

18 October 2021

Hon. Grant Robertson  
Deputy Prime Minister / Minister for Racing  
Private Bag 18 888  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington 6011

[Grant.Robertson@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:Grant.Robertson@parliament.govt.nz)

Dear Minister,

1. The purpose of this letter is to provide a briefing on the background to a proposed development by the Auckland Thoroughbred Racing Inc ("**Club**") at the Ellerslie racecourse. The Club is proposing to develop "The Hill" area of the Ellerslie racecourse for residential purposes via fast-track application under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast Track Consenting) Act 2020. The referral application will be submitted to Minister Parker at the end of October 2021 and the Club would appreciate your support in this regard.
2. The 6.4 hectare site is located in an elevated position adjacent to Ladies Mile and Derby Downs Place in Ellerslie. The racing industry is in a state of change and The Hill is no longer used for horseracing due to the phasing out of steeplechase events. This frees up a substantial area of land that can be used for much needed housing while also ensuring long-term financial stability for the Club.

### Background

3. As the Minister will be aware, the racing industry has a rich history in New Zealand. While the industry continues to contribute significantly to the economy, there has been a substantial decline in the industry's finances resulting in material flow-on effects for individual racing clubs and the racing communities they serve. In the current climate, a racing club cannot solely rely on horseracing for capital. This is evident as many New Zealand racecourses are increasingly reliant on alternative sources of funding, and at substantial risks of a reduction of racing days, amalgamation, and / or closure.
4. Following on from the Messara report and the enactment of the Racing Industry Act 2020, the Auckland Racing Club and Counties Racing Club have merged to form the Club. The Messara report concluded that in order for the racing industry to survive financially, it was necessary for racing clubs to rationalise their assets and streamline their operations so that the capital value of land not required for core racing or direct ancillary activities can be realised. This has prompted the consolidation of assets through the merger and the opportunity to look more strategically at the Club's operations. The Club commissioned a strategic land analysis of its landholdings which identified The Hill as the most significant opportunity to give effect to the Messara report recommendations.
5. The Club considers that the sale and residential development of The Hill is the best option to support the preservation and future of the Ellerslie racecourse while also supplying the community with high-quality housing. The Hill is no longer an integral part of racing events and requires continuous maintenance which does not make economic sense. Given the intensity of Auckland's housing crisis, development of The Hill also presents a

valuable opportunity to provide approximately 325-450 dwellings in one of the most highly attractive locations in Auckland.

### **The proposal**

6. The proposed residential development of The Hill will enable a well-functioning urban environment that will result in medium to high density residential development in close proximity to public transport networks (including the Ellerslie and Remuera rail stations). The outcome will support the Government's decarbonisation goals by reducing private vehicle commuter trips and promoting public transport use.
7. The Hill site also benefits from extensive views over the racetrack and to Maungakiekie (One Tree Hill), Ohinerau (Mount Hobson), and Maungawhau (Mount Eden). Residential development is ideal for The Hill due to the close proximity to public transport (identified above as well as the bus network), and the Remuera and Ellerslie Villages. A short journey will take residents to Newmarket, the Greenlane commercial corridor and the Penrose / Mount Wellington commercial/industrial precinct. Beyond this, the site is highly accessible to the Auckland CBD via rail and to the Auckland Airport via existing transport networks.
8. The Hill is ideally suited to accommodate a variety of residential dwelling outcomes within the site. For example, it is proposed to include the following:
  - (a) 1-2 storey detached dwellings;
  - (b) 2-3 storey duplex and terrace houses; and
  - (c) 4-6 storey apartment buildings.
9. Amongst the different residential dwellings and apartments buildings, it is proposed to develop high quality streetscapes and landscaped open space areas. High quality public access connections are also proposed to, from and through the development site. The overall concept design respects adjoining and adjacent existing development while ensuring that The Hill development will be complementary to the existing and planned character of the neighbourhood.
10. The Club has gone to market to engage a develop partner with the expertise to deliver a high-quality master planned development. A preferred develop partner has been selected by the Club. This partner is still within its Due Diligence period; however we can advise that we are working with an extremely reputable developer. The Club and its preferred development partner intend to seek consent for the development under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast Track Consenting) Act 2020 given the economic, employment and public benefit outcomes that will result from the development. It is anticipated that the developer and the Club will work together to prepare the referral application, which is intended to be lodged by the end of October 2021.

### **Conclusion**

11. This is an exciting opportunity that will contribute to the long-term financial viability of the Club's operations while also providing high-quality housing stock for the Auckland community. We would appreciate your support in your capacity as the Minister of Racing. Please don't hesitate to contact me should you have any questions concerning the proposal.

Yours faithfully,



Doug Alderslade  
Chairman  
Auckland Thoroughbred Racing



AUCKLAND THOROUGHBRED RACING

REMUERA VILLAGE

REMUERA GOLF CLUB

ASCOT PRIVATE HOSPITAL

The Hill

GREENLANE INTERCHANGE

SH1

SH1

GREENLANE TRAIN STATION

ELLERSLIE TRAIN STATION

Boundary line indicative only

16 November 2021

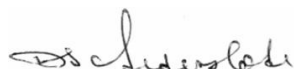
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Dear Minister Robertson,

1. As set out in my letter dated 18 October 2021 the Auckland Thoroughbred Racing Inc ("**Club**") is proposing to develop "The Hill" area of the Ellerslie Racecourse for residential purposes.
2. Further to my earlier letter, this letter is to provide you with confirmation that, on 5 November 2021, the Club and its preferred development partner (who is still undergoing its due diligence process) lodged an application for referral to an expert consenting panel under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast Track Consenting) Act 2020. This application is currently being processed by the Ministry for the Environment.
3. Please don't hesitate to contact me should you have any questions around the application for referral or the proposed development at The Hill.

Yours faithfully,



Doug Alderslade  
Chairman  
Auckland Thoroughbred Racing

# Hon Grant Robertson

MP for Wellington Central

Deputy Prime Minister

Minister of Finance

Minister for Infrastructure

Minister for Sport and Recreation

Minister for Racing



30 NOV 2021

Doug Alderslade  
Chairman  
Auckland Racing Club  
paulw@ellerslie.co.nz

Dear Doug Alderslade

Thank you for your letters dated 18 October and 16 November 2021 regarding the proposed development by the Auckland Racing Club at the Ellerslie racecourse.

Thank you for providing me with an update on this proposed development. I am pleased to read about your continued efforts to enrich the racing industry in Auckland, especially during a time of increased hardship as we continue to deal with the effects of COVID-19 in New Zealand. It is important that the racing industry is sustainable in the long term and continues to provide an enjoyable and colourful recreation option for New Zealanders.

Regarding your request for my support on the fast-track application for consent to the Minister for the Environment, Hon David Parker, I should explain that, as Minister for Racing, I oversee legislative matters under the Racing Industry Act 2020 (the Act), and perform the administrative roles and responsibilities as outlined in the Act. This is not a matter in which I can intervene, however, I trust that you have obtained written permission from New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing to transfer the property.

I am pleased to hear your application is currently being processed by the Ministry for the Environment and I look forward to hearing about its outcome.

Thank you again for writing.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grant Robertson'.

Hon Grant Robertson  
**Minister for Racing**



BRF-1049 / 1308

11 March 2022

Auckland Thoroughbred Racing Incorporated and  
Fletcher Residential Limited (trading as Fletcher Living)  
c/- Alice Gilbert  
Solicitor  
Russell McVeagh  
[alice.gilbert@russellmcveagh.com](mailto:alice.gilbert@russellmcveagh.com)

Dear Alice Gilbert

**COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-Track Consenting) Act 2020 – Amended Notice of Decisions  
(Section 25) – The Hill – Ellerslie**

Thank you for the application from Auckland Thoroughbred Racing Incorporated and Fletcher Residential Limited (trading as Fletcher Living) under section 20 of the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (FTCA) seeking referral of The Hill – Ellerslie project to an expert consenting panel (a panel) for consideration under the FTCA.

The project is to subdivide part of the Ellerslie Racecourse property and construct a housing development consisting of approximately 370 residential units in a mix of detached, duplex and terrace houses from 1–3 storeys high and up to five apartment buildings that are up to 7 storeys high (excluding any part or full basement level) at 100 Ascot Avenue, Greenlane, Auckland. One of the apartment buildings will be designed for the active retired market. The Project will also create open space areas, private access lots, pedestrian and cycle accessways, together with public roads intended to vest in Auckland Council.

The purpose of the FTCA is to promote employment to support New Zealand's recovery from the economic and social impacts of COVID-19 and to support the certainty of ongoing investment across New Zealand, while continuing to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

I can only refer the project to a panel for consideration under the FTCA if it meets the referral criteria in section 18 of the FTCA, which includes me being satisfied the project will help achieve the FTCA's purpose.

I have decided the project meets the referral criteria in section 18 of the FTCA and I consider it will help to achieve the FTCA's purpose as it has the potential to:

1. have positive effects on social well-being by generating employment and providing a diverse range of housing types, including terraced housing (which has the potential to be a lower-priced housing option)

2. generate employment by providing approximately 61 direct full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs in planning, design and consenting during years 1–3 and approximately 1,051 direct FTE jobs in construction during years 3-7
3. increase housing supply through the provision of approximately 370 residential units
4. progress faster than would otherwise be the case under standard Resource Management Act 1991 process

Any actual and potential effects arising from the project, together with any measures to avoid, remedy, mitigate, offset or compensate for adverse effects, could be tested by a panel against Part 2 of the Resource Management Act 1991 and the purpose of the FTCA (section 4 and clause 31 Schedule 6).

Accordingly, I have decided to accept your application for referral under section 24(2) of the FTCA and refer all of the project to a panel.

*Information required to be submitted with your resource consent applications*

In accordance with section 24(2)(d) of the FTCA, I have also decided that you must provide the information listed in Appendix A of this letter with any resource consent application for the project lodged with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) under clause 2 Schedule 6.

I draw your attention to clause 14 Schedule 6 of the FTCA that details that the above information must be provided in sufficient detail to correspond to the scale and significance of effects. You should therefore provide what you believe is a reasonable level of information, and if a panel requires further information, they can seek it from you under clause 25 Schedule 6 of the FTCA.

This information will inform a panel's assessment of the proposal's effects and whether to invite comment from persons or groups in addition to those specified in clause 17 Schedule 6 of the FTCA. This does not preclude a panel from requiring you to provide any additional information on any application lodged with the EPA under the FTCA.

*Persons or groups a panel must invite comments from*

In accordance with section 24(2)(e) of the FTCA, I have also decided that a panel must invite comments on any resource consent application for the project lodged with the EPA from the persons and groups, additional to those specified in clause 17 Schedule 6 of the FTCA, who are listed in Appendix A of this letter.

This will allow those parties the opportunity to have input into the consideration of the application and enable a panel to better understand the potential effects of the proposal.

These directions do not preclude a panel from inviting any other parties to comment on any application lodged with the EPA under the FTCA.

I will progress an Order in Council through the Executive Council for the project. The wording of the referral order may vary slightly from the statements and directions included in this letter, due to legal drafting requirements.

Once this Order is made you will be able to lodge your applications for resource consent with the EPA for a decision by a panel. The decision to approve or decline the resource consents

is a matter for the panel appointed by the Panel Convener Judge L J Newhook. You should not take my decision to refer the project as an indication or direction that the determination of those approvals will be successful. Additionally, my decision does not in any way endorse any related or concurrent planning decisions such as zoning decisions that may affect the project.

Please do not publicly release my decision or this notice until the Order in Council for this project has been approved by Cabinet and notified in the New Zealand Gazette.

The FTCA requires that:

1. I provide a copy of my decisions to the persons, entities and groups specified in section 25(1) and (2) of the FTCA
2. My decisions, the reasons for them, and the Section 17 Report will be published on the Ministry for the Environment's website in accordance with section 25(3) of the FTCA.

In addition, I have also decided to provide a copy of this decision to the following parties:

1. Ngāti Koheriki Claims Committee
2. Minister for Seniors

Please contact the Fast-track Consenting Team at the Ministry for the Environment ([fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz)) if you have any questions or wish to discuss this decision.

Yours sincerely



Hon David Parker  
**Minister for the Environment**

cc Relevant Ministers of/for portfolios specified in section 21(6)(a)–(m) FTCA:

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

Additional relevant Ministers:

Minister for Racing  
Minister for Seniors

Local authority:

Auckland Council

Other parties:

Ngāti Koheriki Claims Committee  
Auckland Transport  
Watercare Services Limited



Relevant iwi authorities:

Makaurau Marae Māori Trust  
Ngā Maunga Whakahii o Kaipara Development Trust  
Ngaati Whanaunga Incorporated Society  
Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki Tribal Trust  
Ngāti Maru Rūnanga Trust  
Ngāti Paoa Iwi Trust  
Ngāti Paoa Trust Board  
Ngāti Tamaoho Trust  
Ngāti Tamaterā Treaty Settlement Trust  
Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei Trust Board  
Te Ākitai Waiohua Iwi Authority  
Te Ara Rangatu o Te Iwi o Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua  
Te Kawerau Iwi Settlement Trust  
Te Kupenga o Ngāti Hako Incorporated  
Te Patukirikiri Iwi Trust  
Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whātua  
Te Whakakitenga o Waikato Incorporated

Relevant Treaty settlement entities:

Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei Trustee Limited  
Te Kawerau Iwi Settlement Trust  
Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki Trust  
Ngāti Tamaoho Settlement Trust  
Te Patukirikiri Iwi Trust  
Ngāti Paoa Iwi Trust  
Te Ākitai Waiohua Settlement Trust  
Ngāti Maru Rūnanga Trust  
Ngāti Tamaterā Treaty Settlement Trust  
Hako Tūpuna Trust  
Ngaati Whanaunga Ruunanga Trust

Environmental Protection Authority

The Panel Convener

## **Appendix A – Requirements specific to application lodged by Auckland Thoroughbred Racing Incorporated and Fletcher Residential Limited**

### ***Information required to be submitted with your application***

In accordance with section 24(2)(d) of the FTCA, I have also decided that you must provide the following information with any application:

- a detailed assessment of:
  - the capacity of the existing infrastructure for three-waters services to service the completed Project
  - what upgrading is required to that infrastructure to service the completed Project
  - how any upgrading is to be funded
- a stormwater assessment and a draft stormwater management plan along with information about discussions held and any agreements made with the Auckland Council Healthy Waters department regarding stormwater management
- an ecological assessment which addresses the effects of increased stormwater flows from the Project site on the Waiaatarua Reserve wetland
- an integrated transport assessment, including:
  - an assessment of how the Project will support both public modes of transport and active modes of transport such as cycling and walking
  - an assessment of the impact of the Project on the area surrounding the Project site and the local transport network, including traffic safety issues that may arise during or after the construction phase
- in relation to the land in the Project site, a report on a preliminary site investigation and, if required, on a detailed site investigation, within the meaning of the Resource Management (National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health) Regulations 2011, that shows how the requirements of those regulations will be met.

### ***Persons or groups a panel must invite comments from***

In accordance with section 24(2)(e) of the FTCA, I have also decided that a panel must invite comments on any consent application for the project from the following additional persons or groups:

- Ngāti Koheriki Claims Committee
- Auckland Transport
- Watercare Services Limited
- Minister for Racing
- Minister for Seniors



**LEGEND**

- ① Apartment Precinct
- ② Belvedere Gardens East
- ③ Belvedere Gardens West
- ④ Existing Pohutukawa Trees Retained
- ⑤ Vivid Living Retirement Apartments
- ⑥ Planted Embankment
- ⑦ Trackside Walkway
- ⑧ Planted Swale
- ⑨ Path Connection to Peach Parade\*
- ⑩ Relocated Access To Racecourse Infield\*
- ⑪ Infield Pond\*

\* Provided by ATR, not part of application, shown for context only