



## FTAA-2511-1126: Application received for referral of the project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – Stage 1 decisions

### Project Name: Powerhouse

Date submitted:	23 January 2026	Tracking #: BRF-00124	
Security level:	In-Confidence	MfE priority:	Urgent

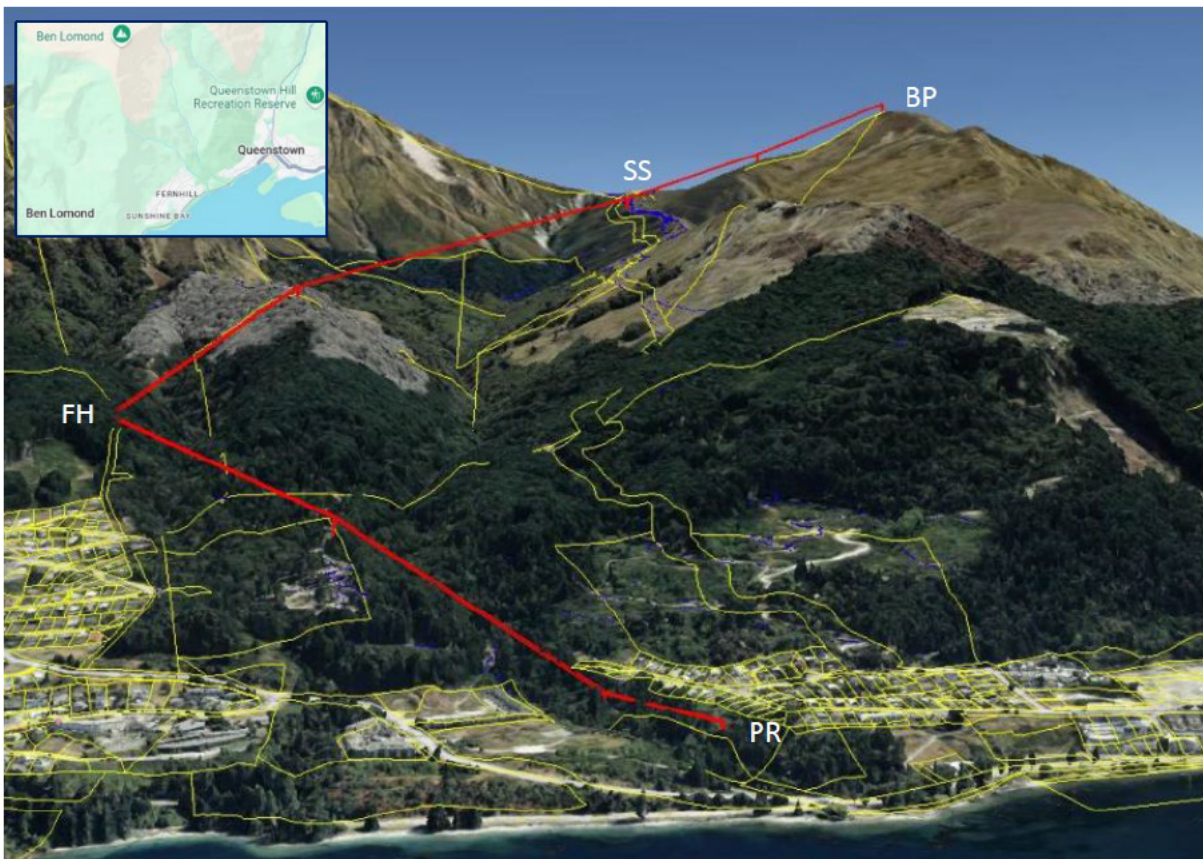
	<b>Action sought:</b>	<b>Response by:</b>
To Hon Chris Bishop, Minister for Infrastructure	Decisions on recommendations in Table A	30 January 2026

Actions for Minister's Office staff	<b>Return</b> the signed briefing to: <a href="mailto:FTAreferrals@mfe.govt.nz">FTAreferrals@mfe.govt.nz</a> <b>Send</b> email to Ministers to invite written comments
Number of appendices: 3	Appendices: 1. Statutory framework summary 2. Application documents for the Powerhouse project 3. List of the Māori groups referred to in section 18(2)

### Ministry for the Environment contacts:

Position	Name	Cell phone	1 <sup>st</sup> contact
Principal Author	Ashley Sycamore		
Acting Manager	Ben Bunting	s 9(2)(a)	
Acting General Manager	Stephanie Frame	s 9(2)(a)	✓

## Project location



**Image 1:** 3D view of the proposed aerial ropeway from the Powerhouse Reserve station (PR), to the proposed Fernhill Heights residential development (FH), to the Saddle station (SS) and Bowen Peak (BP)

## Key messages

1. This briefing seeks your initial decisions on an application from Bowen Peak Limited (the applicant) to refer the Powerhouse project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) to the fast-track approvals process.
2. At this stage you can either decline an application for the reasons set out section 21, or provide the application to, and invite comments from, the parties identified in section 17. If you do not decline the application, you will receive a further briefing following receipt of comments, to inform your final decision on whether to refer the project.

## Previous application

3. You previously considered a referral application for an earlier iteration of this project in August 2025 (BRF-6250 / FTAA-2502-1025) and declined to refer the application, on the basis that there was insufficient information to inform your referral decision.
4. You agreed with officials' recommendation that the referral application raised substantial concerns about the project's overall feasibility, particularly in relation to three-water servicing, risks associated with natural hazards, a conflict with an arterial bypass, and the viability of the proposed ski field.

## Current application

5. Following your earlier decision, the applicant has submitted a new referral application for

a revised version of the project, supported by additional technical assessments. While some changes to the project description have been made, the project is broadly similar to the earlier version you considered in August 2025. Further detail on these changes is provided below.

6. The application is not proposed as a staged project under the Act. The applicant intends to lodge one substantive application for the project, if successfully referred.
7. For the avoidance of doubt, this application must be treated as a new referral application under the Act.

#### *Summary of changes*

8. In response to concerns about constructability, geotechnical risk, and potential track disruption, the applicant has replaced the previously proposed ground-based funicular railway with an aerial ropeway (pylon-based cable car or funifor) system.
9. The applicant has also removed the conference centre and multi-level car park from the One Mile Powerhouse Reserve that was in the previous application. The current application proposes the establishment of a small-scale retail, hospitality, and tourism precinct in this location.
10. The application includes new technical material on the following matters: architectural design, three waters servicing feasibility, geotechnical, transport, ski area feasibility, ecology, and a cultural strategy.

#### *Project details and location*

11. The project area comprises several sites within the Fernhill, Lake Esplanade, and Ben Lomond area of Queenstown within the Otago region. A summary of the titles included in the project area is provided in Appendix 25 of the application.
12. The project area comprises both private and public land, and includes the following reserves:
  - a. Ben Lomond Scenic Reserve – managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC)
  - b. Ben Lomond Commonage Recreation Reserve (also known as the One Mile Reserve / Te-Taumata-o-Hakitekura Ben Lomond Reserve) – vested in Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC)
  - c. Queenstown Water Supply Reserve – vested in QLDC.
13. The applicant describes the project as an integrated development to construct and establish a three-stage aerial ropeway network, associated station infrastructure, a residential development, predator free sanctuaries, and tourism activities including a ski field on Bowen Peak, mountain bike park, walking trails, and a retail and hospitality precinct.
14. The project involves:
  - a. three contiguous aerial ropeways, including:
    - i. the Powerhouse Gondola (a capacity of 10 passengers per cabin) to connect the One Mile Powerhouse Reserve to the Saddle Funifor, which provides access to the proposed Fernhill Heights residential development and the proposed predator-free sanctuary
    - ii. the Saddle Funifor (a capacity of 110 passengers per cabin) to connect to the

Fernhill Heights residential development and facilitate access to the proposed tourism activities

- iii. the Bowen Peak Gondola (a capacity of 10 passengers per cabin) to connect Saddle Station to a viewing platform on Bowen Peak and provide access to a new mountain bike park and ski area
  - iv. note: the applicant states the final system types (pylon-based cable car, gondola, or funifor) will be confirmed with any substantive application
  - b. station buildings, aerial ropeway infrastructure, and ancillary development, including:
    - i. Powerhouse Station, being a retail, hospitality, and tourism precinct
    - ii. Fernhill Heights Station, being an integrated retail, hospitality and tourism facility with bus turnaround bay and multi-level carpark
    - iii. Saddle Station, being a two-storey facility with bar/restaurant, retail, guest services, outdoor education rooms, public shelter, and public toilets
    - iv. Bowen Peak Station, being a public viewing platform with shelter and toilets, to provide access to the proposed tourism activities
  - c. a new residential development known as Fernhill Heights on a 52-hectare site, including:
    - i. the construction of 175 alpine-style chalets – each chalet will contain either seven or nine residential apartment units, providing a total of 1,333 residential units with a mix of two-, three-, or four-bedroom apartments
    - ii. provision of five per cent of units as affordable housing and fifty per cent for worker accommodation
    - iii. fee simple and unit title subdivision across the residential units
  - d. new fenced predator-free sanctuaries, including:
    - i. the establishment of the Te Taumata o Hakitekura Predator-free Sanctuary (approximately 290 hectares) located in the upper One Mile and Two Mile Creek catchments
    - ii. the establishment of two sanctuaries within the lower One Mile Reserve (approximately 3 hectares)
    - iii. the removal of wilding pines and the planting of native vegetation
  - e. other new tourism activities, including:
    - i. a ski field on Bowen Peak
    - ii. a mountain bike park and trail
    - iii. walking tracks.
15. The applicant seeks the proposed approvals under specified Acts for the project:
- a. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)
  - b. concessions under the Conservation Act 1987
  - c. approvals/leases under the Reserves Act 1977
  - d. wildlife approvals under the Wildlife Act 1953

- e. archaeological authorities under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.

### **Initial observations and recommendations**

16. We have undertaken initial analysis of the referral application, and this is presented along with our considerations and recommendations in Table A.
17. We have decided the application is complete and complies with section 14 of the Act, as the application complies with section 13 requirements, may be capable of satisfying the criteria in section 22 and does not appear to involve an ineligible activity. The applicable fee and levy have been paid.

### *Project timeline*

18. The indicative project timeline provided by the applicant (in Appendix 16 of the application) anticipates construction commencing around 2029 and continuing until approximately 2053, with development staged over more than two decades. The residential component would be delivered progressively, at a rate of approximately five chalets per year from 2030 to 2053.
19. While the applicant identifies economic and housing-related benefits of the project, we note at this initial stage that these would be realised over an extended timeframe, which may be relevant to your Stage 2 considerations and final decisions on whether the project would deliver significant regional benefits.
20. Officials have discussed this risk with the applicant at pre-application stage, who chose not to alter the project structure or the indicative timeline.
21. Considering the above, we recommend you seek further information under section 20 from the applicant on how the project, having regard to the proposed construction timeline of 2029–2053, would meet the section 22 criteria under the Act, including the stated economic and housing supply benefits.

### *Proposed lease terms*

22. We also note the applicant proposes that the occupation of reserve land would be authorised through a sequence of short-term licences to occupy, totalling 25 years (five years for construction, followed by two 10-year operational licences). The draft licences are included in Appendix 14 of the application. The applicant considers this would not trigger the 50-year threshold relevant to the right of first refusal within the Ngāi Tahu Treaty settlement provisions.
23. Having regard to the above, we recommend you seek further information under section 20 from DOC in their role as the relevant administering agency, on whether the proposed license structure is appropriate for the project.

### *Next steps*

24. Ultimately, we recommend you progress the application to our Stage 2 analysis. This will allow the parties specified under section 17(1) of the Act, as well as those we recommend inviting under section 17(5), to provide their comments. The comments received under section 17, as well as the section 18 Treaty settlements and other obligations report, will be essential to informing our final recommendation and your considerations for the referral decision.
25. Notwithstanding our recommendation to progress the application to our Stage 2 analysis, it is noted that you retain the discretion to decline the application at this initial stage. The

statutory framework summary provided in Appendix 1 details this process. If you consider for any reason that the application should not progress to our Stage 2 analysis, and it should instead be declined at this initial stage, you can select “no” to Option f in the recommendations section under Table A below.

26. If you agree that the referral application should progress to the Stage 2 analysis, we recommend you invite written comments from the parties prescribed in section 17(1) of the Act being:
- a. QLDC and Otago Regional Council as the relevant local authorities
  - b. the Minister for the Environment
  - c. the Minister of Conservation, the Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, the Minister for Tourism and Hospitality, the Associate Minister of Housing, and the Associate Minister of Transport as the other relevant portfolio Ministers
  - d. the Department of Conservation and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga as the relevant administering agencies
  - e. the Māori groups referred to in section 18(2), as listed in Appendix 3.
27. As the project area includes public conservation land, we note you must obtain a report from the Director-General of Conservation in accordance with section 19(1) of the Act.

*Other parties to be invited under section 17(5)*

28. We recommend that you invite written comments from the following parties as additional persons under section 17(5) of the Act. We have outlined the rationale for including each party.
29. *The Chief Executive of Land Information New Zealand and the Minister for Land Information* to confirm whether any approvals are required outside of the fast-track approvals process to undertake commercial recreational activities on a Crown pastoral lease. It is noted that the Ben Lomond Special Lease boundary covers part of the project area.
30. *The Minister for Climate Change* as the applicant considers the project will support climate change mitigation and adaptation, including form mode-shift potential (being ropeway as a transport option) and restoration/revegetation outcomes.
31. It is noted that both the Minister for Land Information and the Minister of Climate Change provided comments on the previous application (FTAA-2502-1025).

## Action sought

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32. Please indicate your decisions on the recommendations in Table A.

## Signature

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Stephanie Frame  
**Acting General Manager, Investment Strategy and Operations**

**Table A: Stage 1 analysis**

	Project Name	Applicant	Project Area		
<b>Project details</b>	Powerhouse (the project)	Bowen Peak Limited (the applicant)  The applicant is a registered NZ Limited Company and is eligible to apply for the approvals sought.	The project area comprises several sites within the Fernhill, Lake Esplanade, and Ben Lomond area of Queenstown within the Otago region. The project involves both private and public land. Refer to Appendix 25 of the application for a summary of the titles and instruments.		
<b>Project description</b>	<p>The applicant describes the project as an integrated development to construct and establish a three-stage aerial ropeway network, associated station infrastructure, a residential development, predator free sanctuaries, and tourism activities including a ski field on Bowen Peak, mountain bike park, walking trails, and a retail and hospitality precinct.</p> <p>The project involves:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. three contiguous aerial ropeways, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the Powerhouse Gondola (a capacity of 10 passengers per cabin) to connect the One Mile Powerhouse Reserve to the Saddle funifor, which provides access to the proposed Fernhill Heights residential development and the proposed predator-free sanctuary</li> <li>ii. the Saddle Funifor (a capacity of 110 passengers per cabin) to connect to the Fernhill Heights residential development and facilitate access to the proposed tourism activities</li> <li>iii. the Bowen Peak Gondola (a capacity of 10 passengers per cabin) to connect Saddle Station to a viewing platform on Bowen Peak and provide access to a new mountain bike park and ski area</li> <li>iv. note: the applicant states the final system types (pylon-based cable car, gondola, or funifor) will be confirmed with any substantive application</li> </ol> </li> <li>b. station buildings, aerial ropeway infrastructure, and ancillary development, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Powerhouse Station, being a retail, hospitality, and tourism precinct</li> <li>ii. Fernhill Heights Station, being an integrated retail, hospitality and tourism facility with bus turnaround bay and multi-level carpark</li> <li>iii. Saddle Station, being a two-storey facility with bar/restaurant, retail, guest services, outdoor education rooms, public shelter, and public toilets</li> <li>iv. Bowen Peak Station, being a public viewing platform with shelter and toilets, to provide access to the proposed tourism activities</li> </ol> </li> <li>c. a new residential development known as Fernhill Heights on a 52-hectare site, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the construction of 175 alpine-style chalets – each chalet will contain either seven or nine residential apartment units, providing a total of 1,333 residential units with a mix of two-, three-, or four-bedroom apartments</li> <li>ii. provision of five per cent of units as affordable housing and fifty per cent for worker accommodation</li> <li>iii. fee simple and unit title subdivision across the residential units</li> </ol> </li> <li>d. new fenced predator-free sanctuaries, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the establishment of the Te Taumata o Hakitekura Predator-free Sanctuary (approximately 290 hectares) located in the upper One Mile and Two Mile Creek catchments</li> <li>ii. the establishment of two sanctuaries within the lower One Mile Reserve (approximately 3 hectares)</li> <li>iii. the removal of wilding pines and the planting of native vegetation</li> </ol> </li> <li>e. other new tourism activities, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. a ski field on Bowen Peak</li> <li>ii. a mountain bike park and trail</li> <li>iii. walking tracks.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>The applicant is seeking the proposed approvals under specified Acts for the project at the substantive stage:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) described in section 42(4)(a) of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act)</li> <li>b. concessions under the Conservation Act 1987 described in section 42(4)(e) of the Act</li> <li>c. approvals/leases under the Reserves Act 1977 described in section 42(4)(e) of the Act</li> <li>d. wildlife approvals under the Wildlife Act 1953 described in section 42(4)(h) of the Act</li> <li>e. archaeological authorities under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 described in section 42(4)(i) of the Act.</li> </ol>				
<b>Consultation undertaken</b>	<b>As required by section 11, the applicant has consulted with:</b>				
	<i>Relevant local authorities</i>	<i>Relevant iwi authorities, hapū and Treaty settlement entities</i>	<i>Ngā hapū o Ngāti Porou / relevant MACA groups</i>	<i>Relevant administering agencies</i>	<i>Holder of land to be exchanged</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Queenstown Lakes District Council</li> <li>– Otago Regional Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu</li> <li>– Te Rūnanga o Moeraki</li> <li>– Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki</li> <li>– Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou</li> <li>– Waihōpai Rūnaka</li> <li>– Te Rūnaka o Awarua</li> <li>– Te Rūnanga o Ōraka-Aparima</li> <li>– Hokonui Rūnanga</li> <li>– Te Ao Mārama</li> <li>– Aukaha</li> </ul>	Not applicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Department of Conservation</li> <li>– Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga</li> </ul>	Not applicable

**Section 22 assessment criteria**

<p><b>The project is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional or national benefits [section 22(1)(a)]</b></p>	<p>You may consider any of the following matters, or any other matters the Minister considers relevant.</p> <p>The applicant considers the project is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional and national benefits, for the reasons outlined below.</p> <p><i>Will deliver new regionally or nationally significant infrastructure or enable the continued functioning of existing regionally or nationally significant infrastructure [s22(2)(a)(ii)]</i>  The applicant states that the project involves developing a multi-stage aerial ropeway system, which they consider to be new transport and tourism infrastructure that is both nationally and regionally significant. The applicant considers the aerial ropeway network meets the definition of nationally significant infrastructure under the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD), specifically under the description of a rapid transit service. The applicant also considers that, under the Partially Operative Otago Regional Policy Statement, both ski area infrastructure and nationally significant infrastructure are identified as regionally significant, and therefore they regard the ropeway system and the associated ski area as regionally significant infrastructure.</p> <p>The applicant further considers that the project has the potential to integrate with a wider ropeway network across the Wakatipu Basin, improving access to Frankton, the airport, and surrounding residential areas. They state that such a network could help reduce congestion on the regionally and nationally significant highway network.</p> <p><i>Will increase the supply of housing, address housing needs, or contribute to a well-functioning urban environment (within the meaning of policy 1 of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020) [s22(2)(a)(iii)]</i>  The project includes a residential development known as Fernhill Heights, comprising 175 chalets that collectively provide 1,333 residential units. The applicant states that the project would make a meaningful contribution to housing supply in the Otago region by providing a large number of units relative to the local market, including key worker and community housing components. They consider that the medium density housing typology, multiple unit configurations within each chalet, and opportunities for additional multiunit options would help meet the needs of first home buyers and essential workers. They also note the potential for Papakāinga housing to be developed with iwi.</p> <p>The applicant considers that the residential development can connect to existing network infrastructure more readily than other urban growth areas, and that its proximity to the Queenstown CBD supports access to employment, services, and recreational opportunities. They state that the project would contribute to a well-functioning urban environment by providing a residential neighbourhood close to established centres, supporting work from home activity, and avoiding the need for new commercial areas. Overall, the applicant considers that the project would positively contribute to Queenstown’s housing availability and a well-functioning urban environment.</p> <p><i>Will deliver significant economic benefits [s22(2)(a)(iv)]</i>  The applicant considers that the project is expected to generate significant economic benefits, with an estimated 1.1 million passengers per year using the Saddle Funifor. They consider that associated sightseeing, biking, and visits to the Te Taumata o Hakitekura Predator Free Sanctuary would contribute to annual revenue of approximately \$147 million. The applicant also identifies employment benefits, including 75 new jobs within the Powerhouse Precinct and around 1,250 jobs linked to activities accessed via the Saddle Funifor, increasing to 1,250–1,500 jobs during winter peaks.</p> <p>The applicant further notes that construction of station buildings, aerial ropeways, and the Fernhill Heights residential development – including 175 chalets over 28 years – would provide ongoing economic activity at the regional level. They acknowledge that although local GDP, employment, and visitor spend effects are sizeable, the extent of nationally significant benefits is sensitive to assumptions such as visitor numbers, staging, and displacement.</p> <p><i>Will support climate change mitigation, including the reduction or removal of greenhouse gas emissions [s22(2)(a)(vii)]</i>  The applicant considers the project may deliver some indirect climate change mitigation benefits through mode-shift potential (being ropeway as a transport option) and restoration/revegetation outcomes. However, they note these benefits are not the primary project drivers.</p> <p><i>Will support climate change adaptation, reduce risks arising from natural hazards, or support recovery from events caused by natural hazards [s22(2)(a)(viii)]</i>  The applicant considers the project may deliver indirect climate benefits through public transport alternatives and native revegetation. They note these benefits are secondary to the project’s primary objectives.</p> <p><i>Will address significant environmental issues [s22(2)(a)(ix)]</i>  The applicant states that largescale wilding pine removal, predator control, and the establishment of several related sanctuaries will address recognised regional ecological issues. The applicant considers that, if these measures are delivered and maintained as intended, they will provide long-term environmental benefits. The applicant views this matter as limited or secondary.</p> <p><i>Is consistent with local or regional planning documents, including spatial strategies [s22(2)(a)(x)]</i>  The applicant states that the project aligns with strategic directions in local and regional planning documents, particularly those relating to housing and economic diversification. They acknowledge, however, that there is tension with provisions that protect Outstanding Natural Landscapes, noting independent advice identifying moderate–high residual landscape effects.</p> <p>The applicant considers that while the project is located outside the current urban growth boundary, these boundaries are largely retrospective and function as containment tools rather than indicators of future growth. They argue that the project is not inconsistent with district growth policies, which allow for extensions to existing urban areas where appropriate. Overall, the applicant concludes that the degree of consistency with planning documents is mixed.</p> <p><i>Any other matters that may be relevant [s22(b)]</i>  The applicant has provided assessment of additional matters that they consider may be relevant to the Minister’s consideration. The applicant states that the project is strongly aligned with the NPS-UD, highlighting integrated transport, housing, and environmental components that they consider an appropriate response to Queenstown’s growth needs. Although the project is located outside the current urban growth boundary, the applicant considers its urban integration, sustainability features, and public benefits to be consistent with the NPS-UD’s intent to support a compact, resilient, and well-functioning urban environment. The applicant also considers the project to be consistent with the intent of the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity, noting that it intends to restore the natural environment and enhance ecological values while enabling carefully managed development within the Te Taumata o Hakitekura landscape.</p>
<p><b>Referring the project to the fast-track approvals process [section 22(1)(b)]</b></p>	<p><i>Would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes [s22(1)(b)(i)]</i>  The applicant considers that referring the project to the fast-track approvals process would streamline delivery by providing a coordinated, timely, and integrated pathway for assessing a complex, multi-component development that might otherwise face a fragmented and prolonged consenting process.</p> <p><i>Is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process [s22(1)(b)(ii)]</i>  The applicant considers that referring the project is unlikely to have a material impact on the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process. The applicant notes that, although the project involves complex matters, these are clearly identified, supported by an initial technical evidence base, and able to be addressed within the fast-track framework without creating undue procedural burden.</p>

<b>Minister invites comments</b>	<p><i>You <b>must</b> copy the application to, and invite written comments from [s17(1)]:</i></p> <p>a. Relevant local authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Queenstown Lakes District Council</li> <li>- Otago Regional Council</li> </ul> <p>b. The Minister for the Environment</p> <p>c. Other relevant portfolio Ministers (and their relevance to the project):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minister of Conservation – as the applicant seeks approvals for the project under the Conservation Act 1987, the Reserves Act 1977, and the Wildlife Act 1953.</li> <li>- Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage – as the applicant seeks archaeological authorities for the project under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.</li> <li>- Minister for Tourism and Hospitality – as the project involves tourism activities in Queenstown including an aerial ropeway network (gondola-based transport system), ski field on Bowen Peak, mountain bike tracks, and walking tracks.</li> <li>- Associate Minister of Housing – as the project includes a residential development known as Fernhill Heights, which proposes 1,333 new residential units in the form of 175 alpine-style chalets.</li> <li>- Associate Minister of Transport – as the project includes an aerial ropeway network (gondola-based transport system), which the applicant intends as an alternative form of transport infrastructure.</li> </ul> <p>d. Relevant administering agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Department of Conservation</li> <li>- Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga</li> </ul> <p>e. The Māori groups identified in Appendix 3.</p>	<p><i>You <b>may</b> copy the application to, and invite written comments from, any other person [s17(5)]:</i></p> <p>We recommend you invite comments from the following additional parties (their relevance to the project is detailed below):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Chief Executive of Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) – to confirm whether any approvals are required outside of the fast-track approvals process to undertake commercial recreational activities on a Crown pastoral lease. It is noted that the Ben Lomond Special Lease boundary covers part of the project area.</li> <li>- The Minister for Land Information – same reason as above. It is noted that the Minister for Land Information provided comments on the previous declined application (FTAA-2502-1025).</li> <li>- The Minister of Climate Change – as the applicant considers the project will support climate change mitigation and adaptation. It is noted that the Minister of Climate Change provided comments on the previously declined application (FTAA-2502-1025).</li> <li>- The Minister for Regional Development</li> <li>- The Minister for Economic Growth</li> </ul>	<p><i>The Minister <b>may</b> request <b>further information</b> about a referral application from the applicant, the relevant local authorities, or the relevant administering agencies to be provided within the time frame specified in the request.</i></p> <p>We recommend you request further information under section 20 from the applicant and DOC (in their capacity as a relevant administering agency) on the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The applicant – further assessment of how the project meets the section 22 criteria under the Act, having specific regard to the indicative construction timeline of 2029–2053 set out in Appendix 16 of the application.</li> <li>- DOC – whether the Licence to Occupy structure proposed by the applicant (refer to Appendix 14 of the application) is appropriate for the project.</li> </ul> <p>To align with the statutory time frame for inviting comments under section 17, we recommend specifying a time frame of 20 working days for the section 20 request.</p>
	<b>Recommendations</b>		
a. <b>Note</b> that section 25 of the Act permits you to decline the referral application without inviting comments from the relevant local authorities, the Minister for the Environment, any relevant Ministers, any relevant administering agencies and the Māori groups identified in the list provided.			Noted
b. <b>Note</b> that you have not yet provided the application to, nor sought any written comments on it from, the parties listed in section 17(1) but that you are required to do so if you do not decline the application under section 21 of the Act.			Noted
c. <b>Note</b> that section 17(5) of the Act permits you to forward an application to, and invite written comments from, any other person.			Noted
d. <b>Note</b> that if comments have been sought and provided within the required time frame you are required to consider it, along with the referral application, before deciding to decline the application.			Noted
e. <b>Note</b> that section 20 of the Act permits you to request further information from the applicant or relevant local authorities or relevant administering agencies at any time before you decide whether to accept or decline an application.			Noted
f. <b>Agree</b> to progress the Powerhouse project to our Stage 2 analysis (invite written comments and request section 18 Treaty report).			Yes / No
g. <b>Agree</b> to provide the application to, and invite written comments from:			
i. Queenstown Lakes District Council and Otago Regional Council as the relevant local authorities under section 17(1)(a)			Yes / No
ii. The Minister for the Environment under section 17(1)(b)			Yes / No
iii. The Minister of Conservation, the Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, the Minister for Tourism and Hospitality, the Associate Minister of Housing, and the Associate Minister of Transport as the other relevant portfolio Ministers under section 17(1)(b)			Yes / No
iv. Department of Conservation (DOC) and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga as the relevant administering agencies under section 17(1)(c)			Yes / No
v. The parties in Appendix 3 as the Māori groups under section 17(1)(d)			Yes / No
vi. Any parties you are required to invite comments from under section 17(1)(d) and (e) who may be subsequently identified			Yes / No
h. <b>Agree</b> to provide the application to and invite written comments from the following additional persons under section 17(5):			
i. The Chief Executive of Land Information New Zealand (LINZ)			Yes / No

ii. The Minister for Land Information	Yes / No
iii. The Minister of Climate Change	Yes / No
iv. The Minister for Regional Development	Yes / No
v. The Minister for Economic Growth	Yes / No
i. <b>Note</b> that section 19(1) of the Act requires you to obtain and consider a report in relation to the use of public conservation land for the project from the Director-General of Conservation.	Noted
j. <b>Agree</b> to seek further information under section 20 from the applicant and DOC on the following matters:	
i. The applicant – further assessment of how the project meets the section 22 criteria under the Act, having specific regard to the indicative construction timeline of 2029–2053 set out in Appendix 16 of the application	Yes / No
ii. DOC (in their role as a relevant administering agency) – whether the Licence to Occupy structure proposed by the applicant is appropriate for the project.	Yes / No
k. <b>Note</b> that you have agreed to delegate to the Secretary for the Environment your responsibility to send all correspondence, other than to Ministers.	Noted
l. <b>Agree</b> to send the email to invite written comments from Ministers.	Yes / No

**Signed:**

Hon Chris Bishop  
**Minister for Infrastructure**

**Date:**

## Appendix 1: Statutory framework summary

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1. You are the sole decision maker for referral applications. If you accept a referral application, then the whole or part of the project will be referred to the fast-track approvals process.
2. If a Treaty settlement, the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011, the Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019, a Mana Whakahono ā Rohe or a joint management agreement provides for consideration of any document or procedural requirements, you must, where relevant:
  - a. give the document the same or equivalent effect through this process as it would have under any specified Act; and
  - b. comply with any applicable procedural requirements.
3. You must decline a referral application if:
  - a. you are satisfied the project does not meet the referral criteria in s22
  - b. you are satisfied the project involves an ineligible activity (s5)
  - c. you consider you do not have adequate information to inform your decision.
4. You may decline an application for any other reason, including those set out in s21(5) and even if the application meets the s22 referral criteria.
5. You can decline an application before or after inviting comments under s17(1). However, if comments have been sought and provided within the required time frame, you must consider them, along with the referral application, before deciding to decline the application.
6. If you do not decline a referral application at this initial stage you must copy the application to, and invite written comments from:
  - a. the relevant local authorities
  - b. the Minister for the Environment and relevant portfolio Ministers
  - c. the relevant administering agencies
  - d. the Māori groups identified by the responsible agency
  - e. the owners of Māori land in the project area (if applicable)
  - f. you may provide the application to and invite comments from any other person.
7. You can request further information from an applicant, any relevant local authority or any relevant administering agency at any time before you decide to decline or accept a referral application (see section 20 of the Act).
8. However, if further information has been sought and provided within the required time frame you must consider it, along with the referral application, before deciding to decline the application.

## **Appendix 2: Application documents for the Powerhouse project**

### Appendix 3: List of the Māori groups referred to in section 18(2)

Name of group	Type of group (section of Act)
Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu	Iwi authority (s18(2)(a)); Treaty settlement entity – Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 (s18(2)(a))
Te Rūnanga o Moeraki	Papatipu Rūnanga (s18(2)(a))
Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki	Papatipu Rūnanga (s18(2)(a))
Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou	Papatipu Rūnanga (s18(2)(a))
Hokonui Rūnanga	Papatipu Rūnanga (s18(2)(a))
Waihōpai Rūnaka	Papatipu Rūnanga (s18(2)(a))
Te Rūnanga o Awarua	Papatipu Rūnanga (s18(2)(a))
Te Rūnanga o Ōraka-Aparima	Papatipu Rūnanga (s18(2)(a))
Aukaha	Entity owned by Papatipu Rūnanga (s18(2)(k))
Te Ao Mārama Incorporated	Entity owned by Papatipu Rūnanga (s18(2)(k))