</p> <p>Proportionality Conclusion: It is not yet clear whether there is viable long-term private wastewater solution, which (if no such solution is available) is a potentially significant adverse impact. This conclusion applies regardless of whether economic benefits are assessed in accordance with the Applicant's assessment or Dr Meade's review.</p>
<p>4. Inadequate proposal for transport integration</p>	<p>Significance Assessment: As noted in Auckland Transport memo (Annexure 7) and the Traffic Engineering memo (Annexure 8), there are key information gaps relating to transport matters, and the proposal in its current form is likely to result in significant effects including safety risks, poor transport outcomes, a lack of realistic alternative modes to private vehicle transport in the early stages of development (where private vehicle transport is also not catered to), and unplanned cost burdens.</p> <p>Regional/National Benefits Considered: See Project Benefits Summary above.</p> <p>Proposed Conditions/Mitigation/Compensation: Full requirements for mitigation/compensation cannot be determined without updated and realistic traffic modelling. At a minimum, consent conditions will be required for a large range of infrastructure upgrades on the site interfaces, for active mode upgrades to the Papakura and Takanini town centres and train stations, specific designs to prevent uncontrolled parking in the development, early provision of public transport in the initial stages of the development, monitoring and road condition surveys, and travel demand management plans.</p> <p>Proportionality Conclusion: Adverse impacts remain significantly out of proportion to benefits, and it is unlikely that these can be appropriately mitigated simply by way of consent conditions. The proposed approach to transport integration will result in significant adverse impacts to future residents of the development, existing residents in surrounding neighbourhoods, and will exacerbate transport related issues in the vicinity (including introducing heightened risks to pedestrian and cyclist safety).</p>
<p>5. Potential ecological effects</p>	<p>Significance Assessment: As noted in Ecology memo (Annexure 13), there are key information gaps in the application which result in adverse freshwater ecology effects not being able to be fully assessed, and whether any measures proposed by the Applicant are appropriate to avoid, mitigate, offset or compensate for these effects.</p> <p>Regional/National Benefits Considered: See Project Benefits Summary above.</p> <p>Proposed Conditions/Mitigation/Compensation: The potential effects cannot be mitigated by way of conditions unless the full extent of effects is identified, particularly as the proposal involves a net loss in stream length (and likely associated net loss in ecological values). Potential mitigation measures inferred in the application are already part of the</p>

	<p>general mitigation package for other identified effects, which could be an attempt to double-count the mitigation value.</p> <p>Proportionality Conclusion: Adverse ecological impacts may potentially be significant and are unable to fully assessed until this information is provided.</p>
<p>6. Loss of highly productive rural land</p>	<p>Significance Assessment: As noted in the Soil Science and LUC Mapping memo (Annexure 17), the Rural Productivity / Highly Productive Land memo (Annexure 16), Dr Meade's economics report (Annexure 2), and Section C above, the rural zoned portion of the site is subject to LUC class 2 and 3 soils which are able to support economically viable land-based primary production activities. These soils and associated rural production opportunities will be lost through urban development.</p> <p>Regional/National Benefits Considered: See Project Benefits Summary above.</p> <p>Proposed Conditions/Mitigation/Compensation: Not applicable.</p> <p>Proportionality Conclusion: Adverse impacts remain significantly out of proportion to benefits.</p>
<p>7. Low density urban form</p>	<p>Significance Assessment: As noted in the Urban Design memo (Annexure 18), building heights and typology types are limited with no provision for terraced housing or 3+ storey apartments that would be expected near neighbourhood centres and employment locations. The structure and functionality of the residential neighbourhoods have not been demonstrated. Combined with the transport issues and staging of the proposal which undermines the goals of a car-less neighbourhood, and the impacts of aircraft noise on outdoor amenity (and the related reliance on mechanical ventilation for indoor spaces), the proposal does not contribute to a well-functioning urban environment.</p> <p>Regional/National Benefits Considered: See Project Benefits Summary above.</p> <p>Proposed Conditions/Mitigation/Compensation: N/A.</p> <p>Proportionality Conclusion: The adverse impacts associated with the lower density proposed but without commensurate transport access and connectivity (especially in the early stages of development) remain significant out of proportion to the benefits.</p>
<p>8. Inadequate provision of formal recreational opportunities</p>	<p>Significance Assessment: As noted in Parks memo (Annexure 9), all proposed parks to vest are located within the wider drainage network, often with a dual-purpose flood management function. The proposal has not demonstrated a sufficient formal recreation open space network that can support the open space needs of the future community.</p> <p>Regional/National Benefits Considered: See Project Benefits Summary above.</p> <p>Proposed Conditions/Mitigation/Compensation: The proposed open space network will not be accepted for vesting in its current form, and significant changes are required (including provision of dedicated formal open spaces free and clear of flood constraints) before appropriate conditions can be truly determined. While a suite of conditions has been suggested in the Parks memo, the extent of changes required could frustrate the consent and it is unlikely that the information gaps can be resolved through consent conditions.</p> <p>Proportionality Conclusion: Adverse impacts remain significantly out of proportion to benefits. The adverse impacts related to parks, particularly the absence of adequate neighbourhood park provision details and metrics are significant.</p>

<p>9. Potential groundwater drawdown and geotechnical effects</p>	<p>Significance Assessment: As noted in Groundwater memo (Annexure 14) and the Development Engineering memo (Annexure 10), there are key information gaps including insufficient hydrogeological data and geotechnical data available for groundwater modelling purposes, and the limited scope of the investigations provided do not enable the potential adverse effects on the environment, structures and other assets to be assessed.</p> <p>Regional/National Benefits Considered: See Project Benefits Summary above.</p> <p>Proposed Conditions/Mitigation/Compensation: The potential effects cannot be mitigated by way of conditions unless the full extent of effects is identified. This analysis cannot be undertaken without the information gaps being resolved, so consent conditions are not a viable option in this instance. Potential groundwater drawdown and geotechnical effects underpin the entire viability of the project.</p> <p>Proportionality Conclusion: There is a potential significant risk to the viability of the project, future land stability, on future buildings and on both private and public infrastructure. These adverse impacts remain significantly out of proportion to the benefits.</p>
<p>10. Inadequate provision for Mill Road Stage 2 NoR</p>	<p>Significance Assessment: As noted in Section C above, the Mill Road Stage 2 NoR has not been accounted for in the Application, and it has implications that will require a full update of the design plans and supporting information.</p> <p>Regional/National Benefits Considered: See Project Benefits Summary above.</p> <p>Proposed Conditions/Mitigation/Compensation: N/A</p> <p>Proportionality Conclusion: The Application presents as a significant risk to the viability of the Mill Road Stage 2 project if approved without integration, and adverse impacts remain out of proportion to the benefits if the proposal is not updated.</p>
<p>11. Impact on planned investment and infrastructure provision</p>	<p>Significance Assessment: Bringing forward the timing of the proposed development, and introducing new development that is unanticipated, comes at the expense of the delivery of other developments and is not possible without displacing planned investment and infrastructure service provision in existing live zoned areas and sequenced areas. There are significant infrastructure funding and financing gaps for the application and no agreements are in place to confirm the scope of proposed infrastructure and ongoing opex. The funding and financing memo of Ms Duffield addresses these matters further (Annexure 1).</p> <p>Regional/National Benefits Considered: See Project Benefits Summary above.</p> <p>Proposed Conditions/Mitigation/Compensation: If the Application is granted, conditions should be imposed requiring certainty of infrastructure financing and funding before the Development proceeds. These conditions should ensure that the Development demonstrates how infrastructure will be paid for and confirms that required infrastructure provision will not displace planned investment in other areas of Auckland. Consideration could be given to conditions or covenants such as requiring private funding and private operational responsibility for infrastructure, and / or deferring development stages until infrastructure is funded and delivered. Agreements such as 'Infrastructure Agreements' may increase funding & financing certainty as well as timing certainty for infrastructure to be delivered.</p> <p>Proportionality Conclusion: The impact of displaced development, planned investment and infrastructure service provision in existing live zoned and sequenced area are considered to be significant.</p>

12. Uncertainty of infrastructure delivery and servicing	<p>Significance Assessment: The absence of resolved stormwater, water supply, wastewater and transport infrastructure delivery and servicing creates significant uncertainty and risk that, if the application is approved, interim solutions may be required. The Application does not adequately address these concerns, and there is insufficient certainty that Council will not bear (or be placed under pressure to bear) the short, medium or long term operational and capital costs, which Council is not in a position to absorb. Also see Adverse impacts 1, 2, 3 and 4 above. The funding and financing memo of Ms Duffield addresses these matters further (Annexure 1).</p> <p>Regional/National Benefits Considered: See Project Benefits Summary above.</p> <p>Proposed Conditions/Mitigation/Compensation: As discussed under Adverse impacts 1, 2, 3 and 4 above.</p> <p>Proportionality Conclusion: Adverse impact remains significantly out of proportion to benefits. Unresolved infrastructure delivery and servicing creates significant uncertainty and risk, and interim solutions may be required. The council is not satisfied it will not be at risk of bearing the short, medium and long term opex and capex costs.</p>
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Key Information Gaps (Existing / New)

338. **Annexure 25** provides, in tabular form, discussion of the status of information gaps previously identified, including those that remain having reviewed the current application material provided including the application documents, and the Applicant's response package dated 17 July 2025. Council considers that this information is necessary prior to determination and the Panel should request it is provided by the Applicant.
339. Some new information gaps have been identified, as detailed in the table below, which explains their significance for decision-making:

Information gap	Nature of deficiency	Decision-making impact	Risk / uncertainty created
1. Stormwater: Treatment options for high contaminant generating car parks (Refer to Annexure 4).	<p>The Applicant has confirmed that consent is required for up to 21,000m² of high contaminant generating carparks across the development.</p> <p>However, technical details surrounding these have not been provided, and it is unclear which devices will be used to treat which proportions of the contaminants generated. There are limitations on downstream communal devices that cannot be assumed to have sufficient capacity to provide this treatment.</p>	<p>Cannot accurately assess the impacts or impose suitable conditions without stormwater device details.</p>	<p>High Risk: Increased contamination of downstream stormwater networks and receiving bodies may occur.</p>

2. Ecology: Wetland delineation data (Refer to Annexure 13).	Survey points used to classify and delineate natural inland wetlands have not been presented.	This is a minor point for clarification only.	Low Risk: There is general agreement between Council and the Applicant, although review of the data would be preferable.
3. Ecology: The calculated length of stream diversion is not quantified (Refer to Annexure 13).	The Applicant has confirmed that there will be stream diversions that trigger reasons for consent, but has not presented definitive plans or information to accurately determine the extent of stream diversion and stream loss.	Cannot accurately assess the impacts without knowing the full extent of works proposed.	High Risk: There are likely to be significant residual ecological impacts (i.e. net loss of stream environment) if the actual extents are not determined.
4. Ecology: No ecological effects of stream diversion are assessed (Refer to Annexure 13).	The ecological effects of the above stream diversions are not assessed in the EclA, and specific mitigation, compensation or offsetting has not been discussed.	As above – cannot accurately assess ecological effects of stream diversion.	High Risk: There are likely to be significant residual ecological impacts.
5. Transport: Lack of intersection modelling (Refer to Beca report attached to Annexure 7).	Eight intersections have been identified as requiring improvements or additional mitigation based on modelling undertaken by Beca on behalf of Auckland Transport. The Application does not include sufficient detail to enable a full assessment.	The full extent of potential traffic effects cannot be accurately determined without appropriate modelling. Initial indications suggest that the required infrastructure may need to be undertaken on land outside of the development site.	High Risk: There are likely to be significant traffic effects if design and modelling of these intersections is not accounted for.
6. Transport/ Stormwater: Road runoff treatment meeting requirements not demonstrated (Refer to Awa report attached to Annexure 7).	Catchpit inserts for all proposed public catchments as a means of providing stormwater treatment are not acceptable, and these do not meet stormwater mitigation requirements.	The design demonstrated would not be acceptable for vesting, and if approved, alternative options would need to be explored at Engineering Plan Approval stage. Alternative options would likely be more space intensive, which would require redesigns that may not be feasible within the area allocated to roading/stormwater.	Medium Risk: Lack of demonstration of complying alternatives fitting within the space allocated could lead to consent conditions that frustrate the consent, requiring variations or additional consents.
7. Transport/ Stormwater: Major culverts do not meet engineering standards (Refer to Awa report attached to Annexure 7).	Major culverts under primary or secondary collector roads (such as Road 1) need to comply with Section 2.3.4(e) of the NZTA Bridge Manual. The current design does not meet these requirements, and would likely require a much larger culvert.	The current design would require revisions that may not be able to fit within the current space allowed.	Medium Risk: Lack of demonstration of compliance with the standards could lead to approval of a layout with inadequate space, frustrating the consent and requiring variations or additional consents.

8. Transport/ Stormwater: Fish passage assessments not provided (Refer to Awa report attached to Annexure 7).	Similar to the item above, if fish passage measures are not appropriately designed for, proposed culverts may have insufficient capacity and may require redesign	The current design would require revisions that may not be able to fit within the current space allowed.	Medium Risk: As per item 7 above.
9. Transport/ Stormwater: Culvert blockage assessment not provided (Refer to Awa report attached to Annexure 7).	No culvert blockage assessment has been provided, and design changes may be required to meet engineering requirements.	Culverts can be susceptible to blockages, and the risks and impacts need to be assessed to determine if any revisions could fit within the current space allowed in the design.	Medium Risk: As per item 7 above.
10. Transport/ Stormwater: Culvert and bridge access space not allowed for (Refer to Awa report attached to Annexure 7).	Culverts and bridges require access for operation, maintenance and repairs. The current design down not allow for this and may require redesign.	The current design would require revisions that may not be able to fit within the current space allowed.	Medium Risk: As per item 7 above.
11. Transport/ Stormwater: Detail of overland flowpaths within proposed roads not provided (Refer to Awa report attached to Annexure 7).	Roads to be vested to Auckland Transport that have overland flowpaths are to meet the hazard requirements set out in Table 3 of the Road Drainage chapter of the TDM. The current Application material does not provide this information which is necessary to demonstrate that overland flows can be safely managed and integrated within the development's stormwater strategy.	Without this information, it cannot be determined that overland flowpaths can be contained within roads to vest, and this could require significant redesign.	High Risk: Significant changes to the development design would be required if overland flowpaths exceed the maximum hazard requirements for roads to vest (i.e. new overland flowpath channels would need to be designed for, with flow on effects for nearby land uses).
12. Landscaping: Detailed landscape plans have not been provided (Refer to Annexures 18 and 19).	The Applicant has proposed conditions to provide detailed landscaping information prior to implementation of various stages, rather than providing more comprehensive information for assessment as part of this consent process.	Where landscaping is relied upon for mitigation of adverse effects, a lack of detailed landscaping information does not allow this to be fully assessed.	Low Risk: Provision of detailed landscape information through consent conditions creates uncertainties around how the development will function.
13. Urban Design: Hierarchy and legibility of laneways and hubs is not clear (Refer to Annexure 18).	Further clarification on the following with regard to the proposed laneways and neighbourhood service hubs is needed to fully assess the impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interface and junctions of all lane types to local and primary roads • Wayfinding • Crossings and bays for Local and 	The structure and function of the residential neighbourhoods revolves around the hubs as the local refuse/recycling point, cycle storage, loading bays, post and courier boxes, and pickup and drop-off services. More detailed design of the spaces and distances should be provided to determine if these are practical and realistic.	High Risk: Without this information provided, it cannot be determined that a well-functioning urban environment has been designed for, and there are potentially significant risks with regard to fire and emergency access.

	Neighbourhood Service Hubs • Distinction between trafficable lanes, lanes, and pedestrian lanes	Furthermore, the ability for fire and emergency vehicles to navigate primarily pedestrian lanes has not been demonstrated.	
14. Air Discharge: No assessment of chapter E14 of the AUP(OP) is provided (Refer to Annexure 22).	Policy E14.3(10) of the AUP(OP) states “ <i>Require large scale combustion sources that discharge contaminants to air to avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects on aircraft safety</i> ”. As the full nature of potential industrial uses within the employment precinct is currently unknown, it is considered that the Applicant should confirm if this policy will be adhered to.	The full potential impact of future industrial uses on aircraft safety cannot be confirmed.	Low Risk: Confirmation of this would be preferable, as it could lead to a scenario where employment land uses are limited further than intended due to the lack of an up-front assessment.

340. Council considers that the outstanding information detailed in **Annexure 25** and in the additional table above is necessary prior to determination and the Panel should request that this information is provided by the Applicant.

Key Findings

341. A number of adverse impacts have been identified in the Council's reporting, which either can be addressed adequately through conditions of consent, or which do not outweigh the project's benefits.
342. However, the Council's assessment has identified 12 adverse impacts meeting the section 85(3) threshold, individually and collectively (i.e. where the adverse impacts are significantly significant to be out of proportion to the regional, even after taking into account mitigation etc), as detailed in the assessment above.

Section 85(4) consideration

343. Our assessment has considered that the identified adverse impacts cannot be found to meet the section 85(3)(b) threshold solely because they are inconsistent with provisions of specified Acts or other documents. The proportionality assessment is based on the substantive significance of impacts relative to benefits, not (for instance) mere policy inconsistency.

Relevance of information gaps to assessment

344. The identified information gaps (detailed above) create additional uncertainty in the assessment. However, the adverse impacts identified above meet the section 85(3) threshold even accounting for this uncertainty, as the core constraints are sufficiently clear and significant.

Recommendation and conclusion

345. Based on our assessment, we **RECOMMEND DECLINE**, on the grounds that:

346. The adverse impacts identified above, particularly in respect to:

- i. inadequate stormwater and flood management,
- ii. no / inadequate proposal for water supply servicing and wastewater servicing,
- iii. inadequate proposal for transport integration,
- iv. loss of highly productive rural land,
- v. low density urban form,
- vi. inadequate provision of formal recreation opportunities,
- vii. potential ecological effects,
- viii. potential groundwater drawdown and geotechnical effects,
- ix. impact on the delivery of the Mill Road Stage 2 NoR,
- x. impact on planned investment and infrastructure provision, and
- xi. the uncertainty of infrastructure delivery and servicing,

are sufficiently significant to be out of proportion to the project's regional benefits, even accounting for proposed conditions, mitigation and / or compensation measures.

347. Our assessment and this recommendation have been made in accordance with the FTAA. In particular, the assessment has had regard to all matters identified through the section 81(2) process and has been guided by the statutory purpose of the FTAA to facilitate infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits. While that purpose directs decision-makers to place greatest weight on enabling such projects, it does not override the requirement to assess whether adverse impacts are sufficiently significant to outweigh those benefits.
348. In this case, the assessment has identified adverse impacts that are significant in both scale and nature, as described above. Even taking into account the project's claimed regional benefits – which, as noted, are considered to be overstated and may not be significant at a regional let alone national scale – these adverse impacts are of a level that outweighs the benefits in substantive terms. Again, this conclusion is not based merely on inconsistency with statutory instruments or policy (section 85(4)), but reflects a substantive assessment that the adverse impacts are disproportionate to the benefits once all relevant factors are weighed.
349. We consider this recommendation to be consistent with the purpose of the FTAA, which is to enable significantly beneficial projects, not those where adverse impacts are so significant as to outweigh the benefits.
350. We have also given consideration to the purpose and principles in sections 5 to 7 of Part 2 of the RMA. In doing so, we have taken into account that the RMA's purpose is afforded lesser weight than the FTAA's purpose (in section 3, FTAA).
351. It is our assessment that the proposal does not meet the purpose of the RMA which is to promote the management of natural and physical resources. The site location and response to difficult soil conditions leads to a lower density than anticipated around town centres and employment areas, and the staging proposal results in a lack of proper transport integration that will lead to a car dependent development in the early stages, but without the transport provision for the private vehicle demand. The proposal does not contribute to a well-functioning urban environment. We consider the proposal also does not promote sustainable management of natural and physical resources as it has not been demonstrated that the

proposal will avoid or mitigate adverse ecological effects resulting from the development on the environment, and it constitutes an inappropriate use of highly productive land (a rare and highly important resource).

352. Furthermore, relying on the assessment by the Council's Healthy Waters Flood Resilience Department, the proposal does not meet section 6(h) as the Applicant has not demonstrated how the proposal will manage the significant risks posed from natural hazards.

353. In relation to section 7 of the RMA:

- i. It is questionable whether the proposal achieves the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources in terms of section 7(b), given the non-integrated approach for the delivery/coordination of infrastructure, the issues with urban form, and the potential displacement of planned investment from sequenced development areas; and
- ii. The proposal will not maintain and enhance the quality of the environment (section 7(f)), given the unresolved ecological effects, loss of highly productive land, and the non-integrated approach to infrastructure delivery that may compromise environmental outcomes.

354. Overall, the application does not meet the relevant provisions of Part 2 of the RMA or achieve the purpose of the RMA being sustainable management of natural and physical resources. While we acknowledge that Part 2 of the RMA is afforded lesser weight than the FTAA's purpose, the proposal's failure (in our opinion) to meet the RMA's purpose and a number of important principles reinforces our assessment of the significance of the adverse impacts identified. The proposal's inconsistency with the RMA's purpose of sustainable management, its failure to manage significant risks from natural hazards under section 6(h), and its poor performance against several section 7 matters collectively underscore the substantive nature of the adverse impacts that outweigh the claimed regional benefits. This Part 2 assessment provides additional support for the conclusion that the adverse impacts are sufficiently significant to warrant decline under the FTAA framework.