

PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL
PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE G: AOKAUTERE URBAN GROWTH
MINUTE 3 OF INDEPENDENT HEARING PANEL

1. This is the third procedural Minute (Minute 3) issued in relation to submissions on proposed Plan Change G Aokautere (PC G) notified by the Council.
2. The purpose of the Minute is to update submitters on the directions for expert conferencing and related hearing administration matters.

Background

3. On 8 August 2023 the second Minute (Minute 2) was issued to address some preliminary matters in preparation for the hearing including pre-hearing discussions/expert conferencing, circulation of evidence, hearing process and presentations and site and locality visits.
4. Section 42A reports and submitter evidence have now been received in accordance with the timetabling directions within Minute 2, and extensions granted to one submitter.
5. Having reviewed the evidence, we consider it beneficial (and will potentially save significant hearing time) to conduct expert conferencing in order to better understand the position of the various parties and ascertain whether any agreement can be reached to reduce, or at least narrow, the issues for the hearing.

Directions on Expert Conferencing

6. At this stage, the Hearing Panel therefore directs expert conferencing on the following topics:
 - a. Transport (Safety);
 - b. Stormwater; and
 - c. Planning.
7. Conferencing is to be undertaken in accordance with the Environment Court Practice Note 2023. This includes an agreed Joint Witness Statement (JWS) to be produced outlining all matters of agreement and disagreement reached between the participants in each conference.
8. We understand that the Council will arrange an independent facilitator for the expert

conferences, which are to be scheduled across 14 to 16 November 2023. If necessary, it may also be prudent for the facilitator to organise a scribe to assist with the effective and efficient recording of the conferences and subsequent reporting. Unless approved on application to the Panel (via the Hearing Administrator), the date for the filing of the JWS for each conference is two working days after the completion of each conference.

9. The Hearing Panel's strong preference is for conferencing to occur in person. If there are exceptional circumstances which make participating in person difficult, an audio-visual link may be used where approval of the Hearing Panel has been obtained. Any request should be made to the Panel (via the Hearing Administrator) by 10am on 10 November 2023. All requests should be in writing, with supporting reasons, for review by the Hearing Panel.
10. While these directions cannot compel expert witnesses to attend and participate in the expert conferencing sessions, the Hearing Panel strongly recommend they do so. These sessions will enable issues to be clarified and narrowed, with a view to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the hearing process.

Updated timetable

11. With expert conferencing occurring later than anticipated in order to accommodate changes in timing of submitter evidence, a consequential amendment to the timetable directed under Minute 2 is considered by the Hearing Panel to be necessary.
12. Reply evidence for the Council is now to be filed by 1pm on 28 November 2023.

Hearing processes and presentations

13. The PNCC Hearing Administrator will confirm the hearing date in due course. This information will be emailed to parties and made available on the PNCC website: [Proposed Plan Change G: Aokautere urban growth | Palmerston North City Council \(pncc.govt.nz\)](https://pncc.govt.nz/Proposed-Plan-Change-G-Aokautere-urban-growth-Palmerston-North-City-Council)

Any enquiries regarding these directions or any related matters should be directed to the Hearing Administrator, Susana Figlioli, by email at susana.figlioli@pncc.govt.nz

DATED this 7th day of November 2023



DJ McMahon, Chair

On behalf of the members of the Hearing Panel