Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions & Transport

FTAA–2607–1269: Application received for referral of the project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – Stage 1 decisions

Project Name: Whiterock Quarry and Managed Fill Development

Date submitted	11 August 2026	**Tracking**	26-BRF-02335
Security level	In-Confidence	**Priority**	Urgent

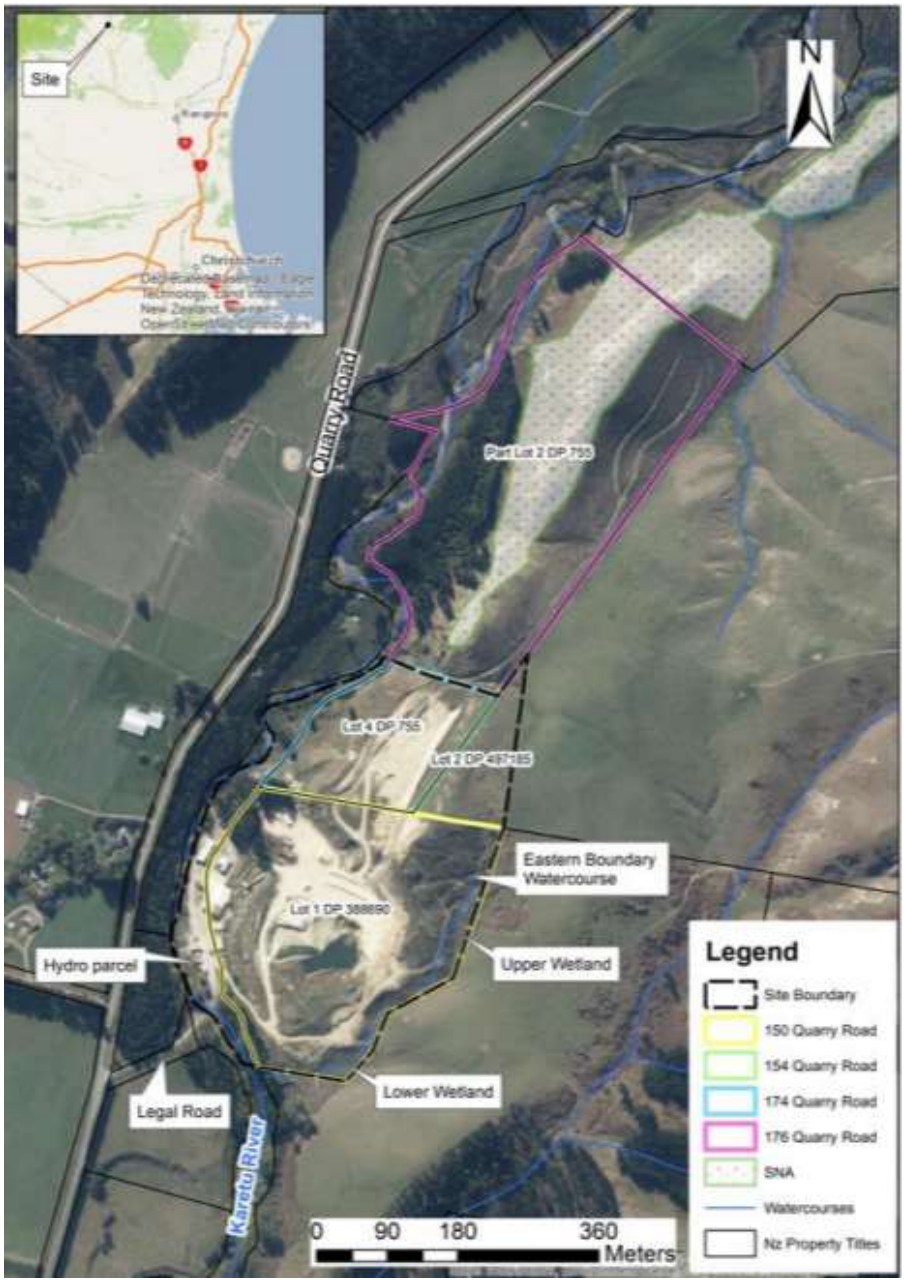
To	Action sought	Response by
Hon Chris Bishop **Minister for Infrastructure**	Decisions on recommendations in Table A	18 August 2026

Actions for Minister's Office staff	**Return** the signed briefing to the Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions & Transport – by email: *FTAreferrals@mfe.govt.nz* **Send** email to Ministers to invite written comments
Number of appendices: 3	Appendices: 1. Statutory framework summary 2. Application documents for Whiterock Quarry and Managed Fill project 3. List of the Māori groups referred to in section 18(2)

Ministry contacts

Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Stephanie McNicholl	Principal Author		
Stephanie Frame	Manager	s 9(2)(a)	✓
Ilana Miller	General Manager	s 9(2)(a)	

Project area



Key messages

1. This briefing seeks your initial decisions on an application from Whiterock Lime Limited (the applicant) to refer the Whiterock Quarry and Managed Fill 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.

3. The project is to construct, establish and operate a Class 3 Managed Fill[1] landfill facility using overburden quarrying and limestone extraction from the existing quarry operation to shape the pit floor and sides over a development area of approximately 5.3 hectares.

4. The project area is approximately 28.93 hectares, located across four properties at 150, 154, 174 and 176 Quarry Road, Loburn, Canterbury Region.

5. The project involves ancillary activities and infrastructure, including:

    a. construction and installation of a 23–metre bridge structure within a waterway setback
    b. the continued operation of the existing limestone quarry activities and processing facility for approximately 10 years
    c. accepting selected inert construction and demolition materials, specific inert materials (asbestos and cured asphalt impacted by coal tar binders), contaminated soil material and cleanfill
    d. an expected operational life of 20 years, with a capacity of 800,000 tonnes subject to demand and capacity
    e. construction earthworks, excavation and stockpiling associated with the quarrying/landfill including within waterway margins
    f. water takes and use, discharges (stormwater, groundwater, sediment).

6. The project will require the following approvals under the fast–track approvals process:

    a. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991

7. We have undertaken initial analysis of the referral application, and this is presented along with our considerations and recommendations in Table A. We note this is a second referral application for the same project. The first application (FTAA–2502–1062) was declined in November 2025 as the application as presented had insufficient detail on whether the project will deliver significant economic and employment benefits to the region.

8. 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.

9. We recommend you progress consideration of the referral application to the next stage of analysis (Stage 2) and invite written comments from the parties prescribed in section 17(1) of the Act being:

    a. Canterbury Regional Council and Waimakariri District Council as the relevant local authorities

    b. the Minister for the Environment, the Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti, and the Minister for Māori Development

    c. the Māori groups identified under section 18(2) of the Act, listed in Appendix 3.

[1] A Class 3 Landfill is defined under the Waste Minimisation (Calculation and Payment of Waste Disposal Levy) Regulations 2009. It accepts solid waste from construction and demolition activities and inert waste from earthworks or site remediation. It does not accept household waste, wate from commercial or industrial sources/processes or waste material from construction and demolition activity (except for inert waste).

10. We recommend that you invite written comments from additional persons under section 17(5) of the Act (as detailed in Table A) being:
    a. the Minister for Economic Growth
    b. the Minister for Regional Development
    c. the Minister for Building and Construction
    d. the Chief Executive of Land Information New Zealand
    e. the Chief Executive of Christchurch City Council
    f. the Chief Executive of Hurunui District Council.
11. We recommend that you seek further information from the applicant under section 20 of the Act as detailed in Table A.

Action sought

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

Signature



Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

Table A: Stage 1 analysis – FTAA–2607–1269

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Project details</td><td>Project Name</td><td>Applicant</td><td colspan="4">Project Area</td></tr>
<tr><td>Whiterock Quarry and Managed Fill (the project)</td><td>Whiterock Lime Limited (the applicant)</td><td colspan="4">The project area is approximately 28.93 hectares, located across four properties at 150, 154, 174 and 176 Quarry Road, Loburn, Canterbury Region</td></tr>
<tr><td>Project description</td><td colspan="6">The project is to construct, establish and operate a Class 3 Managed Fill landfill facility using overburden quarrying and limestone extraction from the existing quarry operation to shape the pit floor and sides over a development area of approximately 5.3 hectares.

The project area is approximately 28.93 hectares, located across four properties at 150, 154, 174 and 176 Quarry Road, Loburn, Canterbury Region.

The project involves ancillary activities and infrastructure, including:

a. construction and installation of a 23–metre bridge structure within a waterway setback
b. the continued operation of the existing limestone quarry activities and processing facility for approximately 10 years
c. accepting selected inert construction and demolition materials, specific inert materials (asbestos and cured asphalt impacted by coal tar binders), contaminated soil material and cleanfill
d. an expected operational life of 20 years, with a capacity of 800,000 tonnes subject to demand and capacity
e. construction earthworks, excavation and stockpiling associated with the quarrying/landfill including within waterway margins
f. water takes and use, discharges (stormwater, groundwater, sediment)

The applicant seeks the proposed approvals under the fast-track approvals process:

a. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Notification and/or consultation undertaken</td><td colspan="6">As required by section 11, the applicant has:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Notified the relevant local authorities</td><td>Notified the relevant iwi authorities, hapū and Treaty settlement entities</td><td>Consulted the relevant MACA groups</td><td>Consulted ngā hapū o Ngāti Porou</td><td>Notified the relevant administering agencies</td><td>Notified the holder of land to be exchanged</td></tr>
<tr><td>a. Canterbury Regional Council
b. Waimakariri District Council</td><td>a. Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu
b. Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga</td><td>N/A</td><td>N/A</td><td>N/A

We note for completeness that the applicant was required to engage with the Secretary for the Environment on a previous referral application for this project (pre-2025 Act amendment) This is no longer required post amendment</td><td>N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">Section 22 assessment criteria</td></tr>
<tr><td>The project is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional or national benefits [section 22(1)(a)]</td><td colspan="6">You <u>must</u> consider a relevant Government policy statement (GPS) [section 22(1A)]
No GPS has been identified by the applicant as being relevant to the application.

You <u>may</u> consider any of the following matters, or any other matters you consider relevant:

The project has been identified as a priority project in a central or local government, or sector plan or strategy or a central government infrastructure priority list [section 22(2)(a)(i)]
Indirectly, the applicant considers the project is strongly aligned with national and regional policy settings including the Waste Minimisation Act 2008, the Waste and Resource Efficiency Strategy 2025 and Regional and territorial authority waste management and minimisation plans

Will deliver new regionally or nationally significant infrastructure or enable the continued functioning of existing regionally or nationally significant infrastructure [section 22(2)(a)(ii)]
a. The applicant states the project will create a Class 3 managed fill landfill that will add to Canterbury's waste disposal system capacity by directly addressing limited capacity disposal options, restrictive acceptance criteria and operational limitations of other landfills in the region.
b. The applicant considers the project qualifies as regionally significant infrastructure because the National Policy Statement for Infrastructure 2025 (NPS–I) definition of 'additional infrastructure' includes: resource recovery or waste disposal facilities. The Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan definition of 'Nationally and regionally significant infrastructure': "includes, but is not limited to, infrastructure for activities recognised by a National Policy Statement as being nationally significant". (The project includes bridge construction, the NPS–I definition of ancillary infrastructure activities includes construction, maintenance, repair and upgrading of access tracks, bridges and culverts).</td></tr>
</table>

	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) [section 22(2)(a)(iii)] Indirectly, the applicant considers this will be delivered by enabling the disposal of contaminated soils and construction and demolition materials generated through both greenfield and brownfield development. *Will deliver significant economic benefits [section 22(2)(a)(iv)]* a. In a regional context, as described in the economic report this will be delivered by directing suitable Class 3 material away from higher-specification landfills, by reserving those facilities for waste streams requiring greater levels of containment, which will defer the need to provide additional higher-cost Class 1 and Class 2 capacity, will increase disposal choice and support a more resilient regional network b. A revised economic report determined that the previously declined referral application submission identified economic and system–level benefits of the proposal and that a focus on economic benefits, demand for additional capacity and regional significance was required. The revised report clarifies demand and identifies the project will inject $17.3 million ($1.76 million annual) into the regional economy over 20 years of operation and create approximately 8.7 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees ongoing. *Will support primary industries, including aquaculture [section 22(2)(a)(v)]* The applicant considers the extraction of approximately 55,000 cubic metres (bulked) of lime rock (over the next 10 years to develop the managed fill floor and sides) supports agriculture (in a crushed form equates to approximately 55,000 tonnes of processed AgLime generally used in fertiliser). *Will support development of natural resources, including minerals and petroleum [section 22(2)(a)(vi)]* The applicant considers this is achieved through the existing and proposed extraction of the natural limestone resource and processing/developing into a usable AgLime form via rotating kiln crushing facilities on-site. *Will support climate change mitigation, including the reduction or removal of greenhouse gas emissions [section 22(2)(a)(vii)]* Indirectly, the applicant considers this will be delivered through shorter haulage distances and consequently lower transport-related emissions compared to alternative disposal locations. *Will address significant environmental issues [section 22(2)(a)(ix)]* The applicant considers the project will address this by diverting inert and low-risk contaminated materials away from higher-specification landfills and reserving those facilities for waste streams requiring greater levels of containment, and by enabling the appropriate containment of contaminated soils and asbestos within a purpose-built facility. *Is consistent with local or regional planning documents, including spatial strategies [section 22(2)(a)(x)]* The applicant considers the project is broadly consistent with the strategic direction of the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement, Canterbury Land and Water Plan, Canterbury Air Regional Plan and the Operative Waimakariri District Plan.		
Referring the project to the fast-track approvals process [section 22(1)(b)]	*Would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes [section 22(1)(b)(i)]* The applicant considers referral of the project will materially facilitate its delivery compared with normal processes, by providing a more streamlined, timely and cost–effective determination of approvals for a project that is regionally significant and likely to involve complex and contested issues. The applicant lodged resource consent applications in April 2024, followed by public notification in September 2024, which resulted in 573 submissions, many opposing, of which 89 submitters wished to be heard. The application has been on hold since. The applicant considers based on the number of submitters and the breadth of issues raised, there is a high likelihood that any Council-level decision would be subject to appeal to the Environment Court, stages of evidence exchange and mediation. Collectively, these steps can extend the approval timeframe significantly and introduce uncertainty into the delivery of the project. The applicant considers such delays in obtaining approvals will defer the realisation of the project's economic, infrastructure, and environmental benefits. *Is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process [section 22(1)(b)(ii)]* The applicant states the project is well advanced, being supported by a comprehensive body of technical work, detailed design, environmental assessments, and responses to issues raised through the resource consents process, including submissions and Council officer review (section 42A report under the Resource Management Act 1991). The applicant considers that collectively this evidential foundation and clear identification of key issues will enable focused and efficient assessment by an expert panel. The Project can therefore be considered without placing undue demand on the fast-track process or affecting its efficient operation.		
Minister invites comments [section 17]	*You **must** copy the application to, and invite written comments from [section 17(1)]:* a. Canterbury Regional Council and Waimakariri District Council as the relevant local authorities b. the Minister for the Environment, the Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti, and the Minister for Māori Development c. the Māori groups identified in Appendix 3	*You **may** copy the application to, and invite written comments from, any other person [section 17(5)]:* We recommend you invite written comments from the following additional persons, for the specified reasons: a. the Minister for Economic Growth – as the project proposes significant economic growth to the region b. the Minister for Regional Development – as the project proposes significant benefits to the region c. the Minister for Building and Construction – as the project proposes significant benefits to support building and construction demolition and disposal of waste materials	*You **may** request further information 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 [section 20]:* We recommend you request further information from the applicant to provide details of the grant of easement over the Crown–owned hydro parcel (affecting the access arrangement and construction of the bridge) and to confirm whether this will affect any ability to undertake the works.

		d. the Chief Executive of Land Information New Zealand – as the project proposes use of a Crown–managed easement, to confirm the details of the grant of easement over the hydro parcel and whether this will affect the applicant's ability to undertake the works e. the Chief Executive of Christchurch City Council – on the regional benefits of the proposed managed fill in accepting construction and demolition waste to the facility, including post-earthquake demolition waste. f. the Chief Executive of Hurunui District Council – as the project area is located adjacent to the territorial boundary shared with Waimakariri District Council. With this context, whether there are any cross-boundary jurisdiction matters that Hurunui District Council consider may affect the delivery of the project.	

Recommendations	**Minister's decision**
a. **Note** that section 25 of the Fast–track Approvals Act (the Act) permits you to decline the referral application without inviting comments from the parties under section 17 of the Act.	Noted
b. **Note** that you have not yet provided the application to, nor sought written comments on it from, the parties listed in section 17(1), but you are required to do so if you do not decline the application under section 21 of the Act.	Noted
c. **Note** that section 17(5) of the Act permits you to forward an application to, and invite written comments from, any other person.	Noted
d. **Note** 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. **Note** 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. **Note** that you have agreed to delegate to the Secretary for the Environment your responsibility to send all correspondence, other than to Ministers.	Noted
g. **Agree** to progress the Whiterock Quarry and Managed Fill project to our Stage 2 analysis (invite written comments and request section 18 Treaty report under the Act).	Yes / No
h. **Agree** to provide the application to, and invite written comments from:	
i. Canterbury Regional Council and Waimakariri District Council as the relevant local authorities under section 17(1)(a) of the Act	Yes / No
ii. the Minister for the Environment, the Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti, and the Minister for Māori Development under section 17(1)(b)(i)–(iii) of the Act	Yes / No
iii. the parties in Appendix 3 as the identified Māori groups under section 17(1)(d) of the Act	Yes / No
iv. any parties you are required to invite comments from under section 17(1)(d) and (e) under the Act, who may be subsequently identified	Yes / No
i. **Agree** to provide the application to and invite written comments from the following additional persons under section 17(5) of the Act:	
i. the Minister for Economic Growth	Yes / No
ii. the Minister for Regional Development	Yes / No
iii. the Minister for Building and Construction	Yes / No
iv. the Chief Executive of Land Information New Zealand	Yes / No
v. the Chief Executive of Christchurch City Council	Yes / No
vi. the Chief Executive of Hurunui District Council	Yes / No
j. **Agree** to send the email to invite written comments from Ministers.	Yes / No

k. **Agree** to request further information from the Applicant under section 20 – to provide details of the grant of easement over the Crown–owned hydro parcel (affecting the access arrangement and construction of the bridge) and to confirm whether this will affect any ability to undertake the works.	Yes / No

Signed:

Hon Chris Bishop
Minister for Infrastructure **Date:**

Appendix 1: Statutory framework summary

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 section 22
    b. you are satisfied the project involves an ineligible activity (section 5)
    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 section 21(5) and even if the application meets the section 22 referral criteria.
5. You can decline an application before or after inviting comments under section 17(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, the Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti, and the Minister for Māori Development
    c. any other relevant portfolio Ministers
    d. the relevant administering agencies
    e. the Māori groups identified by the Responsible agency
    f. the owners of Māori land in the project area (if applicable)
    g. 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 Whiterock Quarry and Managed Fill project

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

Name of group	Type of group (section of the Act)
Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu	Iwi authority (s18(2)(a)); Treaty settlement entity – Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 (section 18(2)(a))
Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga	Ngāi Tahu Papatipu Rūnanga – Treaty settlement entity (section 18(2)(a))
Whitiora Centre Limited	Entity owned by Papatipu Rūnanga – other Māori group with relevant interests (section 18(2)(k))