

# Kaunihera | Council

## Kaupapataka Wātea | Open Agenda



Notice is hereby given that an ordinary meeting of Matamata-Piako District Council will be held on:

**Ko te rā | Date:** Wednesday 26 November 2025  
**Wā | Time:** 9:00  
**Wāhi | Venue:** Council Chambers  
35 Kenrick Street  
TE AROHA

### NGĀ MEMA | MEMBERSHIP

**Tiamana | Chairperson:** Koromatua | Mayor  
Ash Tanner

**Mema | Members:** Koromatua Tautoko | Deputy Mayor  
James Sainsbury  
**Kaunihera ā-Rohe | District Councillors**  
Vincent Andersen  
Grace Bonnar  
Bruce Dewhurst  
Tyrel Glass  
Dayne Horne  
Greg Marshall  
Andrew McGiven  
James Thomas  
Gary Thompson  
Rewiti Vaimoso  
Sue Whiting

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**1 Whakatūwheratanga o te hui | Meeting Opening**

**2 Ngā whakapāha/Tono whakawātea | Apologies/Leave of Absence**

At the close of the agenda no apologies had been received.

**3 Pānui i Ngā Take Ohore Anō | Notification of Urgent/Additional Business**

Section 46A(7) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (as amended) states:

“An item that is not on the agenda for a meeting may be dealt with at that meeting if-

- (a) The local authority by resolution so decides; and
- (b) The presiding member explains at the meeting, at a time when it is open to the public,-
  - (i) The reason why the item is not on the agenda; and
  - (ii) The reason why the discussion of the item cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.”

Section 46A(7A) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (as amended) states:

“Where an item is not on the agenda for a meeting,-

- (a) That item may be discussed at that meeting if-
  - (i) That item is a minor matter relating to the general business of the local authority; and
  - (ii) the presiding member explains at the beginning of the meeting, at a time when it is open to the public, that the item will be discussed at the meeting; but
  - (iii) no resolution, decision or recommendation may be made in respect of that item except to refer that item to a subsequent meeting of the local authority for further discussion.”

**4 Whākī pānga | Declaration of Interest**

Members are reminded of their obligation to declare any conflicts of interest they might have in respect of the items on this Agenda.

**5 Whakaaetanga mēneti | Confirmation of Minutes**

Minutes, as circulated, of the ordinary meeting of Matamata-Piako District Council, held on 5 November 2025

**6 Papa ā-iwi whānui | Public Forum**

At the close of the agenda there were no speakers scheduled to the public forum.

## 7 Pūrongo me whakatau | Decision Reports

# 7.1 Approval of Fast Track Amendment Bill Submission

CM No.: 3114265

## Te Kaupapa | Purpose

The purpose of this report is to gain retrospective endorsement for the submission on the Fast Track Approvals Amendment Bill by the Council's RMA Policy Team.

## Rāpopotonga Matua | Executive Summary

The Council's RMA Policy Team recently made submissions and provided feedback on the Fast Track Approvals Amendment Bill. The Council has not yet formally endorsed this material. The Bill proposes to introduce a raft of amendments that reduce timeframes and consultation requirements and increase Ministerial powers on a range of matters. The Bill also introduces new provisions to address competition issues in the grocery sector.

## Tūtohunga | Recommendation

That:

1. **Council retrospectively endorses the submission on the Fast Track Approvals Amendment Bill.**

## Horopaki | Background

The purpose of the Fast Track Amendment Bill as stated by the Government is to:

- amend the Act to improve certainty that grocery retail competition is a relevant factor in deciding whether a project has significant regional or national benefits, with the aim of improving competition in the grocery sector.
- make technical and operational changes to the fast-track approvals process aimed at improving the efficiency of the process by reducing time frames, duplication, and unnecessary costs, and providing clarity for applicants to the fast-track approvals process by addressing ambiguities.

Whilst achieving these outcomes the technical and operational changes reduce consultation requirements, increase Ministerial powers, set tighter timeframes, and enable Panels to set conditions that require third parties including Council's to provide infrastructure to support a project.

## Ngā Take/Kōrerorero | Issues/Discussion

### Overview of submission

The following points provide a high level overview of the submission:

1. Its proposed to introduce the ability for Ministers to issue a Government Policy Statement on a project. The GPS allows the government to define what "significant regional or national benefit" means for a particular type of infrastructure or development. This was previously a role undertaken within the application process to be finally determined by the Panel.
2. It's proposed to remove the requirement to consult with local authorities and iwi before the referral application is lodged. Instead, it is proposed that local authorities and iwi are to be

notified. For Councils this is a significant change that will mean there is limited ability for Council's to understand a project and provide feedback prior to a referral application being submitted.

3. The time frame for making comments to the Panel on the referral application is proposed to be reduced to 15 days from 20 days. The timeframe will limit the ability of parties to provide effective feedback. MPDC has previously submitted to retain the 20-working day timeframe.
4. Currently, a panel can invite comments from anyone it considers appropriate. The proposed change will allow a panel to invite comments only where a local authority or relevant administering agency does not intend to cover a matter in their comments, or their comments are not adequate. This further reduces the ability of other parties having an opportunity to comment. Some other parties may have different statutory responsibilities, which are best addressed by them rather than by the councils.
5. It's also proposed to enable the modification of an application up until the time an application is approved. It's only appropriate to enable modifications to applications if they are within the scope and effects of the original application
6. It's also proposed to restrict the timeframe that a panel has to make a decision to 60 working days. This could result in unintended consequences such as applications being declined because of insufficient time to consider matters.
7. A new section is proposed that enables the Panel to impose a condition ensuring the infrastructure in the project area or the infrastructure the project will rely on, is, or will be made adequate. It appears that this may be committing a third party to the provision of infrastructure in a consent condition. This provision has the potential to have wide ranging implications including impacting on council infrastructure and financing. It also provides for fast track application to leap frog people with existing approved consents because Council would be required to make the necessary infrastructure available.

### **Mōrearea | Risk**

The submission itself is considered a low risk. The outcomes of the feedback may be included in the amended Act. As the authority responsible for administering, monitoring and enforcing any resource consents or designations it is important the Council has as much involvement in the formulation of changes to the RMA and resulting consent process as possible.

Should the amendments proposed by the Environment Committee become part of the Act, i.e. Council 's submission points are ignored, this will have wide ranging implications for Council and their ability to deliver timely and thorough feedback to fast track consent within the district.

### **Ngā Whiringa | Options**

Given the Council's RMA Policy team has already submitted on the Fast Track Approvals Amendment Bill, there are two options available to the Council. These are:

Option 1: Retrospectively endorse the submission.

Option 2: Do not endorse the submission and feedback and direct staff to withdraw the submission

### **Recommended option**

Option 1: Retrospectively endorse the submission. There are some significant changes proposed including relating to reduced timeframes, increased Ministerial powers, and implications associated with the imposition of conditions related to the provision of infrastructure.

### Ngā take ā-ture, ā-Kaupapahere hoki | Legal and policy considerations

This proposal will have some form of legal and policy impact on the Council. There are risks associated with the proposed changes, including reduced ability to participate in fast track processes and the implications of the new provisions related to infrastructure.

### Ngā Pāpāhonga me ngā Whakawhitiwhitinga | Communications and engagement

The timeframe for making submissions on the Amendment Bill is very short being 7 working days.

Despite the short timeframe staff have liaised with Waikato Regional Council and have read the Taituara submission. Both of whom are raising similar concerns.

### Ngā Tāpiritanga | Attachments

 MPDC - Submission to the Fast-track Approvals Amendment Bill



### Ngā waitohu | Signatories

Author(s)	Carolyn McAlley <b>Kaiwhakamahere Rautaki RMA Matua   Senior RMA Policy Planner</b>	
	Fiona Hill <b>Kaiwhakamahere Rautaki RMA Matua   Team Leader RMA Policy</b>	
	Jayshree Kanji <b>Kaiwhakamahere Rautaki RMA Paetahi   Graduate RMA Policy Planner</b>	

Approved by	Nathan Sutherland <b>Pou Whakamahere   Planning Manager</b>	
	Ally van Kuijk <b>Hautū Tipu me te Whakamatua   Group Manager Growth &amp; Regulation</b>	



te kaunihera ā-rohe o  
**matamata-piako**  
district council

17/11/2025

Environment Committee  
By email

Tēnā Koe,

**Matamata-Piako District Council submission to the Fast-track Approval Amendment Bill**

Matamata-Piako District Council (MPDC) thanks the Environment Committee for the opportunity to submit in respect of the Fast-track Approvals Amendment Bill (the Bill). Please find attached, at Appendix 1, the MPDC submission points.

While MPDC appreciates the intentions of the Environment Committee to streamline the existing fast-track approvals process, we have concerns about the amendments that reduce consultation requirements, increase Ministerial powers, set tighter timeframes for processing applications and possibly enable panels to set conditions that require third parties to provide the infrastructure required to support a project. There is also concern that the ability to recover costs related to Councils providing feedback on fast-track applications may not be a cost recoverable expense under the proposed amendments, resulting in these costs falling on the community.

MPDC believes that all consenting processes should be open and transparent for those involved and it is concerned the changes proposed in the Bill look to undermine the current fast track processes. As identified in many of the submission points the retention of the status quo is sought to have fair and reasonable processes that provide time for input.

In the meantime, should you have any queries regarding this feedback, please contact Fiona Hill, Team Leader, RMA Policy in the first instance, at [fhill@mpdc.govt.nz](mailto:fhill@mpdc.govt.nz).

Ngā mihi

Manajia Te Wiata Chief Executive Officer  
Matamata-Piako District Council

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## Appendix 1

Submission of the Matamata-Piako District Council to the Environment Select Committee on the Fast-track Approval Amendment Bill

Existing or proposed new provision or amended provision or other suggestion	Bill Clause #	Description, Comment and Recommendation
<b>New section 10A (Government policy statements)</b>	cl 5	<p><u>Description</u> The proposed new section allows the Minister to issue a Government Policy Statement (GPS), with the Minister only needing to consult with the relevant portfolio Minister. The GPS will be on the national or regional benefits of certain types of infrastructure or development projects. There are no parameters for the matters a GPS can cover, and no consultative process related to the development of a GPS. The GPS must be considered when deciding to accept a referral, and when the panel approves or declines a proposal.</p> <p><u>Comment</u> The GPS allows the government to define what "significant regional or national benefit" means for a particular type of infrastructure or development. This was previously a role undertaken within the application process to be finally determined by the Panel.</p> <p>This proposed change confers significant discretion to Ministers to determine the projects that proceed to panel decisions and to influence the outcomes of the decision because regional and national significance is no longer being objectively decided based on the evidence presented.</p> <p>Of considerable concern is the GPS will remove the testing of the projects benefits by submitters and the independent panels for example, a GPS could result in substantive applications automatically meeting one half of the proportionality assessment in s85(3) of the FTAA. Under s 85(3) a decision-making panel can decline approval if the project's "adverse impacts are sufficiently significant to be out of proportion to the project's regional or national benefits". A GPS could not amend the adverse impacts assessment, but it could remove the ability for the panel to independently assess the project's benefits.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> MPDC seeks the proposed addition of NEW s10A (government policy statements) is deleted to ensure the status quo is retained with the regional or national significance of a project or development being decided on its merits by an Independent Panel.</p>





Existing or proposed new provision or amended provision or other suggestion	Bill Clause #	Description, Comment and Recommendation
<b>Section 11 amended (Consultation requirements for referral application)</b>	cl 6	<p><u>Description</u></p> <p>There are several amendments to this section that look to narrow the extent of those consulted with including the removal of the existing requirement to consult with TA's, Iwi and Treaty Settlement entities regarding a referral application. It's proposed to change the requirement from consultation to written notification to TAs, Iwi and Treaty Settlement entities. Consultation would be limited to Customary Marine Title applicants and Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou (as applicable)</p> <p>While there are currently no timeframes for the provision of feedback at this stage of the process, this amendment introduces a 20-day timeframe for a response of TA/Iwi to the notice. There is no detail offered as to the level of information that is to be provided as part of the notification.</p> <p><u>Comment</u></p> <p>MPDC is concerned with both the proposed change from consultation to notification, and the introduction of a timeframe in which to give feedback.</p> <p>MPDC considers that consultation, as opposed to notification, provides the potential to enable the applicant to understand a wide range of matters, including infrastructure capacity provision and the provision of parks and reserves. Understanding these matters early in the process has the potential to save significant time and costs later in the process and has positive benefits to both parties. It is generally easier to provide substantial feedback earlier in the process, rather than later.</p> <p>MPDC is also concerned about the 20-day timeframe. This is a very short timeframe in which to provide effective feedback, especially when first viewing an application. A 20-day timeframe later in the process is somewhat acceptable when there is a level of familiarity with the project, not when seeing it for the first time. If timeframes are shortened at the beginning of the process, this makes the overall feedback process less effective.</p> <p>MPDC is also concerned about the possible change from consultation to notification and how this could impact the level of information that would be made available for assessment. No information has been provided around the levels of information in relation to notification, and it may be that no technical information is provided. MPDC supports the provision of the full application. Certainly, the comments that are provided are commensurate with the level of information that is provided for review.</p>



Existing or proposed new provision or amended provision or other suggestion	Bill Clause #	Description, Comment and Recommendation
		<p><u>Recommendation</u> MPDC does not support the proposed amendments, and seeks the retention of the current process, where consultation is undertaken with all parties prior to lodgment, and there is no timeframe for this process.</p>
<b>Section 17 amended (Minister invites comments)</b>	cl 9	<p><u>Description</u> The proposed amendment to Section 17 (6) amends the timeframe for people to make comments from 20 days to 15 days on the referral application.</p> <p><u>Comment</u> MPDC considers that this constrained timeframe will limit the ability of parties to provide effective feedback. MPDC submitted to the last Fast Track Bill that 15 days is not an adequate timeframe to provide effective feedback and sought the retention of the 20-day timeframe. Furthermore, depending on the information that was submitted at the time of notification/consultation, this could be the first time the TA gets to view the full detail of the application (refer to MPDC comments on Section 11). With this proposed amendment in mind, it's even more important to retain the 20-day timeframe.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> MPDC does not support the proposed amendments and seeks for the existing timeframe to be retained</p>
<b>New section 37A inserted (Listed projects proceeding in stages)</b>	cl 19	<p><u>Description</u> Applicants for listed projects can request staged applications for multi-phase projects. This means applicants for listed projects can ask the Minister to make a determination that separate applications may be lodged for each stage of a project. The Minister may make the determination if satisfied that the relevant stage, when considered as a stand-alone project, meets the criteria in section 22 (such as delivering regional and national benefits).</p> <p><u>Comment</u> While this amendment will be useful for applicants who only have funding in place for certain stages of the listed project, MPDC is concerned at this proposed change. The new section does not have any consultation requirements related to the listed project proceeding in stages. This would be of concern to any parties that may have been either consulted or notified of the application. It also raises considerable concerns regarding the project's requirements with matters such as infrastructure over a potentially revised timeframe. The provision of infrastructure in a revised timeframe may result in a rates cap being exceeded, which would require public consultation in order to be able to proceed, further delaying the project.</p>



Existing or proposed new provision or amended provision or other suggestion	Bill Clause #	Description, Comment and Recommendation
		<p>An additional concern related to the possible revision of the staging of a project centers on the functionality of the subdivision proposal and its connections to its surrounding community. For example, earlier stages of a proposal are typically those closest to existing development to ensure connectivity. These sorts of matters would need to be considered in any revised staging.</p> <p>While MPDC can be supportive of the need for an applicant having to change their project to a staged approach, MPDC considers that any change to a staged approach requires a greater level of involvement with, at the very minimum, the TA involved.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> That new section 37A is amended to include consultation with TA's and /or any other affected party over the change to a staged application.</p>
<b>Section 50 amended (Panel convener sets up panel)</b>	cl 29	<p><u>Description</u> The proposed change requires the Independent Panel be appointed within 15 days of the convener receiving notification of an application from the Environmental Protection Authority. Currently, there is no timeframe around this process.</p> <p><u>Comment</u> While MPDC appreciates applicants would like some level of certainty with regard to how long it takes to appoint a panel, MPDC are also mindful of the small pool of experts from which panel selection can be achieved. MPDC considers 15 days may not be sufficient to appoint a panel and suggests retaining the status quo to ensure the most suitable Panel for any given application can be appointed.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> That cl 29 is deleted, and the status quo is retained.</p>
<b>Section 53 amended (Panel invites comments on substantive application)</b>	cl 33	<p><u>Description</u> The proposed amendment to Section 53 restricts the ability for the Panel to invite comments directly from any other person they consider to be relevant. This includes adjoining landowners and any other person.</p> <p><u>Comment</u> We are concerned that the process under proposed new section 53(4) will create difficulties in practice if relevant local authorities are required to confirm the matters they intend to comment on prior to formally making comments and within a relatively short timeframe, in order for the panel to decide whether to invite comments from other parties. This could be particularly difficult for listed projects if applicants are</p>



Existing or proposed new provision or amended provision or other suggestion	Bill Clause #	Description, Comment and Recommendation
		<p>no longer required to consult with local authorities prior to lodging the substantive application, as council staff will have had limited time to familiarise themselves with the application.</p> <p>We are also concerned that this further reduces the ability of other parties having an opportunity to comment. Other parties may have different statutory responsibilities, which are best addressed by them rather than by the councils. We consider it more appropriate to retain the current provision which provides discretion for panels to invite comments from parties they consider to be relevant to their decision on the application. MPDC considers that there are greater long-term benefits in running a more robust consultative approach than the proposed "fast" approach.</p> <p>This amendment also seems contrary to the stated intention of speeding up the process. If the panel is required to check with local authorities first before requesting comment from other parties, this is likely to increase timeframes.</p> <p>Currently, a panel can invite comments from anyone it considers appropriate. The proposed change will allow a panel to invite comments only where a local authority or relevant administering agency does not intend to cover a matter in their comments, or their comments are not adequate.</p> <p>MPDC is concerned as the proposed approach will shut down community involvement and is not likely to provide a balanced view of the application with potentially important information not being brought in front of decision-making panels. It places pressure on councils to become a mouthpiece of individuals or groups, whereas Councils have specified roles under the Local Government Act which they are required to fulfill at a community wide level.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> Delete clause 33 and retain the current provisions in s53 of the Fast-track Approvals Act.</p>
<p><b>New 68A (Panel may seek Minister's determination on proposed modification)</b></p> <p><b>New 68B (Minister's Determination)</b></p>	cl 42	<p><u>Description</u> New proposed section 68A seeks that a substantive proposal may be modified or parts withdrawn after lodgment anytime up until the Panel approves the application. The Panel may, but does not have to, send the modified application to the Minister to determine. s68B will allow the application to be approved if the Minister is satisfied that the project still has significant regional or national benefits.</p> <p><u>Comment</u> MPDC is concerned that consideration of the effects of the modified proposal is not part of the Minister's decision-making process, and the modified proposal could result in adverse effects.</p>



Existing or proposed new provision or amended provision or other suggestion	Bill Clause #	Description, Comment and Recommendation
		<p>MPDC could support allowing modifications to be made to a substantive application once it has been lodged but only where the modifications address issues with the application and fit within the scope and effects of the original application.</p> <p>We do not support proposed new sections 68A and 68B in their current form as we are concerned they are too broad and could result in significant expansion in the scope and adverse effects of a project. We are also concerned that if submitted to the Minister, the only matter the Minister is required to consider is whether the project continues to have significant regional or national benefits; there is no requirement to consider additional adverse effects on the environment or people, or possible conflicts with Treaty settlements.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> Amend clause 42 so that the provisions in new sections 68A and 68B allow for an applicant to modify an application only where the modifications address issues with the application and fit within the scope and effects the of original application.</p>
<b>Section 79 amended (Timing of panel decisions)</b>	cl 44	<p><u>Description</u> The proposed amendment limits Panel decision making timeframes to 60 days unless the applicant agrees in writing to the time frame.</p> <p><u>Comment</u> Currently the panel can set "a timeframe that the panel convener considers is appropriate, having regard to the scale, nature and complexity of the approvals sought, and any other matters raised by, the substantive application". MPDC is concerned this is another truncation of timeframes within the application process.</p> <p>The reduced decision-making timeframes limit the ability of the Panel to undertake effective decisions as the proposed timeframes are inadequate for complex applications. It also may have an unintended consequence of applications being declined if Panels are not able to work through the key issues within this shorter timeframe.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> That clause 44 is deleted, and the status quo is retained.</p>
<b>New section 84A (Conditions relating to infrastructure)</b>	cl 46	<p><u>Description</u> This new section enables the panel to impose a condition ensuring the infrastructure in the project area or the infrastructure the project will rely on, is, or will be made adequate.</p>

Existing or proposed new provision or amended provision or other suggestion	Bill Clause #	Description, Comment and Recommendation
		<p><u>Comment</u> Typically, the provision of infrastructure is a pre-requisite of approval. MPDC is concerned as the wording of the proposal is unclear. The new clause appears to either;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow infrastructure matters to be sorted out post approval, and potentially commits a third party-the Council who is typically an infrastructure provider, to the provision of adequate infrastructure, or</li> <li>• It allows consent to be granted subject to pre-requisite infrastructure being provided to support a project.</li> </ul> <p>MPDC questions whether it is vires to commit a third party to the provision of infrastructure in a consent condition as this would bring a number of problems with it. For example, in practical terms the imposition of conditions on third parties to offset effects (for example by requiring infrastructure to be brought forward) is likely to slow implementation timeframes for approvals, particularly where the requirements to meet those conditions require reallocation of planned project budgets, construction resources and where are there cross boundary issues that need to be resolved.</p> <p>It also questions whether this change along with the new time requirements on a Panel for making a decision will jeopardise the provision of infrastructure through developer agreements. The NEW provision also raises doubt in circumstances where capacity is constrained. By way of example, will activities that would otherwise be permitted or already have consent become subject to leap frogging by fast-track proposals enabled by this clause?</p> <p>MPDC also queries what happens if the Panel cannot rely on infrastructure being made available, does this mean the Panel must refuse the consent?</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> Reword section 84A so that its purpose is clear and is to enable the panel to constrain a project from starting until pre-requisite infrastructure is in place.</p>
<b>New section 93A inserted (Directions to EPA)</b>	cl 48	<p><u>Description</u> This new section would enable the Minister to give general direction to the EPA in relation to the EPA's performance and exercise of its functions, duties and powers under the Act.</p>

Existing or proposed new provision or amended provision or other suggestion	Bill Clause #	Description, Comment and Recommendation
		<p><u>Comment</u> The potential scope for interference in how the EPA discharges its independent statutory functions is of concern, and MPDC believes the Panel should remain independent.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> MPDC seeks the proposed amendment to be deleted.</p>
<b>Section 99 amended (Appeal against decisions only on question of law)</b>	cl 50	<p><u>Description</u> The proposed amendment seeks to limit appeal rights to those that a Panel must invite comments from. Consequently, those who have been invited to comment on a discretionary basis are no longer allowed to appeal the decision.</p> <p><u>Comment</u> MPDC is concerned that appeal rights are being further curtailed. This approach is inconsistent with other processes that allow for appeal rights for people who are involved in a process.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> Delete clause 50 and retain the current provisions in section 99 of the Fast-track Approvals Act.</p>
<b>Section 104 amended (Cost recovery)</b>	cl 51	<p><u>Description</u> Amendments are proposed through regulations (secondary legislation) to further define, and limit costs can be recovered. While the proposed amendment outlines the nature of the regulation changes, the actual details will not be known until the regulations are developed.</p>
<b>Section 108 amended (Regulations may set fees, charges, and contributions)</b>	cl 53	<p><u>Comment</u> MPDC has submitted into Fast track processes in their area and has expected to recover the costs that they have incurred on behalf of their local community, otherwise the costs will fall to the community. There is concern that placing limitations on what costs can be recovered may limit submissions being made or limit the extent of reports that would otherwise be commissioned to understand the nature of the effects that a proposal may generate.</p> <p>MPDC would like to draw to the attention of the Committee that smaller councils do not often have technical resourcing across all disciplines for example Geotechnical engineers or have low levels of planning staff and therefore need at times to commission expert reports or engage contract staff to be able to respond to these very complex applications. Unless it is made clear as to the exact content of the regulation changes, MPDC considers the ability to make further regulations on costs must be removed</p>





Existing or proposed new provision or amended provision or other suggestion	Bill Clause #	Description, Comment and Recommendation
		from the bill. To do otherwise could mean the costs incurred may fall to ratepayers which is not acceptable. <u>Recommendation</u> MPDC seeks that the proposed amendments are deleted and the status quo maintained.

**Schedules**

<b>Schedule 2</b> <b>New section</b>  <b>117A Order in Council to amend description in Schedule 2</b>	cl 55	<u>Description</u> This new section would allow the Minister to recommend the making of an order in Council to amend the description of a listed project in schedule 2.  <u>Comment</u> Although the scope of these projects is not allowed to be made substantially different, there is no mention in the new section of the extent of the environmental impacts when determining the amended description. Potentially, a change in the project could result in adverse effects. This process is not subject to any public scrutiny.  There are three projects in Schedule 2 that are located, in part, in the Matamata-Piako District. MPDC would be very concerned if there were amendments to these projects without any consultation.  <u>Recommendation</u> MPDC seeks the new section is deleted from the Bill.
<b>Schedule 3,</b> <b>3A Applicant or local authority may raise concerns about prospective panel member.</b>	cl 56	<u>Description</u> An applicant or local authority may raise concerns about a panel member.  <u>Comment</u> MPDC is unclear why this clause would be necessary and the circumstances in which this would be needed. Potential panel members are already asked to declare any conflict before being nominated by local authorities. This clause adds another potential step which may delay the process, which seems at odds with the expressed intent of the amendments. MPDC considers it appropriate the decision on who is on a Panel rests with the Panel Convenor.  <u>Recommendation</u> Delete Clause 56 and retain the current provisions in schedule 3 of the Fast-track Approvals Act



## 8 Ngā Pūrongo Whakamārama | Information Reports

### 8.1 District Plan & RMA Update

CM No.: 3112774

#### Te Kaupapa | Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with an update on the rolling review of the Matamata-Piako District Plan (MPDP). This also includes an update on the RMA reform including exemption applications and the Fast Track Approvals Amendment Bill, Private Plan Change 62 Calcutta, MPDC Website update work and the progress on the receipt of six Mana Whakahono ā Rohe invitations.

#### Rāpopotonga Matua | Executive Summary

A District Plan and Resource Management Reform summary is provided below. The update specifically refers to Plan Change Exemption Applications, Calcutta (PPC62), the proposed MPDC Growth Strategy, Resource Management Act Reform (RMA Reform), Future Proof, and the progress on the receipt of six Mana Whakahono ā Rohe invitations. Jayshree Kanji and Fiona Hill are available to deliver the update and answer any questions.

#### Tūtohunga | Recommendation

That:

1. The report be received.

#### Ngā Take/Kōrerorero | Issues/Discussion

##### Plan Change Exemption Applications

In August 2025, the Government introduced new legislation as part of the [Resource Management \(Consenting and Other System Changes\) Amendment Act 2025](#).

A key part of this legislation is called [Plan Stop](#). Its purpose is to prevent councils from spending time and resources unnecessarily on the plan-making process before the new legislation replacing the Resource Management Act comes to take effect. Plan Stop pauses work on district plan reviews, some Council-initiated plan changes and implementing the national planning standards. The provisions do not apply to private plan changes.

Under the Plan Stop rules, councils can ask the Minister responsible for Resource Management Reform for permission to keep working on a plan change if it meets the criteria in section 80W of the Resource Management Act.

As a consequence of these changes, on 8 October 2025 the Council decided not to notify PC61 National Planning Standards and other Matters and to proceed with lodging two exemption applications.

##### **PC65 Minor Matters - Exemption application**

Staff are preparing an exemption application to rectify a number of matters with the MPDP. This plan change aims to fix several issues that have caused inefficiencies, unintended outcomes or challenges in applying the rules. Some of these issues were originally part of PC61 such as amending or deleting some heritage sites e.g. removing McDonald Cottage from the maps and the heritage schedule because the building is no longer there, removing the former NZ Mushroom

DCP sites as the activity is no longer occurring on the site, adding and amending standards related to terrace housing in PREC1 Lockerbie.

Staff have prepared the application and its currently being reviewed prior to lodgement with the Minister. The exemption application will be published on the MPDC Plan Stop webpage once it is submitted to the Minister.

### **PC49 Waharoa - Exemption application**

On 8 October 2025, Council agreed to support the preparation and submission of an exemption application for PC49 to the Minister responsible for Resource Management Reform. This plan change aims to improve job opportunities and enable more flexible living options in Waharoa.

Staff are currently preparing the PC49 exemption application. The next step in the process is to arrange a meeting with the Governance Group. A key matter to be discussed at this meeting is the scope of the plan change. The exemption application will be published on the MPDC Plan Stop webpage once it is submitted to the Minister.

### Private Plan Change 62 - Calcutta

On 3 July 2025, the Council received a request for Private Plan Change 62 - Calcutta. This plan change seeks to rezone approximately 20ha of rural land along the southern side of Tauranga Road, Matamata to Industrial Zone. This is in the same location as Private Plan Change 57, however Private Plan Change 62 has a smaller footprint. Staff are reviewing the application and have issued a further information request to the applicant.

### MPDC Growth Strategy

Council has given support for staff to progress this work. At the end of November 2025, a key input to the strategy, the WISE population projections, is expected. A review of this information will provide direction on how much land needs to be provided in the district to accommodate future growth and where this should be provided. Work has also begun on understanding the existing capacity in the district.

### Resource Management Act Reform (RMA Reform)

In March 2024, the Government made an announcement regarding its proposed RMA reform processes, which is occurring in three phases.

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Status</b>
1 Repealed Existing RMA Reform	<b>COMPLETE</b>
2 Stage 1 Freshwater and Other Matters Bill	<b>COMPLETE</b>
2 Stage 2 Resource Management Consenting and Other Matters Act and national policy changes	<b>PARTIALLY COMPLETE</b> Act passed into law. National policy changes to take effect end of 2025
3 New Planning Act and Natural Environment Act	Bills expected end of 2025

### **Recent updates**

Along with other national direction changes, the National Environmental Standard for Granny Flats and National Environmental Standard for Papakāinga is expected to be approved and operational in early 2026.

Staff are currently preparing a submission to the Fast-track Approvals Amendment Bill which closes on 17 November 2025. The Bill seeks to improve the efficiency of the process by reducing

timeframes, unnecessary costs and provide clarity around the fast-track approvals process to applicants. This is explained further in a separate agenda item.

The new bills for the replacement RMA legislation are anticipated at the end of November 2025. This includes The Planning Act, Natural Environment Act and new legislation on Development Levies. Whilst there will be the opportunity to lodge submissions it is not known what the timeframe will be. It is anticipated that further information can be provided at the Council's next meeting.

### **MPDC website update work - RMA Reform**

Staff have recently created three new webpages to help the public understand what is happening with the RMA reform and how it affects our Council. Going forward, we will ensure these pages are updated regularly to reflect any new changes in legislation.

The webpages are:

- [Resource Management Act Reform](#) – this outlines information about the phases of the reform and the key proposed changes.
- [Plan Stop](#) – this outlines information about the plan stop requirements and progress on plan change exemption applications.
- [Fast Track](#) – the outlines information about the fast-track approval process and the role of local council.
- Staff are also in the early stages of preparing a new webpage for Granny Flats (also known as Minor Residential Units), which will provide early guidance to the public on the changes that are expected to come into force in early 2026. These changes include proposed building consent exemption and resource consent exemption for granny flat development.

### **Mana Whakahono ā Rohe invitations**

The Council has received six Mana Whakahono ā Rohe invitations. A Mana Whakahono ā Rohe is a binding statutory arrangement that provides for a more structured relationship under the RMA between local authorities and iwi authorities. Their intent is to improve the working relationship between tangata whenua and local authorities as well as enhancing Māori participation in resource management and its associated decision-making processes.

While still in the initial phase, MPDC along with other local authorities have been coordinating the key steps in the process. The next potential hui is scheduled at the end of November and the beginning of December with varying Iwi Authorities.

### **Future Proof**

There are several projects currently being driven by Future Proof, which affect Matamata-Piako. The first is the Hamilton to Tauranga (H2T) spatial corridor project. The aim of this project is to ensure that future economic growth along this corridor is well-coordinated, and that the necessary transport infrastructure decisions are made with a clear understanding of a potential growth area's unique needs and opportunities. The study will provide a high-level conceptual overview of the H2T which will be used to inform the review of the Future Proof Future Development Strategy in 2026. The study will provide a 30-year vision for potential development without delving into the specifics of a masterplan or Structure Plan. The completion date for this project is early in 2026.

The second project is looking to assess the current and predicted demand for retirement villages in terms of locality, type, and price point within the Future Proof sub-region over the next 30 years. This is expected to help Future Proof partners understand retirement living preferences and needs of the aging population, determine the suitable locations for retirement living, identify specialised requirements for retirement living within the Future Proof Strategy and identify any implications for public infrastructure and services. A final report providing strategic recommendations for Future Proof's role in planning and supporting retirement village developments is expected shortly.

## Ngā Tāpiritanga | Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.

## Ngā waitohu | Signatories

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	Jayshree Kanji <b>Kaiwhakamahere Rautaki RMA Paetahi   Graduate RMA Policy Planner</b>	
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Approved by	Nathan Sutherland <b>Pou Whakamahere   Planning Manager</b>	
	Ally van Kuijk <b>Hautū Tipu me te Whakamatua   Group Manager Growth &amp; Regulation</b>	

## Exclusion of the Public: Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987

The following motion is submitted for consideration:

That the public be excluded from the following part(s) of the proceedings of this meeting.

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution follows.

This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 6 or section 7 of that Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public, as follows:

### C1 Residential Tenancies Act Delegations

Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Particular interest(s) protected (where applicable)	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
Legal Privilege.	s7(2)(g) - The withholding of the information is necessary to maintain legal professional privilege.  Report contains legal advice.	s48(1)(a)  The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under section 7.