

FTAA-2604-1216

27 July 2026

Ben Jones
Swordfish Projects Limited
C/o - Briar Belgrave
Barker and Associates

email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Ben

Notice of Decisions on application for referral of the Awanui Links project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

This notice of decisions is for an application received from Swordfish Projects Limited for referral of the Awanui Links project (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 to establish a new concurrent land and subdivision mixed-use development over approximately 123 hectares of rural land located at Telephone Road, Puketaha, within the Waikato District.

The project involves:

1. high-end tourism involving an 18-hole-golf course, which will be centred around a contemporary clubhouse, pro-shop, driving range, wellness centre, fine dining restaurant, and boutique hotel with associated event and conference facilities
2. 70 rural-residential lots each of approximately 3,000 square metres
3. a retirement facility including approximately 137 retirement living units, a mix of independent living villas, a central care facility (up to 50 beds), healthcare and community facilities
4. industrial subdivision for supporting rural industry land use activities ranging from 2300 – 5700 square metres with an approximate total area of 4-5 hectares
5. an approximately 3,000 square metre solar farm
6. planting, ecological restoration, and integrated water features
7. supporting three waters infrastructure and roading.

The applicant seeks the following approvals under the fast-track approvals process to authorise the project:

1. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)
2. wildlife authority under the Wildlife Act 1953.

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 and 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:

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

1. is an infrastructure or development project because it involves the construction of mixed-use development
2. will increase the supply of housing and address housing needs: by providing 70 rural-residential lots and a 137-unit and 50-bed retirement facility.
3. will deliver significant economic benefits (s22(2)(a)(ix)): by providing up to \$189 million to the economy and contributing \$29 million annually to GDP, and creating 260 direct full-time equivalent jobs.

The Minister is satisfied there is no reason they must decline the project under section 21(3) of the Act.

Specified matters for accepted referral application

1. Swordfish Projects Limited who lodged the referral application are specified as the person(s) authorised to lodge a substantive application for the project under section 27(2).
2. In relation to a substantive application for the project:
 - a. A deadline for lodging the application applies under section 27(3)(b)(i), the application must be lodged by two years from the date of issue of this letter.
 - b. The following information must be submitted with the application lodged for the project – s27(3)(b)(ii):
 - i. an assessment of the relevant infrastructure for transport and three waters services that—
 - (1) identifies the existing condition and capacity of that infrastructure; and
 - (2) identifies any upgrades to that infrastructure that are required in connection with the subdivision and the proposed development; and
 - (3) identifies any funding required to carry out those upgrades (including who will provide that funding);
 - (4) contains information on any discussions held, and any agreements made, between the authorised person and the relevant infrastructure provider about the relevant infrastructure (including discussions and agreements about the matters referred to in subparagraphs (1) to (3)).
 - c. The persons or groups from whom a panel must invite comments from in addition to any specified in section 53 – s27(3)(b)(iii):
 - i. Hamilton City Council
 - ii. NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi

Other matters (section 28)

The Minister has directed under section 16(2)(c) that any panel that considers a substantive application for the project must:

1. have particular regard to Te Ture Whaimana;
2. give notice to the Waikato River Authority of the application (which may be fulfilled by an invitation to comment under section 53 of the Act);
3. consider the provisions for appointing hearing commissioners from the register maintained by the Waikato River Authority as they may be applied to the fast-track process;
4. have regard to the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan, including how to provide for continued partnership with Waikato-Tainui (as a consistent theme running through the plan); and
5. consider the detailed information-sharing provisions of the JMAs, as they may be applied to the fast-track process.

If you have any queries about this notice of decisions, please email referral@fasttrack.govt.nz and include the name of the lead contact – Max Gander-Cooper or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 225 537).

Yours sincerely



Stephanie Frame

Manager – Fast-track Operations

cc: Written notice of decisions – s28(1):

the applicant – Swordfish Projects Limited

anyone invited to comment – s17(1):

- relevant local authorities – Waikato District Council, Waikato Regional Council
- Minister for the Environment, Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti, Minister for Māori Development
- relevant portfolio Ministers: Minister of Conservation, Minister of Sport and Recreation, Minister of Tourism of Hospitality, Minister of Energy, Associate Minister of Housing
- relevant administering agencies – Department of Conservation
- Māori groups identified in the s18(2) list provided to the Minister – Te Whakakitenga o Waikato, Ngāti Hauā Iwi Trust, Waikato Raupatu River Trust, Waikato River Authority, Te Haa o te Whenua o Kirikiriroa, Ngāti Wairere
- any other person – Chief Executive of NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi, 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 information received by the Minister – s28(4))
- the EPA (including all the information received by the Minister – s28(4))
- the relevant administering agencies – Department of Conservation