

File ref: BRF-6639 / FTAA-2505-1059

26 August 2025

To: Kevin Kearney (Port Otago Limited)
Southern Link Property Limited
Email: s 9(2)(a)

CC: Polly Smith
Mitchell Daysh Limited
Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Kevin

Notice of Decisions on an application for referral of the Southern Link Inland Port project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

This notice of decisions is for an application received from Southern Link Property Limited (the applicant) for referral of the Southern Link Inland Port project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) that has been accepted by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) under section 21 and referred under section 26.

The project is described as being to establish and operate an inland port / logistics hub to service Port Otago at 270-292 Dukes Road North, North Taieri (legally described as Part Section 9 Block V East Taieri Survey District, Part Section 10 Block V East Taieri Survey District, & Deposited Plan 5579 East Taieri Survey District).

The project comprises:

- a. a rail siding to enable a rail freight shuttle service to Port Chalmers and the wider rail network
- b. up to 80,000 m² of high stud warehousing (chilled and ambient)
- c. a truck canopy and unloading area
- d. a 5-hectare container depot facility
- e. up to 5 hectares of container terminal for storage of full containers including up to 1,500 refrigerated container charging ports

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- f. break bulk storage facilities
- g. road widening and upgrades to the Dukes Road rail crossing; and
- h. ancillary activities to support the above, including earthworks, construction of the rail siding, site access, internal roadways and parking, hardstand areas, landscaping, buildings for storage, administration and maintenance facilities, and associated infrastructure and works including measures necessary to manage stormwater and stabilise the site.

The project is intended to be delivered in three construction stages, with initial infrastructure and facilities built within 12-18 months post-approval, expanded container storage and warehousing added within 2-5 years, and further development occurring over 5-10+ years as demand grows. The applicant intends to lodge one substantive application for all stages of the project.

The project will require the proposed approvals under a specified Act:

- a. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).

The project can only be accepted if the Minister is satisfied the criteria in section 22 is met, which includes being satisfied the project is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional or national benefits and referring the project to the fast-track approvals process would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes and is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process.

Decision on referral application

The Minister has decided to accept the referral application for the whole project as he is satisfied it meets the criteria in section 22 (s 21(1)(c)) and to refer the project to the fast-track approvals process under section 26(2)(a).

Reasons for accepting referral application

The Minister is satisfied the project:

- a. is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional or national benefits; and
- b. referring the project to the fast-track approvals process –
 - i. would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes; and
 - ii. is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process.

The Minister is satisfied the project is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional or national benefits as it:

- a. is an infrastructure project that would have significant regional benefits because it:
 - has been identified as a priority project in a local government strategy, specifically the Future Development Strategy for Dunedin 2024-2054 jointly prepared by DCC and ORC [section 22(2)(a)(i)]
 - will deliver new regionally significant infrastructure by addressing critical capacity constraints at Port Otago, and it has secured \$8.2 million in funding from the Regional Infrastructure Fund [section 22(2)(a)(ii)]
 - will deliver significant economic benefits in the Otago region, including regional investment of up to \$100 million (86 per cent within Otago), the creation of over 550 FTE construction jobs and 55 ongoing roles, improved freight efficiency and logistics, reduced road maintenance costs, strengthened supply chain resilience, and enhanced productivity for KiwiRail and Port Otago [section 22(2)(a)(iv)]
 - will support the Otago region's primary industries by improving logistics for agriculture and forestry goods [section 22(2)(a)(v)]
 - will support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by enabling a significant shift of freight from road to rail [section 22(2)(a)(vii)]
 - will provide infrastructure that could support recovery from natural hazards and climate-related events [section 22(2)(a)(viii)]
 - will address significant environmental issues, specifically climate change, through its contributions to emissions reduction and climate resilience [section 22(2)(a)(ix)]
 - is consistent with local or regional planning documents, including spatial strategies, specifically Dunedin City Council's Future Development Strategy 2024-2054 [section 22(2)(a)(x)].

The Minister is satisfied that referring the project to the fast-track approvals process:

- b. would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes because:
 - the project area's rural zoning and classification as highly productive land would likely require a plan change to progress the project under standard RMA processes, which is typically a detailed and resource-intensive process
 - the time frames under the Act are significantly shorter than under the RMA
 - the Act precludes public and limited notification
 - appeals under the Act are only to the High Court rather than the Environment Court and are limited to points of law.

- c. is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process because the project is neither novel in the New Zealand context nor beyond the scope of what a panel would typically assess under the RMA.

The Minister is satisfied that there is no reason he must decline the project under section 21(3).

Specified matters for accepted referral application

The following person who lodged the referral application is the person authorised to lodge a substantive application for the project under section 27(2): Southern Link Property Limited.

The Minister has not set a specific deadline for lodging the substantive application under section 27(3)(b)(i). However, in accordance with section 28(3)(d)(ii), the application must be lodged no later than 26 August 2027, which is two years from the date of this notice of decisions.

The persons or groups from whom a panel must invite comments from in addition to any specified in section 53 (s27(3)(b)(iii): the Chief Executive of NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi.

If you have any queries about this notice of decisions letter, please email referral@fasttrack.govt.nz and include the name of the Application Lead – Ashiley Sycamore.

If you have any queries about the substantive process, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz, or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 225 537).

Yours sincerely



Ilana Miller

General Manager, Delivery and Operations

cc: Written notice for all projects under section 28(1):

anyone invited to comment on the referral application under section 17:

- relevant local authorities – Dunedin City Council and Otago Regional Council
- Minister for the Environment

- relevant portfolio Ministers – Minister of Climate Change, Associate Minister of Transport, Minister for Rail, Minister for the South Island
- relevant administering agencies – Ministry for the Environment
- Māori groups identified in the list provided to the Minister – Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu, Te Rūnanga o Moeraki, Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki, Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou, Te Rūnanga o Awarua, Hokonui Rūnanga, Waihōpai Rūnaka, Te Rūnanga o Ōraka-Aparima, Te Ao Mārama Incorporated, Aukaha
- any other person – Chief Executive of NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi, Chief Executive of KiwiRail, Chief Executive of Port Otago Limited, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Economic Growth.

cc: Written notice where the Minister accepts the application and refers the project (s28(2)):

- the Panel Convener (including all the related information received by the Minister)
- the EPA (including all the related information received by the Minister)