

File ref: 26-BRF-01957 / FTAA-2604-1223

30 July 2026

Simon Delander
Reefton Resources Pty Limited (the applicant)
Email: s 9(2)(a)

c/- Claire Hunter and Ella Williams
Mitchell Daysh Limited (the agent)
Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Simon

Section 28 – Notice of Decisions on the referral application for the Auld Creek project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

This notice of decisions is for a referral application received from Reefton Resources Pty Limited (the applicant) for the Auld Creek project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act).

Project details

The project is for the phased development and operation of a new underground mine for the extraction of gold and antimony for approximately 6–8 years from the Auld Creek deposit, near Reefton in the West Coast Region. The mining permit is proposed for a duration of 30 years.

The project area encompasses multiple sites covering an area of approximately 1,009 hectares around three kilometres south of Reefton, within the Buller District of the West Coast Region. The project area includes public conservation land within Victoria Forest Park, administered by the Department of Conservation (DOC), as well as land owned by Ngāi Tahu Forestry Limited and privately owned land.

The mining operation is to be undertaken in two phases. Phase one involves the development of a portal and adit (straight line mine drive) on Crown land administered by DOC to access and mine the upper part of the deposit. Phase two involves accessing and mining the remaining deposit via an underground twin decline tunnel from land owned by Ngāi Tahu Forestry Limited. The project also involves the closure and rehabilitation of the site over an estimated 2–5 years, including rehabilitation in accordance with an agreed closure plan, monitoring, and handover once closure criteria are met.

The project includes the following activities:

- a. continued mineral resource investigation and exploration progression at Auld Creek

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- b. establishing a new surface facilities area to house the surface infrastructure necessary to facilitate the development and operation of an underground mine including but not limited to on-site processing of gold and antimony, associated tailings and waste rock storage, and water treatment infrastructure located across privately owned farmland, disused Te Pūkenga land, and Ngāi Tahu Forestry Limited land accessed via Quigleys Road
- c. the establishment and operation of a temporary Run of Mine pad and associated haul road on Ngāi Tahu Forestry Limited land
- d. the required construction and upgrades of ancillary infrastructure including new network utility connections, public and private road upgrades and service connections
- e. the construction, operation and maintenance of a mine access portal located on Ngāi Tahu Forestry Limited land and associated access tunnel
- f. the construction, operation and maintenance of a twin incline / decline tunnel extending from the access tunnel termination from Ngāi Tahu Forestry Limited land to the Auld Creek orebody
- g. construction, operation and maintenance of an access portal and associated ventilation adit/s at the top of the orebody located on DOC land
- h. construction, operation and maintenance of the Auld Creek Underground Mine
- i. activities over or within waterways, including the possible damming, diverting, taking, storage and use of water, and construction of structures over and in waterways (including culverts)
- j. take, use and storage of groundwater
- k. discharge of contaminants (including heat) to land, air and water
- l. low impact surface and groundwater, ecological, meteorological, noise and vibration monitoring activities
- m. handling, salvaging, and possible incidental killing of any avifauna, invertebrates, aquatic and terrestrial species across the project area
- n. ancillary activities that are required to support the activities identified above.

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

- a. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) as described in section 42(4)(a) of the Act
- b. concessions under the Conservation Act 1987 as described in section 42(4)(e) of the Act
- c. wildlife approvals under the Wildlife Act 1953 as described in section 42(4)(h) of the Act
- d. an approval, a dispensation, or an authorisation for a complex freshwater fisheries activity under the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983 as described in section 42(4)(j) of the Act
- e. an initial access arrangement under the Crown Minerals Act 1991 (CMA) as described in section 42(4)(l)
- f. a mining permit under the CMA as described in section 42(4)(n) of the Act.

Statutory framework for referral applications

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits.

The project can only be accepted if the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) is satisfied the criteria in section 22 are 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.

Under section 21(3) of the Act, the Minister must decline a referral application if:

- the Minister is satisfied that the project does not meet the criteria in section 22
- the Minister is satisfied that the project involves an ineligible activity
- the Minister considers they do not have adequate information to inform the decision.

Additionally, the Minister has the discretion to decline a referral application for any other reason, even if the project meets the criteria outlined in section 22 of the Act.

Decision on referral application

The Minister has decided to accept the referral application under section 21(1)(c) and refer the whole project to the fast-track approvals process under section 26(2)(a). The Minister is satisfied that the project meets the criteria in section 22 of the Act, for the reasons detailed below.

Reasons for accepting referral application

The Minister is satisfied the project:

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

Specifically, the Minister is satisfied the project meets the criteria in section 22 of the Act because:

- a. the project, a new underground mine for the extraction of gold and antimony, is a development project that would have significant regional and national benefits [section 22(1)(a)] because it
 - i. will deliver significant economic benefits [section 22(2)(a)(iv)] by:
 - supporting substantial capital investment in the Buller District, West Coast Region, and wider New Zealand economy
 - generating export earnings through the production of gold and antimony
 - supporting employment and economic activity through the construction and operation of the mine.
 - ii. will support development of natural resources, including minerals [section 22(2)(a)(vi)] by:
 - developing and extracting gold and antimony resources from a new underground mine near Reefton
 - supporting the development of minerals identified on New Zealand's Critical Minerals List, including antimony, which is recognised as strategically important to New Zealand's economy and supply security

- contributing to the objectives of the Minerals Strategy for New Zealand to 2040 by increasing mineral export value and advancing critical mineral opportunities.
- b. referring the project to the fast-track approvals process would facilitate its delivery [section 22(1)(b)(i)], including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes as:
- the project requires multiple approvals, permits, and authorisations that would otherwise be considered under separate statutory processes and by different decision-makers, and referral would enable these approvals to be considered through a single integrated process
 - the standard approval processes for a project of this scale and complexity could involve public notification, hearings, and appeals, resulting in increased costs and longer approval timeframes
 - appeals under the Act are only to the High Court rather than the Environment Court and are limited to points of law
 - the Act precludes public and limited notification.
- c. referring the project is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process [section 22(1)(b)(ii)] because the proposed underground mining activities and their associated effects are generally well understood, and the project is consistent with the types of regionally and nationally significant developments the fast-track approvals process was established to consider.

The Minister is satisfied there is no reason they must decline the project under section 21(3) of the Act. The Minister is also satisfied there is no reason to decline the project under section 21(4) and (5) of the Act.

Specified matters for accepted referral application

1. Reefton Resources Pty Limited, who lodged the referral application, as the person who is authorised to lodge a substantive application for the project under section 27(2) of the Act.
2. Under section 27(3)(b)(i) of the Act, a deadline of two years from the date of issue of this letter applies for lodging the substantive application.
3. Pursuant to section 27(3)(b)(ii), the following information must be submitted with the substantive application lodged for the project:
 - a. an NI 43-101-compliant pre-feasibility study and associated economic model
 - b. a social impact assessment, including an assessment of workforce accommodation demand, the capacity of local housing and accommodation supply to meet that demand, the potential effects on local infrastructure and services in Reefton and the surrounding areas, and any proposed measures to manage those effects
 - c. an integrated transport assessment, including but not limited to a sightline analysis of the Quigleys Road/State Highway 7 intersection, an assessment of adverse effects on the state highway network arising from the project, any proposed mitigation measures to address those effects, and details of any upgrades required to the Quigleys Road/State Highway 7

intersection and other transport infrastructure, including how those upgrades will be funded

- d. a geotechnical and seismic assessment in relation to the proposed underground mining operation, identifying any geotechnical or seismic hazards associated with the project, and details of any measures proposed to manage those hazards.
4. In relation to a substantive application for the project, pursuant to section 27(3)(b)(iii), the panel must invite comments from the following groups, in addition to those specified in section 53:
- a. NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi
 - b. Reefton Agwork Limited.

Other matters

Under section 16(2)(c) of the Act, the Minister directs any panel that considers a substantive application for the project to comply with the following requirements:

- a. consider how they will comply with the hearing commissioner provisions in Schedule C of the Mana Whakahono ā Rohe (MWaR) relevant to the project area when convening a panel for the application; and
- b. consider how the hearing protocols and provisions relating to cultural evidence in Schedule D of the MWaR may apply to the application under the fast-track approvals process, if a hearing is held.

A copy of the relevant MWaR is included as Attachment 4 to the section 18 report for the project.

Under section 28 of the Act, the Secretary for the Environment must also give written notice of decisions made by the Minister on an accepted referral application to the parties specified in Appendix 1 of this letter.

If you have any queries about this notice of decisions, please email referral@fasttrack.govt.nz and include the name of the lead contact – Ashiley Sycamore.

If you have any queries about the substantive process, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 225 537).

Yours sincerely



Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

Appendix 1: Section 28 – Notice of Minister’s decision on accepted referral application

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Section 28(1)(a) – The applicant	Reefton Resources Pty Limited
Section 28(1)(ii) – Anyone invited to comment on the application	
<i>Relevant local authorities</i>	Buller District Council West Coast Regional Council
<i>Relevant portfolio Ministers</i>	Minister for the Environment Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti Minister for Māori Development Minister of Conservation Minister for Resources
<i>Relevant administering agencies</i>	Department of Conservation / Director-General of Conservation New Zealand Petroleum and Minerals (within the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment)
<i>The Māori groups under s17(d)</i>	Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Waewae Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio Pokeka Poutini Ngāi Tahu Limited
<i>Any other persons under s17(5)</i>	Chief Executive of NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi Chief Executive of the New Zealand Minerals Council Minister for the South Island Minister for Regional Development Minister for Economic Growth
Section 28(2) – Other parties for an accepted referral application	
<i>The Panel Convener</i>	Including all the information received by the Minister as required by section 28(4).
<i>Any iwi authorities or Treaty settlement entities (other than those that must be notified as identified above) that the Minister considers have an interest in the matter</i>	No additional iwi authorities or Treaty settlement entities have been identified beyond those listed above.
<i>Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)</i>	Including all the information received by the Minister as required by section 28(4).
<i>Relevant administering agencies</i>	As identified above.