

File ref: 26-BRF-02375 / FTAA-2604-1219

8 October 2026

Ian Thompson
Sabys 101 Limited (applicant)
s 9(2)(a)

c/- Kerstin Ghisel
Barker & Associates Limited (agent)
s 9(2)(a)

Dear Ian and Kerstin

Section 28 – Notice of Decisions on the referral application for Franco Farms Project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

This notice of decisions is for a referral application received from Sabys 101 Limited (the applicant) for the Franco Farms Project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act).

Project details

The project is to establish and construct an urban development over approximately 35 hectares to deliver approximately 350 residential lots (to enable future housing construction) with supporting infrastructure (roading, three waters services, stormwater management), neighbourhood centre services and amenities, and riparian enhancement.

The project area is located across Lot 3 DP 68573 Sabys Road and 6 Wroots Road in Halswell, near Christchurch, in the Canterbury Region.

The applicant seeks the following proposed approvals via 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. wildlife permits under the Wildlife Act 1953 as described in section 42(4)(h) of the Act
- c. archaeological authorities under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 as described in section 42(4)(i) of the Act
- d. approvals under the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983 as described in section 42(4)(j) 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.

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Fast-track referrals are administered on behalf of the Minister for Infrastructure by the Secretary for the Environment
NZBN: 9429041908853

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:

- a. the Minister is satisfied that the project does not meet the criteria in section 22
- b. the Minister is satisfied that the project involves an ineligible activity
- c. 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 a development project that would have significant regional 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 as:

- a. it is a development project that would have significant regional benefits [section 22(1)(a)] because it:
 - i. will increase the supply of housing, address housing needs, and contribute to a well-functioning urban environment with the development of residential dwellings by approximately 350 units
 - ii. will deliver significant economic benefits estimated by generating a direct one-time contribution of approximately \$37 million to gross domestic product (GDP), by supporting approximately 74 direct FTE roles per year and generate approximately \$25 million in direct wages and salaries. Indirect impacts are estimated to support a further approximately 167 FTE roles per year, contributing approximately \$58 million in wages and salaries and approximately \$101 million in GDP value-add over the same period.

- 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 timelier and more cost-effective way than under normal processes because it precludes public and limited notification in an RMA context and enables multiple approval types under specific Acts to be considered under a singular process, and appeals under the Act are to the High Court and limited to points of law.
- 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 project is neither novel in the New Zealand context nor beyond the scope of what a panel would typically assess where multiple approval types are sought under the fast-track approvals process.

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

Specified matters for accepted referral application

1. Sabys 101 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) of the Act:
 - a. a deadline for lodging the substantive application is two years from the date of the referral notice of decisions letter to the applicant
 - b. the following information that the applicant must submit with the substantive application:
 - i. an infrastructure an infrastructure capacity assessment that considers the downstream network capacity, including the capacity of the Christchurch Wastewater Treatment Plant, and should consider the capacity required to facilitate the urban growth that has been planned for through the District Plan
 - ii. an assessment of the upgrades required to facilitate the project, including water, wastewater network, wastewater treatment plant and roading. This will need to address how all necessary upgrades will be funded and align with Christchurch City Council's maintenance, renewal and upgrade programmes.

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, email these to referral@fasttrack.govt.nz and include the lead contact – **s 9(2)(a)**

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MG' with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Max Gander-Cooper

Acting Manager – Fast-track Operations

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

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Section 28(1)(a)(i) – the applicant Sabys 101 Limited

Section 28(1)(a)(ii) – anyone invited to comment on the application

<i>Relevant local authorities</i>	Canterbury Regional Council Selwyn District Council Christchurch City 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 Arts, Culture and Heritage Associate Minister of Housing
<i>Relevant administering agencies</i>	Department of Conservation Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga
<i>Māori groups under section 17(d)</i>	Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga Mahaanui Kurataiao Limited Whitiora Centre Limited Te Taumutu Rūnanga
<i>Any other persons under section 17(5)</i>	Minister for Economic Growth Minister for Regional Development Chief Executive of NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi

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>	No additional administering agencies have been identified beyond those listed above.
