



2021-B-07906

18 May 2021

Ministers of/for:

Infrastructure; Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti; Housing; Education; Arts, Culture, and Heritage; Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations; Local Government; Land Information; Defence; Transport; Conservation; and Climate Change

Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

Dear Ministers

COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 – Comments sought on application for referral – George Street Mixed Use Development

I have received an application to refer a project to an expert consenting panel (a panel) for consideration under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (FTCA). This letter is sent to you pursuant to section 21(2) of the FTCA.

The aim of the FTCA is to urgently promote employment to support New Zealand's recovery from the economic and social impacts of COVID-19 and to support certainty of investment while continuing to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources and meet Treaty of Waitangi obligations.

The Project is described in the enclosed schedule, and a copy of the application is electronically attached. The Project is for a mixed use development near Auckland Domain with a maximum height of 65 metres compared to the permitted 27 metre height standard for this site under the Auckland Unitary Plan. Due to the site's location, I have also asked the Tūpuna Maunga o Tāmaki Makaurau Authority to provide comment on the application.

I invite you under section 21(2) of the FTCA to provide written comments on the referral application. The standard feedback template has been adjusted to include provision for comments about whether it would be more appropriate for the Project to go through standard Resource Management Act (RMA) consenting processes given the proposed height exceedance. It is worth noting that as with any referred application, a panel can impose conditions to manage environmental effects in the manner they consider necessary to achieve sustainable management and consistency with Part 2 of the RMA and the economic recovery purposes of the FTCA. The panel considering a referred project for a retirement village in

Kohimarama recently issued its decision granting consent to buildings that exceeded the permitted height standards in the Auckland Unitary Plan. The panel imposed conditions requiring the height of 2 buildings to be lowered to reduce visual impacts and achieve a more sustainable planning outcome. A copy of the decision can be found here: <https://epa.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Documents/Fast-track-consenting/Kohimarama/Decision-of-the-Kohimarama-Comprehensive-Care-Retirement-Village-Expert-updated-with-appendices-1-3.pdf>

I also note that if the project is referred a more detailed environmental assessment and cultural impact assessment will be required as part of any consent application lodged with the Environmental Protection Authority. You will have an opportunity at that stage to provide comments on an application to a panel.

This information is provided to you in confidence and as part of the statutory process set out in the FTCA. Please do not forward the application or the request for comments to anyone outside your organisation, including any Crown Entity or statutory body.

Please provide your comments via return email within 10 working days if you wish me to take them into consideration when making a decision on whether or not to accept the application and refer the project to a panel.

Yours sincerely



Hon David Parker
Minister for the Environment

Enclosures:

- A. Schedule of proposed project
- B. Application to refer George St Mixed Use Development to an expert consenting panel, including supporting information

Appendix A - Schedule of proposed project

Project	Applicant	Details
George Street Mixed Use Development	Newmarket Holdings Development Limited Partnership	<p>The Project is to construct and use land for a 65 metre (maximum) mixed use development comprising four buildings, and associated subdivision, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• approximately 324 residential units• a supermarket• other retail• commercial tenancy space• a publicly accessible plaza and pedestrian access through the site. <p>The Project involves activities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• demolition of existing buildings and infrastructure• earthworks (including bulk earthworks and on contaminated land)• water takes and diversions• discharge of groundwater, stormwater and contaminants• construction of three waters services• construction of buildings and underground carparking facilities• construction of vehicle access and loading areas• construction of a publicly accessible plaza and pedestrian access through the site• landscaping including plantings• signage• subdivision