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## MINUTE OF THE PANEL CONVENER IN RELATION TO NEXT STEPS

### Convener's Conference Takitimu North Link – Stage 2

[FTAA-2507-1085]

2 October 2025

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#### Purpose of conference

[1] On 1 October 2025 I held a Convener conference in respect of this application. The conference was attended by the Applicant, the local authorities – Bay of Plenty Regional Council (**BOPRC**) and Western Bay of Plenty District Council (**WBOPDC**), – the Department of Conservation (**DOC**) on behalf of the Director-General, the Ministry for the Environment (**MfE**), and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (**HNZPT**). The iwi authorities and Treaty settlement entities identified as relevant under section 18(2)(a) of the Fast-track Approval Act 2024 (the Act), as listed in the **section 18** report provided by MfE were also invited. These entities are listed in Schedule 3 of the Minute dated 26 September 2025.

[2] Prior to the conference, I was informed that a number of entities had not included as relevant entities under section 18(2)(a) but were listed as 'other Māori groups with relevant interests' under section 18(2)(k) in the section 18 Report. Both the Councils and the Applicant agreed that they should have been included to be participants in the conference. I was informed at the conference that these entities were all related to one hapū and were all recognised as being the appropriate Treaty Settlement entity for the Application. These entities were duly invited to the conference. The entities that attended the conference were:

- (a) Representatives of Pirirākau Hapū
- (b) The Chair of the Pirirākau Tribal Authority
- (c) The Chair for the Pirirākau PSGE
- (d) Representative for Ngāti Taka Hapū.

Collectively called the **hapū entities**.

[3] The purpose of the conference was to canvass views of the statutory participants in respect of the two principal matters that I must determine in the exercise of my duties, functions and powers under the Act, namely the appointment of an expert panel to make a decision on the approvals sought in the application, and the setting of a timeframe within which that decision must be delivered. I will issue a separate minute in due course setting out the views that were expressed by conference participants as to those two matters and confirming the determinations I have made.

[4] The purpose of this minute is to record the outcome of my discussions with those entities representing the Pirirākau Hapū, particularly noting that these entities were not included in the section 18 Report.

[5] Of particular note

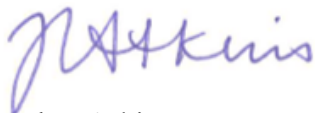
- (a) The hapū entities were concerned that they had not been identified correctly in the section 18 Report when their relationship has been appropriately recognised by the Crown in a Treaty settlement agreement.
- (b) The other participants at the conference agreed that the hapū entities ought to have been included in the section 18 Report as the relevant authority or Treaty settlement entity in addition to Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Ranginui.
- (c) The representative from MfE confirmed that this would be referred to the appropriate persons in that organisation.
- (d) The proposed amendments to the Act were briefly discussed in the

context of whether any amendments needed to be made to specifically address the issue that has arisen in this Application.

- (e) There are a number of management plans proposed by the Applicant that have had some input from the hapū entities but proper consideration, including appropriate time is required.

[6] I direct that the hapū entities, the Applicant, Councils, DOC and HNZPT are to confer and confirm what process and time is required to appropriately consider the management plans of concern by **Friday 10 October 2025**.

[7] Once I have clarity around the process and timeframes, I will be in a position to confirm that panel appointments and the decision timeframe.



Helen Atkins

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