
MINUTE 3 OF THE PANEL CONVENER
Appointment and timing of panel
Beachlands South [FTAA-2606-1256]
4 September 2026

[1] On 3 September I held a convener conference in respect of this application. The conference was attended by the Applicant and its legal and planning team, and representatives from Auckland Council, the Department of Conservation, and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga.

[2] The purpose of this minute is to:

- (a) Summarise the views expressed by conference participants on the matters of panel composition and the timeframe required for the expert panel to deliver its decision; and
- (b) Confirm my decisions on those two matters.

In advance of the conference, I received written memoranda from the Applicant, Auckland Council, the Department of Conservation, and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga.

[3] I discussed my proposed panel membership during the conference and all participants agreed that they had the requisite skills and experience for this application.

[4] I am appointing the following persons to the Expert Panel to determine the substantive application lodged for the Beachlands South project:

- (a) Ian Gordon (chair)
- (b) Philip Brown
- (c) Vaughan Smith.

[5] I am satisfied that, collectively, the Expert Panel will hold appropriate expertise and experience in relation to the Fast-track Approvals Act, and engineering and planning. I also confirm that as experienced environmental decision makers the Expert Panel collectively have an understanding of te ao Māori and Māori development.

[6] The Expert Panel may wish to engage other specialist technical disciplines to assist them in their task once they have considered the application in detail.

[7] The date on which the Expert Panel will commence work is 14 September 2026.

[8] I recommend that the Applicant continue its constructive engagement with Auckland Council and the other agencies to identify or narrow issues in contention and confer on conditions. The Applicant confirmed that it intends to provide an update to the application documentation prior to the commencement of the Panel on 14 September.

In relation to the decision timeframe the participants' views can be broadly summarised as noting that the project does not necessarily require longer than 60 working days for the decision. I indicated to the participants that there are some time constraints that the proposed Panel members have that need to be accommodated, which necessitates an 80 working day timeframe. The Applicant noted that it is cognisant of the need to be realistic and pragmatic, factoring in the Panel's other commitments and understands the time chosen for the delivery of the decision.

I therefore consider that a timeframe of 80 working days following the receipt of invited comments is appropriate. This means the decision documents will be due

on 17 March 2027 subject to processing of the application being suspended for any of the reasons outlined in section 60 of the Act. The date specified for inviting comments under section 53 of the Act will be 28 September 2026 with comments being due on 27 October 2026 and the Applicant's response to comments being due on 5 November 2026.

[9] In addition to the time constraints for the Expert Panel, in setting this timeframe, I have had regard to the following relevant matters:

- (a) The nature of the application and the range of activities for which approval is sought;
- (b) The participants' views on complexity and the likely issues requiring resolution;
- (c) The possibility that some mechanism to resolve focused issues, or to workshop conditions, may need to be provided for by the Expert Panel; and
- (d) The time for year that the application will be considered in which includes the Christmas – New Year lock-down period.

[10] In terms of next steps, the participants will be contacted by the Expert Panel for the Beachlands South application.

[11] I record my thanks to all conference participants for their attendance and thoughtful participation.



Helen Atkins

Panel Convener for the purpose of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024