BEFORE THE PANEL CONVENER

IN THE MATTER of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (**FTAA**)

AND

IN THE MATTER of an application by Golden Ridge Farm Limited, Golden Ridge Park Limited, Industre Property Rua Limited, Southpark Agri Development Limited under section 42 of the FTAA for the Southern Links SL1 development

APPLICATION NO. FTAA-2609-1294

MEMORANDUM FROM THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF CONSERVATION RESPONDING TO MINUTE 2 OF THE PANEL CONVENER

Dated 10 November 2026

Barrister Instructed:
Jeremy Prebble
[redacted]

Shona Bradley Legal Services Manager Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai Telephone: [redacted] Email: [redacted]	David Greaves Fast Track Project Lead Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai Wellington Phone: [redacted] Email: [redacted]

Introduction

1. This Memorandum is filed on behalf of the Director-General of Conservation (**DG**), in response to the Panel Convener's directions set out in Minute 2 dated 10 November 2026 (the **Minute**) ahead of the Panel Convener's Conference to be held on 24 November 2026 at 10:00 am.

2. The Department of Conservation (**DOC** or **the Department**) is the relevant administering agency in respect of approvals sought by Golden Ridge Farm Limited, Golden Ridge Park Limited, Industre Property Rua Limited, Southpark Agri Development Limited (the **Applicant**) under s 42(4) of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the **Act**) in relation to:
   a. a wildlife approval, as defined in Schedule 7 clause 1, under s 42(4)(h).

3. A wildlife approval has been sought in relation to the salvage, handling and relocation of lizards that may be found on the Site.

4. We note the Department is not identified as a person for attending the first conference (para [4]). However, the Department is the administering agency for the wildlife approval sought under s 42(4)(h), so will attend and respond to the application as required by the legislation (noting ss 51 and 53 in particular).

Confirmation of attendance at forthcoming conference

5. The DG confirms her representatives will attend the Panel Convener's conference. Attendees will be:

   a. Jeremy Prebble, Hawkestone Chambers, [redacted]

   b. David Greaves, Fast Track Project Lead, [redacted]

Comment on matters listed at paragraph [6] of the Minute

6. The DG advises as follows:

   a. The Department has reviewed the information that has been provided with the application documents and has concluded that there are no significant gaps that will prevent the efficient processing of the Wildlife approval.

   b. With regard to consultation, the applicant first contacted DOC regarding its substantive application on the 26th of May 2026. A meeting between the Applicant and DOC occurred on the 26th of June 2026, where the applicant provided an overview presentation, with subsequent meetings undertaken to

discuss the residential and industrial portions of the project separately. DOC provided a formal pre-lodgement consultation summary on the 12th of August 2026, this was further updated and again provided to the applicant on the 25th of August 2026. The reason that the pre-lodgement consultation summary was updated was because on the 14th of August 2026, the Applicant indicated a desire to include a Wildlife approval within its FTAA application, rather than via the business and usual ('BAU') process, as initially indicated.

c. The application has a moderate level of complexity in respect of the conservation approvals listed above;

d. With regard to the Wildlife approval, DOC is of the opinion that the principal matters to be addressed are the appropriate management of lizards through their identification and handling on the Site, to the appropriateness of the relocation site and any mitigations necessary to ensure that adverse effects are adequately addressed;

e. If there are issues in contention or a need to consider proposed conditions, including draft management plans, then DOC considers these could be addressed through discussions and, if necessary, expert conferencing;

f. The Department notes that the applicant has provided a number of draft management plans and proposed conditions with regard to the applicable resource consents. DOC has undertaken a high-level review of the documentation and considers that they are generally 'fit for purpose'. It is anticipated that further refinement of the documents can be facilitated between the parties without considerable time or resource requirements;

g. DOC is not aware of any changes made to the Application since lodgement. Should it be determined that changes have been made, the Department wishes to engage with the Applicant to discuss them;

h. The DG considers the default timeframe would be sufficient for the conservation approval components of this Project, as they are of moderate legal, evidential, and factual complexity.

7. The following paragraphs expand on this advice and address the matters in Schedule 1 of the Minute.

Complexity

8. The DG has reviewed Schedule 1 and advises:

    a. This application does not raise novel or untested legal issues;

    b. The Application requires consideration of the interface between multiple statues and the Act, noting, in a fast-track context this is not unusual;

    c. The application requires (and the applicant has provided) expert assessments and reports across multiple fields with corresponding complex analysis of technical and scientific subject matter;

    d. The Wildlife approval sought is assessed as being of moderate complexity, noting the Applicant has provided information about potential lizard release sites that requires further consideration.

9. In summary, the DG considers the complexity of this project is **moderate** as it relates to the conservation approvals. The DG is not able to advise on the resource consent applications sought.

Issues

10. No issues have arisen with the Applicant during pre-lodgement and post-lodgement consultation and engagement.

11. The DG is not aware of any statutory process that coincides with the 30-working day period.

Panel membership

12. The DG considers it appropriate for the Panel Convener to appoint a panel member with relevant ecological expertise, including understanding of effects on freshwater, bird/bat, wildlife, and terrestrial flora ecological values. This will assist with decision making on both the Wildlife approval and the various resource consents required.

13. Subject to including a panel member with the above expertise, the DG does not consider it is necessary to appoint members beyond the default number for consideration of the DOC approvals. The DG acknowledges that other matters may warrant appointment of additional panel members.

Timeframe for Panel decision

14. The DG considers the default timeframe would be sufficient for the wildlife approval and complex freshwater fisheries components of this Project, as they are of moderate legal, evidential, and factual complexity.

15. The DG anticipates that advice on appropriate timeframes to decide the resource consent components of the Project will be provided by other attendees at the conference.

16. The DG recommends the timeframe should accommodate any procedural steps required by the Panel, such as additional information requests or expert conferencing and/ or conditions workshops if appropriate.

17. It will be for the Panel, once appointed, to determine what procedural steps are appropriate once key issues have been identified. The DG considers it unlikely a hearing would be required for the DOC approvals components of the Project.

Other matters

18. The DG's representatives will be happy to elaborate as they are able at the conference.

19. The DG confirms willingness to continue to engage with the Applicant as well as the other parties to progress this application.

Counsel for Director-General of Conservation

Date: 17 November 2026