Fast-track

New Zealand Government
Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa

MINUTE 27 OF THE EXPERT PANEL
Suspension of Processing
Central and Southern Block Mining Project [FTAA-2512-1153]

(16 October 2026)

[1] This Minute addresses a request for suspension of processing of the Application.

[2] On 15 October 2026, the Panel received a memorandum[1] from the Applicant requesting a suspension of processing for 9 working days to allow further time to prepare its response to the matters raised in para [4] of the memorandum.

[3] The Applicant seeks that the suspension take effect from midnight Friday 16 October 2026, with processing resuming on Monday 2 November 2026 (with the Panel's draft decision and conditions due that day).

[4] The Applicant has confirmed it has no objection to the Panel, its advisers, or the EPA to continue work on the application throughout the period that processing is suspended.

[5] Under s64(4) of the Act, the Panel may, at its discretion, suspend the processing of a consent application in response to a request by the Applicant. The Act does not set any criteria or tests for considering such a request, but section 10 (Procedural Principles) requires the Panel to use "timely, efficient, consistent and cost effective (as well as proportionate) processes" for the exercise of any function or power.

[6] Where the Panel does grant a suspension, it must give written notice of the date on which processing was suspended to any of the parties specified under s 64(4)(a) to (d) of the Act.

[7] The Panel has considered the memorandum from the Applicant and decided to grant the request for the reasons stated in that memorandum, and confirm the updated timeline below:

(i) Response from the Applicant on all reports and Panel directed questions due on Friday 23 October;

(ii) Panel's draft decision and conditions would be due on Monday 2 November 2026;

[1] Correspondence

(iii) Comments on the draft conditions would be due on Monday 9 November 2026;

(iv) The Applicants response to comments made by s53 parties on the draft conditions would be due on Monday 16 November 2026; and

(v) The Panel's final decision would be due on Friday 20 November 2026.



Dave Serjeant
Central and Southern Block Mining Project Expert Panel Chair