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environmental consultants

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Oyster Capital Level 6, 12 Viaduct Harbour Ave PO Box 37846, Parnell, Auckland 1151

Attention: Andrew McCarthy

## Re: Ecology Memo – Oyster Capital Fast Track Referral Application

#### Introduction

Oyster Capital ("Oyster") propose to lodge an application for a referred project under the Covid-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (the "Act") to utilise the fast track consenting process via an expert consenting panel. This application relates to the development of a contiguous landholding at 76, 76A, 116, 136 and 140 Waihoehoe Road ("the site"). This landholding forms part of a larger land area within Drury East that is currently subject to a private plan change process - Waihoehoe Precinct Private Plan Change ("PC50") - to rezone the land from Future Urban to the Terraced Housing and Apartment zone under the Auckland Unitary Plan ("AUP") which will enable quality urban development and well-functioning urban environments. Oyster has a sale and purchase agreement for the site, and has full control of the site for the purpose of rezoning and future residential development.

This proposal for a referred project will give effect o the purpose of the Act to promote employment and New Zealand's recovery to the economic and social impacts of Covid-19 through the enabled construction and delivery of a comprehensive development that offers employment opportunities and an accelerated supply of quality housing choice and diversity.

To support the application for a referred project, this memo provides a high-level review of the ecological aspects of the proposal including:

- Summary of the proposal and site description;
  - Summary of work completed to date;
  - High level ecological assessment of the proposal; and
  - Overview of works required to achieve the proposal.

#### Site Description and Proposal

# Site Description

The site comprises 34.65 ha of land at 76, 76A, 116, 136 and 140 Waihoehoe Road which is currently zoned Future Urban ("FUZ") under the AUP. Overall, the ecological values and sensitivities of the site are low and typical of rural areas in the South Auckland area. The intermittent streams and induced wetland areas are highly modified and support very limited ecological values (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Aerial view of site showing key ecological features.



## Proposal

Oyster are proposing the staged development of the site into a mix of terrace and detached housing, 9 residential superlots and supporting roading and servicing infrastructure. A total of 376 dwellings are proposed, which will be delivered across three stages. A new road off Waihoehoe Road is proposed which will provide access to the development. The development is shown in Figure 2.

## **Background Analysis**

The ecological values and potential effects of the proposal have been thoroughly investigated as part of several site walkovers and ecological assessments since 2018. The terrestrial and freshwater ecological assessments were undertaken using best practice and were designed to meet regional and national assessment standards, including the recent follow up assessments of wetland areas following the release of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) in September 2020.

The key findings of the ecological investigations are that the site supports low ecological values characterised by low terrestrial ecological habitat and biodiversity low stream habitat and biodiversity with channelised or piped streams and two artificial ponds being the dominant freshwater habitats within the site (Figure 1). The high level o historical mod fication of the site watercourses is typical of rural landscapes and the stream b inthic invertebrate and fish community is characterised by a limited range of species that are tolerant of poor water and habitat quality.

#### Assessment

The project, as shown on the masterplan, forms the scope of this application for a referred project under the Act. Despite the highly modified nature of the watercourses and wetlands and limited ecological values, the proposed development has the potential to cause adverse ecological effects (Figure 1).

The proposed road alignments and associated stormwater management has been designed to minimise potential adverse ecological effects within the wetland areas. We understand the road alignments have been selected to minimise the effect on the streams and wetlands as much as practicable. With the road design, and stormwater management options available, including constructing a water level control structure within Pond 1 to maintain the hydrology of the wetland, any potential adverse effects on watercourses and wetlands within and beyond the site boundary can be avoided, remedi d or mitigated. Restoring the lower portion of Pond 1 and Pond 2 into intermittent stream habitat will have positive ecological effect in terms of creating/restoring natural stream habitat and improving downstream water quality.

Though there are limited ecological values within the project area due to historic modification, the potential adverse ecological effects can be managed to avoid impacts on native flora and fauna through the usual range of options for avoiding, remedying and mitigating effects (e.g., wetland and stream ecolog cal enhancement plans, fish relocation plan, lizard management plan). There are a range of options that could be used to protect the hydrology of the intermittent streams and wetland habitat within and downstream of the site. The proposal has the potential to deliver positive water quality and ecological effects through the removal of farm animals from the site, removing 2 artificial ponds and riparian planting around wetlands and streams.

There are no fundamental issues with the proposed masterplan in terms of ecological matters that cannot be addressed through the usual RMA hierarchy of avoiding, remedying, mitigating and offsetting significant adverse effects.



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## Conclusion

The ecological values of the site and the effects of the proposal have been thoroughly investigated in a number of ecological assessments to date. The proposed road alignments and stormwater management system has been designed to minimise ecological effects and there is scope to further refine the road design and stormwater management to further reduce ecological effects. With the proposed design and application of the usual mitigations, adverse effects should be able to be minimised and the potential positive ecological effects maximised. A more detailed ecological assessment will be included in the resource consent application, should the application be accepted as a referred project under the Act.

Yours sincerely

R. Montgouere

Richard Montgomerie FRESHWATER SOLUTIONS LTD

