

FTAA–2505–1078: Application received for referral of the project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – Stage 1 decisions

Project Name: Ridgeburn

Date submitted:	16 July 2025	Tracking #: BRF–6492	
Security level:	In-Confidence	MfE priority:	Urgent

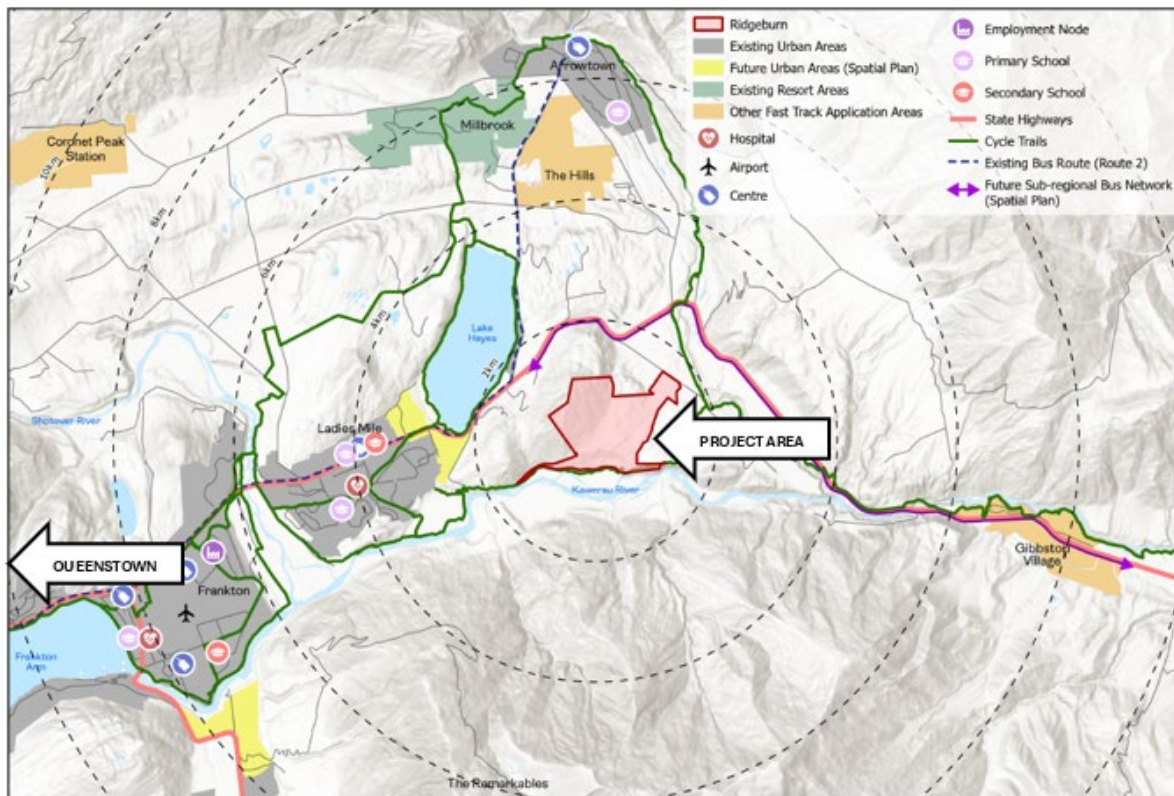
	Action sought:	Response by:
To Hon Chris Bishop, Minister for Infrastructure	Decisions on recommendations in Table A	21 July 2025

Actions for Minister's Office staff	Return the signed briefing to MfE – email to: FTAreferrals@mfe.govt.nz Send email to Ministers to invite comment
Number of attachments: 3	Appendices: 1. Statutory framework summary 2. Application documents for Ridgeburn (in File Exchange) 3. List of Māori groups referred to in section 18(2)

Ministry for the Environment contacts:

Position	Name	Cell phone	1 st contact
Principal Author(s)	Stephanie McNicholl, Stephen Church		
Manager	Stephanie Frame	s 9(2)(a)	✓
General Manager	Ilana Miller	s 9(2)(a)	

Project area



Key messages

1. This briefing seeks your initial decisions on an application from Ridgeburn Limited to refer the Ridgeburn project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) to the fast-track approvals process. 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 support your final decision on whether to refer the project.
2. The project is to develop a comprehensive residential and mixed-use development on 212 hectares at 122 Morven Ferry Road, Arrow Junction, near Queenstown.
3. The project involves the establishment and operation of:
 - a. approximately 1250 residential dwellings/units (including 180 affordable dwellings/units), a 'workers' accommodation/ accommodation complex, and commercial village precinct (retail, hospitality, community services, office space)
 - b. 60 hectares of landscape and ecological enhancement, including native planting
 - c. integration with existing and proposed walking and cycling trails
4. The project will require the proposed approvals:
 - a. Resource consent approvals under the specified Act – Resource Management Act 1991
 - b. Wildlife approval under the specified Act – Wildlife Act 1953

c. Archaeological approval under the specified Act – Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014

5. We have undertaken initial analysis of the referral application, and this is presented along with our considerations and recommendations in Table A.
6. 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.
7. 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: local authorities, the Minister for the Environment and relevant portfolio Ministers, relevant administering agencies, the owners of Māori land within the project area and identified Māori groups from section 18(2) of the Act. The parties are listed in Attachment 3.
8. We recommend that you invite written comments from the Minister for Economic Growth, the Minister for Regional Development and Waka Kotahi, New Zealand Transport Agency as additional parties under section 17(5) of the Act.
9. We recommend that under section 20 you request further information from the Queenstown Lakes District Council as a relevant local authority under section 20 of the Act, detailed in Table A.

Action sought

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

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'I' followed by a horizontal line that tapers to a point on the right.

Ilana Miller
General Manager – Delivery and Operations

Table A: Stage 1 analysis

Project details	Project Name		Applicant		Project Area	
	Ridgeburn		Ridgeburn Limited c/- Barker & Associates		122 Morven Ferry Road, Arrow Junction, near Queenstown (comprised in Records of title – Lot 2 DP 601937 (24.7256 ha), Lot 3 DP 529201 (2.0584 ha), Lot 5 DP 300661 & Sec/s 21, 23, 24, 64, 71 in Blk VIII & IX Shotover SD (82.6923 ha), Sec 22 Blk IX Shotover SD (23.0823 ha), Sec 23 Blk IX Shotover SD (26.5069 ha), Secs 1–2 SO 478164, Sec 25 Blk IX Shotover SD, Lots 3–4 DP 300661 (45.1025 ha) and Sec 1 SO 420327 (8.5980 ha)).	
Project description	The project is to develop a business park and service area and involves the establishment and operation of: a. approximately 1250 residential dwellings/units (including 180 affordable dwellings/units), a ‘workers’ accommodation/ accommodation complex, and commercial village precinct (retail, hospitality, community services, office space) b. 60 hectares of landscape and ecological enhancement, including native planting c. integration with existing and proposed walking and cycling trails The project will require the proposed approvals: d. Resource consent approvals under the specified Act – Resource Management Act 1991 e. Wildlife approval under the specified Act – Wildlife Act 1953 f. Archaeological authority under the specified Act – Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014					
Consultation undertaken	As required by s11, the applicant has consulted with:					
	Relevant local authorities	Relevant iwi authorities, hapu and Treaty settlement entities:	Relevant MACA groups	Ngā hapū o Ngāti Porou]	Relevant administering agencies	Holder of land to be exchanged
	a. Queenstown Lakes District Council b. Otago Regional Council	a. Aukaha b. Te Ao Mārama c. Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu d. Te Rūnanga o Moeraki Incorporated e. Kāti Huirapa ki Puketeraki Incorporated f. Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou Incorporated g. Hokonui Rūnanga Incorporated h. Waihōpai Rūnaka Incorporated i. Te Rūnaka o Awarua Charitable Trust; and j. Ōraka Aparima Rūnaka Incorporated	Not applicable	Not applicable	a. Ministry for the Environment b. Department of Conservation c. Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga	Not applicable
Section 22 assessment criteria						
The project is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional or national benefits [section 22(1)(a)]	You may consider any of the following matters, or any other matters you consider relevant. <i>Will increase the supply of housing, address housing needs, or contribute to a well-functioning urban environment [s22(2)(a)(iii)]</i> a. The applicant considers the development of 1,250 residential dwellings/units in total (including 180 residential dwellings/units as ‘affordable’) to be a significant increase in development capacity for the purposes of the National Policy Statement on Urban Design 2020 (NPS-UD) and therefore the project contributes to a well-functioning urban environment. b. In addition, the applicant considers that the inclusion of ‘affordable’ housing (through provision of approximately 180 residential dwellings/units to be priced between \$599,000 and \$999,000) represents a significant and urgently needed contribution to the district’s constrained supply of more affordable housing. <i>Will deliver significant economic benefits [s22(2)(a)(iv)]</i> The applicant considers the development project will deliver significant economic benefits at a regional level, including employment opportunities of approximately 6,555 full-time equivalent job years (including a peak year with 1,462 full-time equivalent job years) over a 5-year development period across multiple sectors. <i>Will support climate change mitigation, including the reduction or removal of greenhouse gas emissions [s22(2)(a)(vii)]</i> The applicant considers the development project will support national climate goals through a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by providing the opportunity for solar panels on houses and that the extensive enhancement planting of a 60-hectare native planting area can serve as a lasting carbon sink, as vegetation matures and soil carbon builds over time. <i>Any other matters that may be relevant [s22(2)(b)]</i> a. The applicant considers the development project will promote recreation and tourism in the region by enhancing the cycle trail network to significantly improve public recreational access. b. The applicant considers the development responds directly to historic land clearance degradation through a regionally significant ecological restoration programme, with a strong focus on improving habitat for indigenous flora and fauna.					
referring the project to the fast-track	<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 this is satisfied for the following reasons:					

approvals process [section 22(1)(b)]	a. The complexity of the existing planning framework, including rural zoning means the project would require a private plan change or a suite of non-complying resource consents. These paths would likely involve notification, lengthy processing timeframes, and appeal risk. <i>Is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process [s22(1)(b)(ii)]</i> The applicant considers this is satisfied for the following reasons: a. The applicant is the developer responsible for constructing the housing and delivering the infrastructure, ensuring integrated and efficient implementation consistent with the purpose of the fast-track process.		
Minister invites comments	<i>You must copy the application to, and invite written comments from [s17(1)]:</i> a. Relevant local authorities: Queenstown Lakes District Council, Otago Regional Council b. Relevant portfolio Ministers: Minister for the Environment, Minister of Conservation, Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, and Associate Minister of Housing c. Māori groups identified in Attachment 3	<i>You may also copy the application to, and invite written comments from, any other person[s17(5)].</i> a. Minister for Economic Growth b. Minister for Regional Development c. Waka Kotahi, New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) because the project proposes an upgrade to the intersection to State Highway 6 (which connects to the project site) and NZTA can advise on whether there are any matters which may adversely affect project delivery	<i>The Minister 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.</i> a. Queenstown Lakes District Council - information on whether the Council considers the project would have significant regional or national benefits, and in that context, whether the Council has any high-level comments on the project's alignment with any respective plans, policies or strategies
Recommendations			Minister's decision
a. Note 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. Note 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. 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 written 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 the application.			Yes / No
f. Agree to progress the Ridgeburn Project to our Stage 2 analysis (invite written comments and request section 18 report stage).			Yes / No
g. Agree to provide the application to, and invite comments from: a. Relevant local authorities: Queenstown Lakes District Council, Otago Regional Council] b. Relevant portfolio Ministers: Minister for the Environment, Minister of Conservation, Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, and Associate Minister of Housing c. Relevant administering agencies: Ministry for the Environment, Department of Conservation, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga d. the Māori groups identified in Attachment 3			Yes / No
h. Agree to provide the application to and invite comments from the following additional entities/persons under section 17(5): Minister for Economic Growth, Minister for Regional Development and Waka Kotahi, New Zealand Transport Agency			Yes / No
i. Agree to seek further information from the applicant the relevant local authorities or the relevant administering agencies under section 20: a. Relevant local authorities: Queenstown Lakes District Council – information on whether the Council considers the project would have significant regional or national benefits, and in that context, whether the Council has any high-level comments on the project's alignment with any respective plans, policies or strategies			Yes / No

j. Note that you have agreed to delegate to the Secretary for the Environment your responsibility to send all correspondence other than to Ministers	Noted
k. Agree to send email and invite written comments from Ministers.	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 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 s 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 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:
 - 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 Pohutukawa Business Park Project: (in File Exchange)

Appendix 3: List of 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))