

Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

MINUTE #2 OF THE EXPERT PANEL

Request for suspension and site visit
Waitaha Hydro [FTAA-2505-1069]

19 November 2025

Request to suspend

[1] By Memorandum dated 18 November 2025, and in accordance with section 64(1) of the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024 (FTAA), the Applicant's Agent made a written request to the EPA that the processing of the substantive application be suspended.

[2] The reasons given in support of the suspension request are as follows:

- (a) There was a lengthy panel overview conference on 14 November, providing the panel with plenty of detail as to the project for it to consider.
- (b) Yesterday the panel completed its site visit which, given the project's location took considerable travel time.
- (c) Last night the Applicant provided updated information to the panel, including in relation to the recently released decisions version of the Te Tai Poutini Plan.
- (d) That now having undertaken the site visit, and having additional information, Westpower would like the panel to have some additional time to consider the project before parties are invited to comment and the process commences in earnest. Westpower considers that taking that time now will make the whole process going forward more efficient and effective.
- (e) Westpower's request is made solely on the basis that the panel continues to work during the suspension and, to avoid any doubt, Westpower will

continue to cover all actual and reasonable cost recovery by the panel during this time.

[3] Pursuant to section 64(3), the Expert Panel (Panel) may, at its discretion, suspend the processing of the Application. Whilst the discretion is broadly framed, the Panel must nevertheless exercise its discretion in a principled way, including by reference to the purpose of the FTAA.

[4] Having considered the reasons for the requested suspension, the Panel considers that granting the suspension sought is consistent with the purpose of the FTAA.

[5] The Applicant has requested that, at this time, the suspension would be for a period of five working days. Unless advised otherwise, processing of the application will resume on Wednesday 26 November 2025.

[6] As a consequence of the request being made the date for inviting comments will now be made on Wednesday 26 November 2025, with invitations to comments being due on 14 January 2025, and all other dates shifting out 5 working days.

[7] In accordance with section 64 of the FTAA, the Panel grants the request to suspend processing of the substantive application, effective from 11:59pm Tuesday 18 November 2025. The Panel authorises the EPA to give notice of this decision to the Applicant, and all persons or groups invited to provide comment under section 53 of the FTAA (at this stage the statutory parties).

[8] A copy of the request is available on the FTAA website:
<https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/projects/waitaha-hydro/correspondence>

Site Visit

[9] The Panel attended a site visit on 17 November 2025 viewing the site and surrounds both from the air and on the ground. The Panel wishes to extend their thanks to all those that assisted with the site visit.



Vicki Morrison-Shaw

Waitaha Hydro Expert Panel Chair