

**BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT HEARING COMMISSIONER
OF NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT COUNCIL**

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991 ("**RMA**")

AND

IN THE MATTER of an application to New Plymouth District Council by
Bunnings Limited for resource consent for
construction of a Bunnings warehouse with
associated parking, loading and access and
cancellation of a consent notice at 662 Devon Road,
New Plymouth - Applications LUC25/48839 &
SUB17/46785.02.

**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF MATTHEW FORBES NORWELL ON
BEHALF OF BUNNINGS LIMITED**

(PLANNING)

29 SEPTEMBER 2026

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This statement summarises my planning evidence dated 14 September 2026 in support of Bunnings Limited's resource consent application for a Bunnings Warehouse at 662 Devon Road, Waiwhakaiho. It also provides comments responding to the planning evidence filed for Ngāti Tāwhirikura Hapū and Puketapu Hapū on 21 September 2026.

2 THE PROPOSAL, PLANNING FRAMEWORK, AND EFFECTS ASSESSMENT

- 2.1 The proposal, planning framework and effects assessment are set out in Paragraphs 4.1 – 6.19 of my evidence, and to avoid repetition I do not describe these further here.
- 2.2 The principal matters in contention concern the cultural landscape, including Aotere Pā, Te Pou Tūtaki, Mangaone Stream, the interface with the Special Purpose – Māori Purpose Zone, the adequacy of the design response, and the role and form of post-consent engagement and cultural expression.

3 RELEVANT NPDP PROVISIONS

- 3.1 The NPDP strategic direction recognises historic and cultural values, tangata whenua relationships with ancestral land and taonga, the exercise of kaitiakitanga, and the contribution of those relationships to the District's identity. The General Industrial Zone provisions also require effects at zone boundaries to be managed, while the SASM provisions require recognition and protection of the identified sites and relationships.
- 3.2 Those provisions are relevant and should be considered together. They do not displace the General Industrial zoning of the Site or require every proposal to achieve all aspirations for adjoining land. The planning question is whether this Proposal, in its current form and subject to enforceable conditions, appropriately recognises the cultural context, manages the effects it creates, and is consistent with the direction of the NPDP when read as a whole.
- 3.3 In my opinion it does. The primary site structure was changed in response to cultural feedback; the Pā and Pou are not physically affected; the visual connection between them remains open; works and paving near Aotere Pā have been reduced; access to the Pā remains available; stormwater is treated without direct discharge to Mangaone; cultural monitoring is offered; and ongoing cultural input can be provided through a suitably framed Kaitiaki Forum and landscape /

cultural-expression process.

4 EVIDENCE OF MR SEAN ZIELTJES – FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND WHOLE-OF-SITE PLANNING

- 4.1 Mr Zieltjes places considerable emphasis on the absence of detailed plans for the approximately 47% of the Site not occupied by the Bunnings development. He considers this creates uncertainty about access, the future road alignment and cumulative effects at the interface with Aotere Pā and the Special Purpose – Māori Purpose Zone.
- 4.2 The present application does not seek approval for development of the balance land, the indicative pad sites, a public road, or widening of the one-way accessway. The section 42A report identifies the parts of the Site and Proposal falling within the SASM provisions associated with Aotere Pā and Te Pou Tūtaki. Outside those areas, the NPDP anticipates industrial activities and buildings within the General Industrial Zone, including permitted activities where the applicable standards are met.
- 4.3 Any future development extending into a SASM setback, or otherwise requiring consent, must be assessed when a defined proposal is made. That assessment would include its effects on Aotere Pā and Te Pou Tūtaki and any relevant cumulative effects. The current Proposal does not authorise that outcome. I agree that an unidentified future road cannot be assessed or authorised now; the logical consequence is that the effects of that unidentified road should not be attributed to Bunnings when determining this application. Conditions must retain a proper nexus with the Proposal and should not regulate activities that have not been applied for.
- 4.4 The consent sought sets out the Bunnings building, parking, loading and access shown on the application plans; it neither authorises nor predetermines development of the balance land or a future public road. Those matters remain subject to the statutory processes and cultural assessment applicable when, and if, a defined proposal is advanced.

5 SPECIAL PURPOSE – MĀORI PURPOSE ZONE INTERFACE AND PLANNED CHARACTER

- 5.1 I accept that the adjoining Special Purpose – Māori Purpose Zone and the future activities it enables are relevant planning context. The planned environment includes both those activities and the industrial development anticipated on the

Site. The NPDP manages the interface between those environments; it does not establish a hierarchy requiring development in the General Industrial Zone to be designed around every potential future use of the adjoining land.

- 5.2 Effects at the interface are managed through the General Industrial Zone objectives and policies and specific standards, including the applicable height-in-relation-to-boundary recession plane and minimum building setback. The Proposal complies with those interface standards. As amended, it also reduces the accessway to approximately 6 m, increases separation from the Aotere Pā boundary to approximately 9 m, removes the retaining wall, provides a landscaped and battered edge, and relocates the main building away from the identified view corridor. In my opinion, it would not be appropriate to apply the Special Purpose – Māori Purpose Zone provisions to the subject site as though they impose additional development standards on land to which that zoning does not apply.
- 5.3 The Māori Purpose Zone is a real part of the receiving and planned environment, and I have expressly taken it into account. In my opinion, the revised interface appropriately responds to that context without assuming that either zone is passive: it provides greater physical separation and landscaping while retaining the operational function of the General Industrial Zone

6 **PLANNED CHARACTER AND COMPREHENSIVE SITE PLANNING**

- 6.1 The receiving environment is not homogenous, but neither is it governed by a structure plan requiring comprehensive development of the whole Site. Where the NPDC has considered coordinated planning necessary for large sites, structure plans are an available District Plan method which have been utilised in the current Plan. No structure plan applies here. In that context, the Proposal should be assessed against the zoning, overlays and interface controls that the NPDP has applied to this site, rather than an additional master-planning requirement that is not contained in the Plan.
- 6.2 The present layout also reflects approximately three years of engagement and includes fundamental changes that limit Bunnings' development potential, including retention of the full identified sightline and removal of development from that corridor. Those commitments are secured by the application plans and are not left to post-consent design.

7 DESIGN RESPONSE, CO-DESIGN AND APPLIED CULTURAL EXPRESSION

- 7.1 The Ngāti Tāwhirikura evidence emphasises that genuine cultural input must occur early enough to influence fundamental design decisions and should not be reduced to decoration. I agree with that principle, but do not agree that planting or a possible mural is all that has been offered. As detailed in the corporate evidence, consultation led to reduction and redesign of the building to retain the full identified visual connection, removal of the above-ground water tank, removal of the road stub, reduction of works and paving beside the Pā and, most recently, narrowing and relocation of the access interface. These are structural changes that have constrained Bunnings' development potential.
- 7.2 The remaining cultural-expression opportunities can appropriately be developed through the Kaitiaki Forum and final landscape / cultural-expression process. A condition may require engagement, identify outcomes and topics, record feedback and the consent holder's response, and secure implementation. It should not provide an unbounded third-party approval, require agreement on subjective matters, or leave the fundamental layout unresolved. In my opinion, the fundamental layout has already been settled through the revised plans; the post-consent process addresses detailed expression and implementation.

8 KAITIAKI FORUM AND CONDITIONS

- 8.1 Ms Salisbury supports the Kaitiaki Forum, an Applied Cultural Expression Plan, cultural monitoring, tikanga, a pre-start blessing, an Accidental Discovery Protocol and meaningful input into the final landscape plan. I support those outcomes in principle. My concern remains in relation to the workability, particularly any condition that makes implementation dependent on a separate Collaboration Agreement or third-party approval.
- 8.2 Amended Condition 4 specifies the Forum's purpose, membership and operation; requires meetings at least every three months during construction until opening unless otherwise agreed; and requires the consent holder to record feedback and its response, including reasons where no action is taken. This provides an enduring, transparent process without requiring a separate private agreement as a precondition to exercising consent.
- 8.3 Cultural monitoring and the Accidental Discovery Protocol perform different functions and can operate together. Condition 2 requires a pre-start meeting involving Council and both hapū, including discussion of cultural monitoring and accidental discovery. Condition 4 addresses tikanga Māori, a pre-start blessing

and cultural monitoring. Condition 17 requires work to stop and relevant parties to be notified if archaeological evidence is encountered. These conditions provide both proactive mana whenua involvement and a reactive discovery process.

- 8.4 I support an enduring and properly resourced engagement mechanism. My proposed amendments are not intended to reduce the role of either hapū; they are intended to ensure that the condition is certain, enforceable and does not make the exercise of consent contingent on obtaining a separate private agreement.

9 AOTERE PĀ, TE POU TŪTAKE AND CULTURAL VISIBILITY

- 9.1 The cultural evidence explains that the significance of Aotere Pā and Te Pou Tūtaki is relational and is not confined to a mapped boundary or a single line of sight. I accept that evidence. The retained view corridor is therefore one component of the response. Other components include the building relocation, reduced works beside the Pā, the absence of physical works to either identified site, ongoing access, landscaping, pedestrian connection and cultural monitoring.

- 9.2 The Proposal does not require Te Pou Tūtaki to be relocated, altered or obscured. Mr Georgeson's evidence confirms that no widening or intersection works at Devon Road / Smart Road are required for Bunnings, and the Council and Applicant traffic specialists agree that road upgrading is not required. Te Pou Tūtaki is located on approximately 10 m² of Council-owned Road-zoned land outside the existing NZTA designation. Any future designation alteration or separate transport project would require its own statutory process, including public participation. The present traffic-review condition principally addresses the right turn from State Highway 3 and potential queuing; it does not authorise works to the Pou.

- 9.3 Transport conditions 41–45 address the access arrangement, sightlines, NZTA confirmation, a 12-month traffic safety review and the available response if traffic effects arise. A condition guaranteeing that no future transport project will ever affect Te Pou Tūtaki would extend beyond the effects and control of this consent; any such project must instead be considered through its own planning process.

10 MANGAONE STREAM

- 10.1 No stormwater from impervious surfaces will discharge directly to the Mangaone Stream. The conditions require erosion and sediment controls before earthworks,

the TRC-approved Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, a certified Contamination Management Plan, oversight by a suitably qualified environmental practitioner, remediation and site validation, and an operational soakage system designed for the 1% AEP event with climate-change allowance. These are enforceable responses to the physical pathways by which the Proposal could affect the stream.

11 COUNCIL OFFICER'S REPORT AND PROPOSED CONDITIONS

- 11.1 I generally agree with the reporting officer's assessment of effects and the relevant statutory provisions. I also generally support the recommended conditions, subject to amendments updating the approved plans, deleting conditions for the removed road stub, refining transport provisions, retaining cultural monitoring and accidental-discovery processes, and making the Kaitiaki Forum and cultural-expression requirements clear and enforceable.
- 11.2 The conditions should not require a Collaboration Agreement as a precondition to exercising consent, prescribe cultural treatment to the Bunnings façade, or regulate a future public road that is not part of the Proposal. The revised conditions secure the mitigation offered and provide meaningful continuing input by both hapū. I also support adding an appropriate mechanism for relevant environmental monitoring information to be reported to the Kaitiaki Forum.

12 CONCLUSION

- 12.1 The submitter evidence provides important additional detail about the cultural landscape, the aspirations for Aotere Pā and Te Pou Tūtaki, and the outcomes sought through ongoing engagement. I have considered that evidence and do not question the values expressed. In my planning opinion, it does not alter the conclusion in my primary evidence.
- 12.2 The Proposal is an appropriate use of the Site. It has been materially changed in response to tangata whenua engagement, and its actual and potential effects can be appropriately avoided, remedied or mitigated through the revised design and a clear, enforceable condition set. The possibility of separate future development or a future public road should not be treated as part of this application. Subject to the amended conditions, I continue to recommend that resource consent be granted.

Matthew Forbes Norwell

29 September 2026