

PROPOSED KAIPARA DISTRICT PLAN

SIXTH DIRECTION

from the Hearing Panel

Update on Hearing Procedures

25 March 2026

Introduction

1. The purpose of this Direction is to provide an update on hearing procedures, including in respect of the provision of ‘tabled statements’ by hearing attendees. This Direction should be read in conjunction with Direction 5 dated 26 February 2026.

Background

2. Kaipara District Council (**the Council**) notified the Proposed District Plan on 28 April 2025, and the Hearings Panel is well advanced into the hearings phase of hearing and deciding submissions.
3. Nine hearings have now been held, as follows:
 - Hearing 1 (25 August 2025)- where an overview of the plan review process was presented and certain procedural issues were determined;
 - Hearing 2 (17 December 2025) - Light;
 - Hearings 3 and 4 (23 February 2026) on the topics of ‘Introduction’ and ‘Temporary Activities’;
 - Hearing 5 (9 March 2026) – Hospital Zone;
 - Hearings 6 and 7 (10 March 2026) –Hazardous Substances and Contaminated Land;

- Hearing 8 (11 March 2026) – Signs; and
 - Hearing 9 (24 March 2026) – Renewable Electricity Generation.
4. The Hearings Panel recommendation reports are programmed to be delivered to the Council by April 2027 for its resolution to adopt them and to notify all submitters of the Council’s decisions on submissions accordingly. Further details on the programme are provided on the Council’s web page and within any forthcoming directions.

Tabled Statements

5. The Hearings Panel has noticed a trend from the initial hearings whereby a number of statements are being tabled from submitters who have opted to not attend the hearing. Such statements generally fall into three categories:
- a. Statements tabled by legal counsel. These will be treated a legal advocacy.
 - b. Statements tabled by experts (planners etc). These will be treated as expert evidence.
 - c. Statements tabled by lay representatives. These will be treated as lay representations.
6. The Hearings Panel has the expectation that statements tabled by experts will be provided in accordance with our advice on the provision of expert evidence as set out in Direction 5:

“Submitter’s written expert evidence is to be provided to the Hearings Administrator, two weeks (10 working days) following the issuing of the Council’s s42A report on a particular hearing topic. The notice of hearing for each topic will nominate the precise date for the receipt of expert evidence”.

7. The Hearings Panel also has the expectation that legal submissions will be filed with the Hearings Administrator 3 working days prior to the relevant hearing commencing as set out in Direction 3.

Fuel Crisis

8. The evolving fuel crisis will impact on the way hearings are conducted. While the Hearings Panel favours face-to face hearings it is accepted that many of the

hearings will need to be conducted online using Microsoft TEAMS. The Hearings Administrator will provide timely notice of online hearings. Where hearings are held in-person, allowances will be considered for attendance using Microsoft TEAMS in accordance with the advice set out in the Direction 5.

Notices of Hearing

9. Parties are reminded that the Hearings Administrator will place an indicative hearing timetable on the [Council's Proposed District Plan webpage](#) prior to each topic hearing. The Hearing Administrator will advise all confirmed speakers when the timetable is available.

10. If you have any questions regarding the matters included in this Direction, please contact Ms Meagan Walters, Hearings Administrator at mwalters@kaipara.govt.nz



Mark C Farnsworth MNZM
Panel Chair
For the Hearing Panel