
MINUTE 7 OF THE PANEL CONVENER

Further directions and second conference [FTAA-2603-1186] 16 July 2026

[1] A conference was held on 30 June 2026 with the applicant, Kā Rūnaka, local authorities and administering agencies.

[2] At the conclusion of the conference, I decided that the application was not ready to be passed on to the expert panel. The reasons for this are set out in a Minute dated 1 July 2026, where directions were also given to place the applicant and other participants in the best position to assist the panel, once appointed, through comprehensive reporting on the application.

[3] The directions made are set out below:

- (a) The applicant, having conferred with the local authorities and administering agencies, will:
 - (i) scope the information gaps and the timeframe for production of further information;
 - (ii) detail any arrangements to meet with the local authorities and administering agencies as part of the above process;
 - (iii) giving reasons, identify any matters on which the applicant does not agree to produce further information.
- (b) Kā Rūnaka and the Applicant will file an agreed, amended set of conditions.

[4] In response, the applicant filed a memorandum dated 15 July 2026. To the extent that the memorandum traverses the applicant's prior engagement with the other conference participants, this is not a matter on which I need to comment.

At this stage, in the fast-track context, a key indicator of successful engagement is the absence of information gaps, rather than the absence of a contest. Disagreement on the merits of the project is anticipated.

Disclaimers – Code of Conduct – Curriculum Vitae

[5] The applicant, as directed, has produced statements from 21 experts qualifying the basis for their reports. Although the statements are strictly evidence rather than correspondence, they are saved under the tab ‘Correspondence to the panel convener’ found here: [Correspondence to the panel convener](#).

Second conference

[6] The second conference will be held on **22 July 2026 at 10am**. An MS Teams invite will be sent out shortly.

Attendances

[7] While they are welcome to attend the conference, attendance is not required from Kā Rūnaka, which has settled its interest in this application, and, as directed, has filed with the applicant an agreed set of conditions, nor from Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (and the Māori Heritage Council), which has confirmed that there are no information gaps.

[8] The attendance of the applicant, the local authorities and the Department of Conservation is requested.

Principal issues in contention

[9] The applicant agrees to provide by 10 August 2026 most of the further information identified by the Otago Regional Council and Queenstown Lakes

District Council.¹ This is not the applicant's position in relation to the Department of Conservation's request for further information. The applicant characterises several aspects of this request as reflecting a difference in expert opinion, rather than a gap in information.

[10] It is my expectation that by 10 August, the technical experts engaged by the applicant, QLDC and NZTA will have met to discuss and preferably agree on the content of the Integrated Transport Assessment. While this is proposed by the applicant's expert, Mr Andy Carr², no arrangement is recorded in the applicant's memorandum. It is likely that this will be the subject matter of further directions because the scope of the Assessment may have an important bearing on the extent of the project's benefits.

[11] Using the applicant's revised list at paragraph [55] of the memorandum as a starting point,³ the Department of Conservation, Otago Regional Council and Queenstown Lakes District Council are to file memoranda:

- (a) identifying:
 - (i) the likely principal issues in contention; and
 - (ii) those issues capable of resolution through conditions of approval.
- (b) detailing any arrangements to meet with the local authorities and administering agencies as part of the above process; and
- (c) proposing efficient processes to enable the panel to understand, resolve or narrow the scope of any likely issues and indicate how these processes may be accounted for under the decision timeframe.

¹ Memorandum, Appendix A.

² Carriageway Consultants Ltd

³ The participants are not bound to do so if they find that the issues are not a helpful starting point.

Directions

[12] By **21 July 2026**, the Department of Conservation, Otago Regional Council and Queenstown Lakes District Council will file memoranda responding to paragraph [11].

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane'.

Jane Borthwick

Panel convener for the purpose of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

