

Hon James Meager

Minister for the South Island
Minister for Hunting and Fishing
Minister for Youth
Associate Minister of Transport



05 AUG 2026

Cindy Robertson
Expert Panel Chair
By email: substantive@fasttrack.govt.nz

Fast-track Approvals Act substantive application – Southern Link Inland Port

Dear Cindy

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Southern Link Property Limited (SLPL)'s substantive application under the *Fast-track Approvals Act 2024* (FTAA 2024) for the Southern Link Inland Port project (the project).

This letter provides comments in my capacity as Minister for the South Island and Associate Minister for Transport.

I understand SLPL has applied to the Environmental Protection Authority for fast-track approval to establish and operate the Southern Link Inland Port at 270–292 Dukes Road North, North Taieri.

The project is intended to service Port Otago and improve freight movement between Mosgiel, Port Chalmers and the wider rail and logistics network. The proposal includes a new rail siding off the Taieri Branch Line, warehousing, container depot and terminal facilities, break bulk hardstand areas, internal roading, stormwater infrastructure and site works. The project is proposed to be delivered in three stages over an indicative 10-year period.

SLPL has provided an updated Economic Assessment, prepared by Savvy Consulting, to support its application for the project:

- Construction of the project is estimated to generate up to \$191.30 million in gross value added over the three development stages.
- The assessment estimates that construction will create or sustain up to 1,489 gross full-time equivalent (FTE) roles across a wide range of sectors over the construction period.
- Once fully developed and operational, the Inland Port is expected to support 125 FTE roles on site, including 104 new high-value jobs.
- The assessment states that the Inland Port is likely to reduce overall logistics costs for importers and exporters using Port Chalmers. It also estimates that Stage 1 will initially shift about 15,000 one-way heavy vehicle movements from road to rail each year.

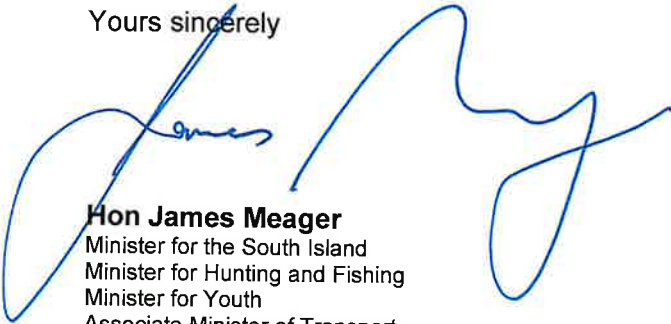
The site is strategically located near Mosgiel's industrial area and the Taieri Branch Line, enabling the project to connect Port Otago's freight operations with the wider rail and logistics network, while supporting Otago's role in South Island freight and export supply chains.

I have considered the information provided and its alignment with the priorities of my South Island portfolio. Given the scale of the projected economic benefits, including gross value added, job creation, freight infrastructure and support for export supply chains, I support the application and consider the project will deliver significant economic benefits for Otago and the wider southern South Island.

As Associate Minister for Transport, I have not considered the impact of this proposal on the local transport network. However, I am pleased to see that the applicant is working with KiwiRail, the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) and local regional and city councils to ensure these matters are properly considered and note that those organisations have also been invited to comment on this application.

I would like to take the opportunity to note my support for this project to receive the substantive approvals it requires.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James', is written over the typed name and titles.

Hon James Meager

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