
To: Rippon Holdings Limited and Rippon Investments Limited Ref: 25145B
Cc:
From: e3Scientific Ltd
Date: 14/05/26
Subject: Summary of Terrestrial Ecological Impact Assessment – Shannon Farm
Residential and Commercial Extension

1 Introduction

Rippon Holdings Ltd and Rippon Investments Ltd propose to lodge a referral application under the Fast Track Approvals Act for a large-scale residential and commercial development on land located immediately west of the Cromwell township, between Ripponvale Road and SH6 (the site). Rippon Holdings Ltd and Rippon Investments Ltd has engaged e3Scientific Limited (e3s) to provide a Terrestrial Ecological Impact Assessment (TEcIA) for the proposed development. A TEcIA characterises the existing terrestrial ecological values, the potential effects of the proposed development on those values, and then applies the effects management hierarchy to determine the overall level of ecological effect. This memo provides a summary of the TEcIA.

At the time of the assessment, the site was being operated as a commercial cherry orchard, featuring planted cherry trees that are either permanently or temporarily netted, two man-made reservoir ponds, workers accommodation, and buildings and infrastructure associated with the orchard operation.

The proposed development includes approximately 755 residential lots of varying densities, together with an approximately 6.7 ha retail and industrial development and 2.37 ha of green spaces, comprising 1.82 ha of parks and a 0.55 ha stormwater management area (see Figure 1). The development will require earthworks and

clearance of existing vegetation across the site, with the total area of disturbance approximately 70 ha.

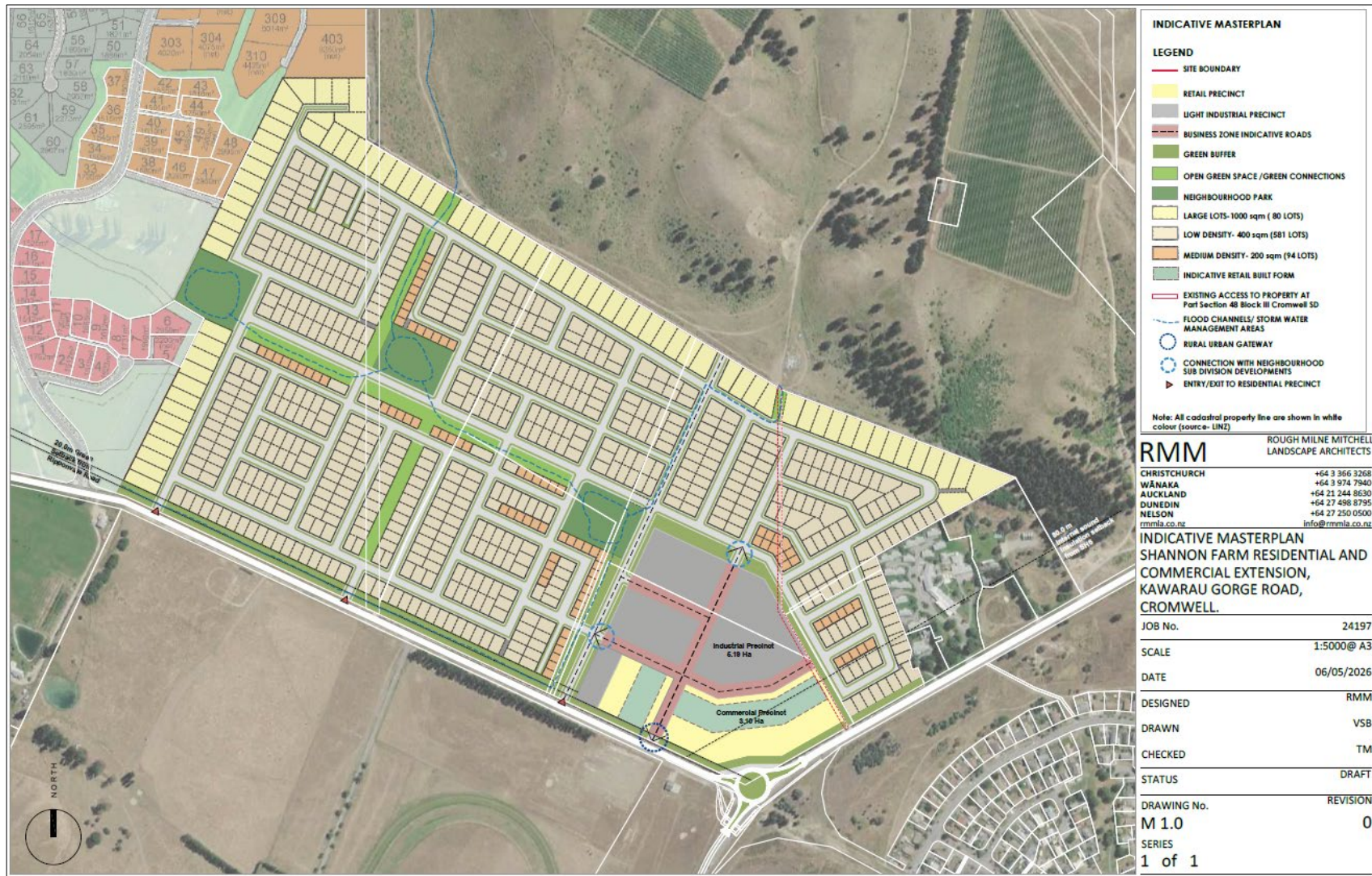


Figure 1: Proposed Masterplan Developed by Rough Milne Mitchell Architects Limited (RMM).

2 Methodology

The TEclA was informed by a combination of desktop review and field surveys undertaken between 29 October and 3 November 2025.

Desktop investigations included a review of ecological databases such as eBird, iNaturalist, the Department of Conservation (DOC) Herpetofauna database, the DOC National Threat classifications for New Zealand's indigenous plants, birds, and lizards, and the Otago Regional threat classifications.

Field surveys comprised habitat mapping, avifauna observations, and targeted herpetofauna surveys. A five-day lizard trapping programme was undertaken using Gee's minnow traps, supported by manual habitat searches.

The assessment of ecological effects for the site was completed using the Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand Ecological Impact Assessment guidelines (EIANZ EclA Guidelines (Roper-Lindsay, et al. 2018)). The impact assessment uses the ecological values identified, along with the magnitude of the effect that the activity has on those values, to produce an overall level of ecological effect. Where the ecological impacts result in levels of effect great than Low, impact management is recommended (via the effects mitigation hierarchy).

3 Results

3.1 Existing Environment

The site is located within the Pisa Ecological District and within Category 1 of the Threatened Environment Classification (TEC), with less than 10% of the indigenous vegetation cover left. Historically, the site would have supported Central Otago tussock grassland and shrubland ecosystems. European settlement and subsequent land use have resulted in extensive modification of these original ecosystems. Since 2005, the land use of the site has been intensive horticulture as an operational cherry orchard. There are no above ground, natural freshwater bodies present on site.

3.2 Ecological Values

The existing environment is highly modified and dominated by exotic vegetation. Three vegetation communities were identified: Horticultural Land (cherry orchard), Exotic Grassland occurring along margins and open areas, and Disturbed Areas with orchard

infrastructure such as access tracks, buildings, and reservoirs; as shown in Figure 2 below. No indigenous vegetation communities or plant species were recorded on site. The ecological value of the vegetation communities present on site was assessed as Negligible.

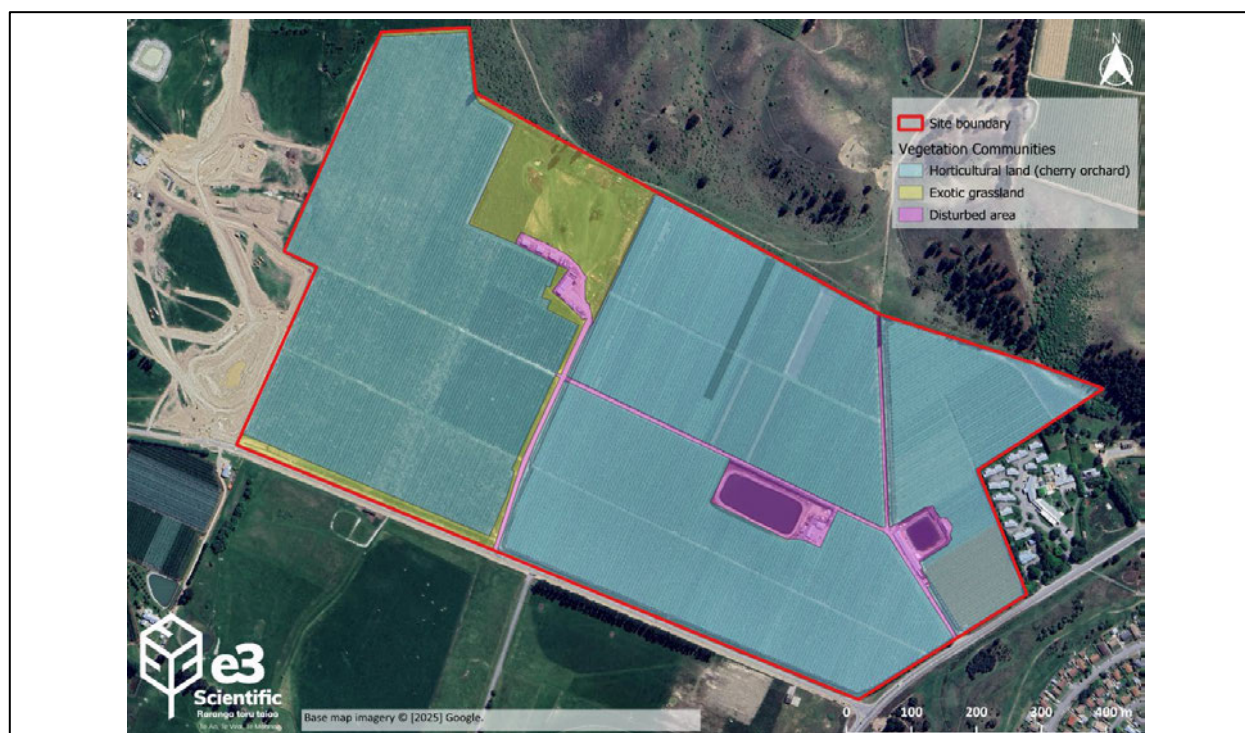


Figure 2: Vegetation Communities Present Across the Site.

Faunal values on site are limited by the intensive horticultural management regime and lack of indigenous habitat. The site provides limited and generally low-quality foraging habitat for At Risk and Threatened native bird species. No breeding habitat for At Risk or Threatened indigenous avifauna was identified. Avifauna observed were predominantly Not Threatened common species typical of modified rural environments, including paradise shelduck and welcome swallow.

The eastern New Zealand falcon/kārearea (*Falco novaeseelandiae*), Threatened – Nationally and Regionally, was identified as having a Moderate likelihood of occurrence, and silvereye/tuhou (*Zosterops lateralis*), Threatened Regionally, was identified as having a High likelihood of occurrence.

Targeted lizard surveys confirmed the presence of McCann's skink (*Oligosoma maccanni*), a Not Threatened indigenous lizard species. Skinks were recorded at low densities in Exotic Grassland and Disturbed Areas. Based on the habitat present, history of modification, and only McCann's skink found during the survey, there is a low likelihood of any other lizard species being present on site.

The site offers no suitable habitat for indigenous bats, and there have been no bats recorded within the Pisa Ecological District.

3.3 Assessment and Management of Ecological Effects

Vegetation clearance associated with the proposal will result in the removal of approximately 70 hectares of cherry orchard, exotic grassland, and disturbed vegetation. This will not result in loss of indigenous habitat.

Loss of exotic terrestrial habitat will reduce low-quality foraging habitat for some avifauna species. Given the limited ecological value of habitat present, the highly modified nature of the site, and the availability of similar or higher-quality habitat in the surrounding landscape, the proposed development is unlikely to result in any measurable impact on the local or regional distribution or population size of the eastern falcon or silvereye. The overall Level of Effect is assessed as Low and Very Low for the eastern falcon and silvereye respectively species with no mitigation required

Indirect effects associated with the proposal may include increased artificial lighting, construction and operational noise, increased human activity, and habitat fragmentation. Effects can be mitigated through project design and construction controls to minimise disturbance. Lighting mitigation and landscape planting within proposed green spaces is expected to facilitate post-development habitat diversity and connectivity.

Earthworks and vegetation clearance will directly affect areas occupied by McCann's skink. While this species is Not Threatened, it is protected under the Wildlife Act 1953, and disturbance effects are therefore managed on a compliance basis rather than due to ecological significance. A Wildlife Act Authority will be required for disturbance of this species, and it is recommended that a Lizard Management Plan be prepared by a suitably qualified Herpetologist and implemented in full prior to any works within lizard habitat on site.

4 Conclusion

The ecological assessment of the site confirms that existing terrestrial ecological values are limited due to extensive historical modification and dominance by exotic vegetation. The proposed development will not result in loss of indigenous habitat. There is potential for avifauna species of ecological value to utilise the site, although the site provides limited, low-quality foraging habitat and no breeding habitat. Potential disturbance effects can be addressed through project design and construction management measures. Lizard surveys have identified the presence of McCann's skink and although this is a Not Threatened species, disturbance will require a Wildlife Act Authority (permit), and it is recommended that a Lizard Management Plan be prepared and implemented. In conclusion, there will be an overall Negligible to Low level of ecological effect from the proposed development provided ecological mitigation measures are implemented, and in doing so, no ecological constraints are identified that would preclude the development proceeding under the Fast-track Approvals Act.