

MINUTE 9 OF THE EXPERT PANEL

Request for Information
Ashbourne [FTAA-2507-1087]
(18 December 2025)

- 1) The Expert Panel requests the following information be provided by the applicant under section 67 of the Fast Track Approvals Act in relation to this application. The Applicant is requested to file their response to the below questions to the EPA no later than **4pm on Friday 19th December 2025**.

- 2) The information requested is set out in the right hand column of the table below. The table is included to illustrate the purpose of the information and the context in which it is requested.

Information requested

NPS UD Policy 1: Planning decisions contribute to well-functioning urban environments, which are urban environments that, as a minimum:	Panel request to Applicant
(a) have or enable a variety of homes that:	
meet the needs, in terms of type, price, and location, of different households; and	Please provide evidence whether the anticipated sale costs of proposed housing on small lots will meet the needs of lower income people.
enable Māori to express their cultural traditions and norms; and	Section 7 of the March 2025 Cultural Impact Assessment advised that Nga Iwi seek support for a 5 percentage of housing within the Ashbourne development to be designated as affordable housing. Can the Applicant please advise if they intend this to be the case and if not advise the reasons.

<p>(c) have good accessibility for all people between housing, jobs, community services, natural spaces, and open spaces, including by way of public or active transport; and</p>	<p>Can the Applicant please provide advice as to how the proposed development meets this requirement with respect to: accessibility for all people between housing, jobs, community services, including by way of public or active transport. This to include discussion on ease and safety for cyclists to commute from proposed residential areas to the town centre and industrial areas of Matamata.</p>
<p>(e) support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions; and</p>	<p>Can more certainty be provided regarding the construction of the proposed solar farms will be constructed. Can this be achieved by way of consent conditions or other mechanism? If so please provide an example wording or structure for such a mechanism.</p>
<p>(f) Are resilient to the likely current and future effects of climate change.</p>	<p>Please advise how this matter will be addressed with respect to the heat island effect caused by climate change that can be expected to result due to proposed new houses (e.g., due to dark coloured roofs, dark coloured paved areas - roads, driveways, parking areas and attendant adverse effects on health and well-being).</p>

Legal Opinion on Significant Regional or National Benefits

- 3) On Thursday 18 December the Panel received two Memoranda. Firstly, a legal opinion on behalf of the Applicant which concluded with a suggestion that the Panel may be assisted in reaching a decision by obtaining independent legal advice on “whether displacement should be ‘accounted for’ when considering whether the Proposal has ‘significant regional or national benefits’ ”.

Secondly, a legal opinion on behalf of MPDC, which also addressed the issue of displacement but was not wholly consistent with Applicant's opinion.

- 4) While the Panel had not intended to seek further legal advice, it is considered in the best interests of the Applicant to take up the suggestion, and the Panel will seek that advice.

- 5) Given that the Christmas closedown commences at the close of business on 19 December, through until 12 January 2026, the Panel considers it is appropriate to advise the applicant that obtaining this advice may take some time and will inevitably put pressure on the Panel in terms of the time frame that it has for making its decision.



Sue Simons

Expert Panel Chair