BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT HEARING PANEL
APPOINTED BY TASMAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

IN THE MATTER	of the Resource Management Act 1991
AND	
IN THE MATTER	of a Streamlined Planning Process under s 80B of the Act
AND	
IN THE MATTER	of Proposed Change 1 to the Tasman Regional Policy Statement and Proposed Plan Change 81 to the Tasman Resource Management Plan

MEMORANDUM OF COUNSEL FOR TASMAN DISTRICT COUNCIL REGARDING ENLARGEMENT OF SPP DECISION-MAKING TIMEFRAME

20 October 2026

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MAY IT PLEASE THE PANEL:

1. On 17 September 2026 the Tasman District Council requested an extension to the time frame set down in the Minister's direction (**Direction**) under cl 78(4)(g) Schedule 1 RMA for the completion the Streamlined Planning Process for C1 and PC81. Materially, it requested an additional 40 working days to the 240 working days specified in the Direction. A copy of the letter making that request is attached as Appendix 1.

2. In general terms, the enlargement was sought given the number of submissions received on PC81, to allow more time for the Panel to deliberate and prepare their recommendations and ultimately for Council to make a decision on those recommendations under cl 86 Schedule 1 RMA.

3. On 16 October 2026 the responsible Minister wrote to TDC and granted the request, meaning the process must now be completed by 18 June 2027 (**Amended Direction**).

4. Council understands the Amended Direction will be gazetted this week. In the meantime, a copy of the Minister's letter is attached to this memorandum as Appendix 2.

5. Consequently, TDC suggest consideration be given to amending the timetable set down by Minute 1.

6. At the time of writing this memorandum the Council considers Hearing Stream 1 (**HS1**) and Hearing Stream 2 (**HS2**) should proceed as timetabled, given the s 42A reports have been delivered and progress toward those hearings is underway.

7. Thus, TDC requests consideration be given to rescheduling the hearings from Hearing Stream 3 (**HS3**) on.

8. Subject to the availability of the Panel, TDC's preferred option is:

    8.1. Move the Hearing Stream 3 hearing, set down for three days, to the dates presently allocated to Hearing Stream 4 (**HS4**) in the first two weeks of February.

8.2. HS4 be reallocated to the four days set aside for Hearing Stream 5 (**HS5**) at the start of March. It is noted both HS4 and HS5 have been allocated four hearing days.

8.3. HS5 be heard in late March or April.

9. The hearing timetable in Minute 1 is reproduced below with the potential amendments marked up in red:

Hearing Stage	Dates
1 - Preliminary matters • Scope of original and further submissions • Late submissions • Implications of new legislation and changes to national direction • Hearing allocation and associated procedural directions	3 November 2026 *Venue still to be confirmed*
2 – Change 1 to the RPS	10 – 12 November 2026 *Venue still to be confirmed*
3 – PC81 – Urban growth framework • Objectives • Policies • Definitions • Non-site-specific methods • Design matrix • MDRZ standards • Road traffic noise overlay • Deferred zoning framework • Infrastructure framework • General transport provisions • Any district-wide provisions	~~15-18 December 2026~~ 2 – 3, 10 and 22 February 2027 *Venue still to be confirmed*
4 – PC81 - Residential growth areas and rezonings • Richmond • Māpua • Motueka • Wakefield • Brightwater • Tākaka • Outline spatial plans • Site-specific methods • Site-specific transport issues	~~2-3,10 and 22 February 2027~~ 1 – 4 March 2027

5 – PC81 - Other
• Commercial and industrial growth areas
  • Commercial rezonings
  • Mixed business
  • Light industrial
  • Centres hierarchy
• Worker accommodation
• Stringer Road Papakāinga
• Any residual Papakāinga matters
• Outstanding matters
	~~1-4 march 2027~~
	Late March or April
	[TBC - Subject to Panel availability]

10. It is submitted the suggested amendments to the timetable would still allow additional time for Panel deliberations and release of its recommendations, along with consideration of those recommendations and determination by the elected members under cl 86. Should HS5 be rescheduled to be heard in late March or April this would defer that hearing by around half the number of additional working days that have been 'added' to the process.

11. To avoid any doubt, TDC records that it is open to alternative amendments to the timetable should the Panel consider a different approach to the Amended Direction is appropriate.

12. The Panel will appreciate that preparations for HS3, including the drafting of the s 42A report and briefing of evidence in support is underway. Likewise, the briefing of the HS4 evidence is in train. It is therefore requested that a decision on this request for an enlargement is made before the HS1 hearing, which would allow resources to be reallocated should there be changes to the timetable.

Date 20 October 2026



C P Thomsen / A A Yardley

Counsel for Tasman District Council

Appendix 1 – Letter from Tasman District Council to Hon Chris Bishop dated 17 September 2026

tasman district council | Te Kaunihera o te tai o Aorere

Office of the Mayor
Email mayor@tasman.govt.nz
Phone 03 543 8444

17 September 2026

Hon Chris Bishop
Minister Responsible for RMA Reform
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Tēnā koe Minister

Request for extension to the timeframe for notifying decisions on Plan Change 81 and Change 1 to the Tasman Regional Policy Statement

Firstly, thanks for enabling us to proceed with plan change 81 and of part plan change 84. With the impending El Nino, plan change 84 will ensure existing irrigators aren't exposed to the risk of economic losses through water restrictions caused by over abstraction of two important aquifers.

I am writing on behalf of Tasman District Council to respectfully request an extension to the total time period for completing the Streamlined Planning Process for Plan Change 81 to the Tasman Resource Management Plan and Change 1 to the Tasman Regional Policy Statement.

The Resource Management (Direction to Tasman District Council to Enter the Streamlined Planning Process for Plan Change 81 to the Tasman Resource Management Plan and Change 1 to the Tasman Regional Policy Statement) Notice 2026 provides that the total time period within which the Streamlined Planning Process must be completed is no later than 240 working days after the Direction in the New Zealand Gazette takes effect.

Council is seeking an additional 40 working days, equivalent to approximately two months, beyond the 240-working-day period. This extension is necessary to ensure that the hearing process is procedurally fair, efficient, and capable of properly considering the scale and complexity of submissions received.

Plan Change 81 has attracted 274 submissions, comprising 1,189 individual submission points. This is a substantial volume of material for the independent hearing panel, council officers, submitters, and expert witnesses to address. Given the number and range of submission points, and the likelihood of cross-examination of experts, the hearing of submissions is expected to require significantly more time than originally anticipated.

The hearing panel has indicated that the hearing of submissions will be divided into five separate hearings. Hearings 1 and 2 are being scheduled for November, Hearing 3 is scheduled for December, and Hearing 4 (the largest) and Hearing 5 starting in February due to the availability of panel members. This means that the hearing programme will necessarily be split by the Christmas and New Year period. Under the current timeframe very little time will remain for the Panel to make recommendations and for the Council to come together and make its final decisions.

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In addition, the delay in the appointment of the two ministerial hearing panel members meant that the Chair was unable to confirm a timetable for procedural matters and hearing dates until this week. Panel member availability across December and January is also constrained, with at least one panel member unavailable in each of those weeks.

Council remains committed to progressing Plan Change 81 and Change 1 as efficiently as possible, while ensuring that submitters are afforded a fair opportunity to be heard and that the hearing panel has adequate time to consider the evidence, submissions, and reporting requirements.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that you approve an extension of 40 working days to the total time period for completing the Streamlined Planning Process for Plan Change 81 and Change 1 to the Tasman Regional Policy Statement.

An additional issue has arisen with the summary of decisions requested (SDR), and consequently the opportunity for further submissions (see steps 5 and 6 of the Direction). One party wrote to Council and identified errors in the SDR they alleged would prejudice them prior to the close of further submissions (submitter 160). Several other parties pointed to errors in the SDR in their further submissions (submitters 147, 246 and 261). Council considered these points and determined it would be appropriate to amend the SDR and provide a targeted opportunity for further submissions on the affected submissions to ensure fairness and accuracy. The amended SDR was notified on 15 September and further submissions (on the affected submissions only) are due by 5pm 29 September 2026.

Under cl 80 Tasman District Council requests an amendment to the Direction to enlarge the time for the SDR to be publicly notified and for further submissions on account of the steps taken above. It proposes the timeframes in steps 5 and 6 be deleted.

The requested amendments to steps 5 and 6 are necessary to align the Direction with steps taken at the request of a small number of submitters to ensure fairness. It is Council's view that the amendment has no more than a minor effect in accordance with cl 80(4) as the requested amendment will not impact completion of Plan Change 81 and Change 1 within the original time under the Direction or, if the requested extension is granted, that timeframe. The process will therefore continue to achieve an expeditious planning process that is proportionate to the complexity and significance of the planning issues being considered, per s 80B(1).

Accordingly, Tasman District Council requests two amendments to the Streamlined Planning Process:

1. An extension of 40 working days to the total time period for completing the Streamlined Planning Process for Plan Change 81 and Change 1 to the Tasman Regional Policy Statement.
2. Deletion of the timeframes in steps 5 and 6 of the Direction.

Nāku noa, nā



Tim King
Mayor of Tasman
Te Koromatua o te tai o Aorere

Appendix 2 – Letter from Hon Chris Bishop to Tasman District Council dated 16 October 2026

Hon Chris Bishop

Attorney-General
Minister of Housing
Minister for Infrastructure
Minister Responsible for RMA Reform
Minister of Transport
Associate Minister of Finance

16 October 2026

CB-COR3316

Tim King
Mayor of Tasman
Tasman District Council
By email: mayor@tasman.govt.nz

Dear Tim,

Decision to grant your request to amend and extend timeframes for the PC81/C1 Streamlined Planning Process

Thank you for your letter of 17 September 2026 requesting that I amend the Direction for the Streamlined Planning Process (SPP) for Plan Change 81 to the Tasman Resource Management Plan and Change 1 to the Tasman Regional Policy Statement.

I have decided to grant your requests for an additional 40 working days and for the internal processing timeframes for further submissions to be removed.

My reasons are:

a. to ensure a robust and procedurally fair consideration of submissions and evidence, the additional 40 working days are reasonable in light of constraints on the availability of Tasman District Council's appointees and the remaining steps in the process. The revised timeframe remains expeditious and proportionate to the complexity and significance of the planning issues being considered.

b. that removal of the internal timeframes for further submissions accommodates the corrective renotification process undertaken by TDC following errors in the summary of submissions, to ensure procedural fairness.

I nevertheless encourage TDC to maintain momentum in completing the SPP, particularly in the context of the wider transition to the new resource management system.

The SPP will now need to be completed by 18 June 2027. An amendment notice will be published in the Gazette shortly reflecting these changes. In accordance with clause (vi) of the Statement of Expectations, please also update this information on your website.

Yours sincerely,



Hon Chris Bishop
Minister Responsible for RMA Reform