
RE: Officer's Right of Reply - Ecosystems & Indig. Biodiversity Hearing

From arwatson@xtra.co.nz <arwatson@xtra.co.nz>

Date Wed 17-Jun-26 2:36 PM

To Meagan Walters <mwalters@kaipara.govt.nz>; 'Juliane Chetham' <juliane@chethamconsulting.nz>; Craig Jepson <cjepson@kaipara.govt.nz>; Gordon Lambeth <glambeth@kaipara.govt.nz>

Cc markcf60@gmail.com <markcf60@gmail.com>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside Kaipara District Council. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Meagan

Dealing now with the first part of your email note below:

The Panel does not intend issuing directions in relation to any of the 3 hearing topics and similarly no memoranda. Those processes are where specific direction is to be given by a hearings panel. That is not the case here where we want to leave the process more open to allow the officers discretion with what they address, all in order to assist us. I note the reporting officers indicated a minute may be more preferable. As Chair Mark would point out, the Courts issue “minutes” not hearing panels. We can issue memoranda or simply emails as appropriate. I have discussed this matter with him and we agree this can be handled by way of **Email Correspondence from the Hearings Panel** as per the headers on the Council’s website. I provide the wording below for you, thanks.

To the Reporting Officers for the below topics

Hearings 17, 18 and 19 – Ecosystems and Biodiversity, Natural Character, and Natural Features and Landscapes

At the conclusion of the above hearings the two reporting officers raised with the Hearing Panel the approach that had been adopted in other similar hearings whereby the officers entered into some further engagement with some submitters following the hearings to assist in narrowing the issues in contention and exploring potential agreements on those issues before the officers’ rights of reply. This was also raised by some submitters, particularly Mr Badham on behalf of Northpower Ltd and Northpower Fibre Ltd. The Department of Conservation (Ms Sutherland) had suggested perhaps the approach of a Joint Witness Statement but the experience of the officers was that was not necessary and we agree it is more effective in this case to leave the process relatively open so as not to limit what may be discussed and perhaps resolved before the officers’ rights of reply for the three hearing topics.

Accordingly, by way of this email correspondence, we encourage the officers to engage further with the submitters where they consider some further agreement and/or resolution of the submissions can be achieved and that this be carried out before the officers provide their respective rights of reply. This email correspondence provides the opportunity for the officers to engage further with submitters for all three hearing topics and in a manner by which we do not limit the potential for agreements.

We will hear or receive the rights of reply in due course.

Alan Watson
Acting chair for these hearing topics.

Meagan, this should do what we seek. Please call/email me as you wish.

Alan

From: arwatson@xtra.co.nz <arwatson@xtra.co.nz>

Sent: Wednesday, 17 June 2026 1:23 PM

To: 'Meagan Walters' <mwalters@kaipara.govt.nz>; 'Juliane Chetham' <juliane@chethamconsulting.nz>; 'Craig Jepson' <cjepson@kaipara.govt.nz>; 'Gordon Lambeth' <glambeth@kaipara.govt.nz>

Cc: Mark Farnsworth <markcf60@gmail.com>

Subject: RE: Officer's Right of Reply - Ecosystems & Indig. Biodiversity Hearing

Hi Meagan

Dealing with the last matter first (planner's logic!) the right of reply from Ben Lee for Hearing 18 (Natural Character) and Hearing 19 (Natural Features and Landscapes) can be extended to say 13 July to meet his request to do so. It is sensible, and agreed by Jerome Wyeth, that should also then include the right of reply for Hearing 17 (Ecosystems and Indigenous Vegetation) because the 3 topics are all inter-related. It does not need us to provide a formal direction or a memorandum but it is sufficient to just send a note to the officers which can be shown on the website under Email Correspondence from the Hearings Panel. I provide the wording below for you.

Hearings 17, 18 and 19 – Ecosystems and Biodiversity, Natural Character, and Natural Features and Landscapes

At the conclusion of the hearings the reporting officers sought that the timing for the officers' Rights of Reply for the above 3 topics be extended to cover the time that one of the reporting officers is scheduled to be away from work. The Hearing Panel considered the request and agreed to the timing being extended to 13 July 2026.

I think that will sort that part of your email note to the Hearing Panel. **At the conclusion of the hearings the reporting officers sought**

Cheers, Alan

From: arwatson@xtra.co.nz <arwatson@xtra.co.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, 16 June 2026 3:53 PM

To: 'Meagan Walters' <mwalters@kaipara.govt.nz>; 'Juliane Chetham' <juliane@chethamconsulting.nz>; 'Craig Jepson' <cjepson@kaipara.govt.nz>; 'Gordon Lambeth' <glambeth@kaipara.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: Officer's Right of Reply - Ecosystems & Indig. Biodiversity Hearing

Hi Meagan

I can send you a reply late today.

Cheers, Alan

From: Meagan Walters <mwalters@kaipara.govt.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, 16 June 2026 12:20 PM

To: arwatson@xtra.co.nz; 'Juliane Chetham' <juliane@chethamconsulting.nz>; Craig Jepson <cjepson@kaipara.govt.nz>; Gordon Lambeth <glambeth@kaipara.govt.nz>

Subject: Officer's Right of Reply - Ecosystems & Indig. Biodiversity Hearing

Importance: High

Morena

At the end of the ECO&IB hearing, the Panel indicated that they would give some more thought to whether they would issue any direction on:

- 1) engaging further with submitters on options to give effect to NPS-IB; and
- 2) pre-hearing meetings on infrastructure chapter.

The reporting officer has requested that I confirm whether you intend to issue in directions following Hearing 17 in relation to:

1. Pre-hearing meetings on the Infrastructure Chapter, including to help confirm relationship with other chapters. The reporting officer indicated that this is not necessary as intent is to do this regardless, but a minute could be issued directing this can be done as was done in Far North.
2. Engaging with submitters on specific provisions to give effect to the NPS-IB (mainly ECO-P2) to inform the right of reply for Hearing 17. Again, the reporting officer indicated that is this not necessary if we keep this relatively informal but a minute may be preferable if this is more formal (e.g. Joint Witness Statement as suggested by DOC, noting planning evidence was limited to DOC and Northpower).

Also, rather than me sending you another separate email, you may recall that at the end of the Natural Features and Landscapes hearing there was a brief discussion with Ben Lee about extending the Right of Reply timeframe for ECO&IB, Natural Character and Natural Features and Landscapes to 4-5 weeks as Ben is going to be overseas for a couple of weeks. Can you please confirm that you are happy for the ROR for all 3 of these topics should be available by say 13 July (this is 5 weeks from the NFL hearing date).

Many thanks!

Meagan Walters

Policy and Planning Administrator | Kaiwhakarite Kaupapa Here, Māhere

Kaipara District Council, Private Bag 1001, Dargaville 0340

DDI: +6494399262 **Mob:** +6421392218 **Freephone:** 0800 727 059

mwalters@kaipara.govt.nz | council@kaipara.govt.nz | www.kaipara.govt.nz

