



FTAA-2607-1273: Application received for referral of the project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – Stage 1 decisions

Project Name: Auckland Regional Landfill

Date submitted	1 September 2026	Tracking	26-BRF-02549
Security level	In-Confidence	Priority	Urgent

To	Action sought	Response by
Hon Chris Bishop Minister for Infrastructure	Decisions on recommendations in Table A	8 September 2026

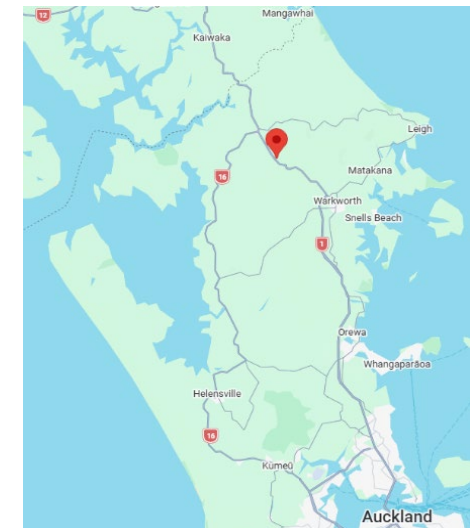
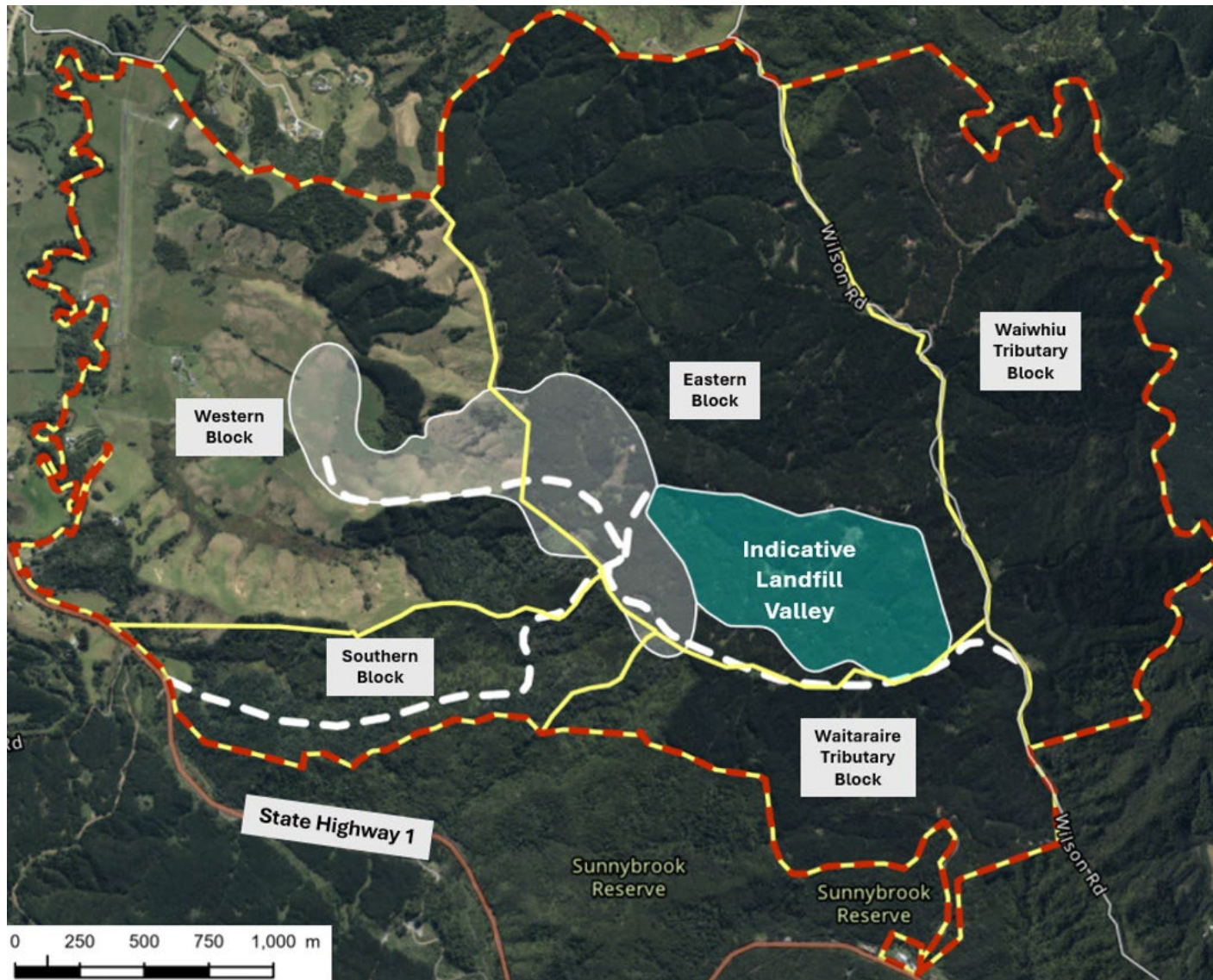
Actions for Minister's Office staff	Return the signed briefing to: FTAreferrals@mfe.govt.nz Send email to Ministers to invite written comments
Number of appendices: 3	Appendices: 1. Statutory framework summary 2. Application documents for Auckland Regional Landfill project 3. List of the Māori groups referred to in section 18(2)

Ministry contacts

Name	Position	Telephone	1 st contact
Oliver Sangster	Principal Author		
Stephanie Frame	Manager	s 9(2)(a)	✓
Ilana Miller	General Manager	s 9(2)(a)	



Project location: 1232 State Highway 1, Wayby Valley, Auckland



LEGEND

- Indicative landfill valley
- Indicative ancillary activities
- Indicative access roads
- Block boundaries
- The site



Key messages

1. This briefing seeks your initial decisions on an application from Waste Management NZ Limited (the applicant) to refer the Auckland Regional Landfill project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) to the fast-track approvals process.
2. At this stage you can either decline an application under section 25 for the reasons set out section 21, or provide the application to, and invite comments from, the parties identified in section 17. If you agree to progress the application to stage 2, you will receive a further briefing following receipt of comments, to inform your final decision on whether to refer the project.
3. The project is described as “construction, operation, closure, and aftercare of a new Class 1 Landfill, and associated infrastructure, in the Wayby Valley area north of Auckland”.¹
4. The applicant intends to open Auckland Regional Landfill in the early-mid 2030s, following the future closure of the existing Redvale Landfill, which is also operated by the applicant.
5. A proposed extension of Redvale Landfill is currently subject to a separate substantive application under the Act, following your referral of that project in April 2026 (FTAA-2511-1136 refers). Resource consents for the Auckland Regional Landfill have been the subject of an ongoing appeals process, as outlined in this referral application. Following earlier approval of resource consents by Auckland Council in 2021, an interim decision on appeal by the Environment Court, and appeals to the High Court (which were dismissed), as noted to you in previous advice in May (26-BRF-01137). A Court of Appeals process is currently underway – a hearing was held in August 2026 with a decision reserved.
6. The project will require the proposed approvals:
 - a. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)
 - b. Wildlife Act approval under the Wildlife Act 1953
 - c. archaeological authority under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014
7. The applicant may also seek approval for a complex and/or standard freshwater fisheries activity under the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983, and may require approval under the Conservation Act 1987 for fish salvage activities (to be determined at the time of a substantive application).
8. We have undertaken initial analysis of the referral application, and this is presented along with our considerations and recommendations in Table A.
9. We have decided the application is complete and complies with section 14 of the Act, as the application complies with section 13 requirements, may be capable of satisfying the criteria in section 22 and does not appear to involve an ineligible activity. The applicable fee and levy have been paid.
10. We recommend you progress consideration of the referral application to the next stage of analysis (Stage 2) and invite written comments from the parties prescribed in section 17(1) of the Act being:
 - a. Auckland Council as the relevant local authority (including Watercare and Auckland

¹ This is the applicant’s proposed project description, as provided in section 2.2.1 of the application document. We note the proposal has separately been anecdotally referred to as the “Dome Valley” landfill.



Transport)

- b. the Minister for the Environment, the Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti, and the Minister for Māori Development
 - c. the Minister of Conservation and Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage as the other relevant portfolio Ministers
 - d. Department of Conservation and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga as the relevant administering agencies
 - e. the parties in Appendix 3 as the other identified Māori groups.
11. We recommend that you invite written comments from the following as additional persons under section 17(5) of the Act
- f. the Minister for Auckland, the Minister for Economic Growth, the Minister for Energy, the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery, and the Minister for Regional Development
 - g. the Chief Executive of Vector Limited, as the project's landfill gas energy component is proposed to connect to the local electricity network
 - h. the Chief Executive of New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi, given the potential for the project to involve direct site access onto State Highway 1.
12. We recommend that under section 20 you request further information from the applicant as detailed in Table A.

Action sought

13. Please indicate your decisions on the recommendations in Table A.

Signature

Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

Table A: Stage 1 analysis

Project details	Project Name		Applicant		Project Area	
	Auckland Regional Landfill (the project)		Waste Management NZ Limited (the applicant)		1232 State Highway 1, Wayby Valley. The total site area is approximately 1020 hectares. The site is described as being split into five blocks (Western, Eastern, Southern, Waiwhiu Tributary, and Waiteraire Tributary), with the landfill valley component is proposed to be within the Eastern Block. The main site access is proposed to be located off State Highway 1, approximately 6 km southeast of Wellsford and 13 km northwest of Warkworth.	
Project description	The project is described as: construction, operation, closure, and aftercare of a new Class 1 Landfill, and associated infrastructure, in the Wayby Valley area north of Auckland. The applicant is seeking the following approvals through the fast-track approvals process: a) resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) b) Wildlife Act approval under the Wildlife Act 1953 c) archaeological authority under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 The applicant may also seek the following approvals, to be confirmed at the time of a substantive application: d) approval for a standard and/or complex freshwater fisheries activity under the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983 e) approval under the Conservation Act 1987 for fish salvage activities.					
Notification and/or consultation undertaken	As required by section 11, the applicant has:					
	Notified in writing, the relevant local authorities	Notified in writing, the relevant iwi authorities, hapū and Treaty settlement entities	Consulted, the relevant MACA groups	Consulted, ngā hapū o Ngāti Porou	Notified in writing, the relevant administering agencies	Notified in writing, the holder of land to be exchanged
	Auckland Council (including Auckland Transport)	Tamaki Mana Whenua Collective, which the applicant describes as comprising: - Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki - Ngāti Manuhiri - Ngāti Maru - Ngāti Pāo - Ngāti Tamaterā - Ngāti Te Ata - Ngātiwai - Ngāti Whanaunga - Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara - Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei - Te Ākitai Waiohua - Te Kawerau ā Maki - Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whātua - Te Ahiwaru	N/A	N/A	Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Department of Conservation We note the applicant also notified the Ministry for the Environment (now part of Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions and Transport) but this is no longer a requirement under the Act.	N/A
Section 22 assessment criteria						
The project is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional or national benefits [section 22(1)(a)]	The Minister <u>must</u> consider a relevant Government policy statement (GPS) [s22(1A)] We do not consider the GPS on grocery competition is relevant to this application. There are no other GPSs you must consider. You <u>may</u> consider any of the following matters, or any other matters the Minister considers relevant: Will deliver new regionally or nationally significant infrastructure or enable the continued functioning of existing regionally or nationally significant infrastructure [s22(2)(a)(ii)] The project is for a new Class 1 landfill intended to provide capacity as replacement for the existing Redvale Landfill following its upcoming closure. Resource recovery and waste disposal facilities fall within the definition of ‘additional infrastructure’ under the National Policy Statement for Infrastructure 2025. The applicant states that, if the project does not obtain consent and is not operational by 2035, this would create a significant capacity shortfall and Auckland’s projected demand would fall to three (other) landfills.					

	<i>Will increase the supply of housing, address housing needs, or contribute to a well-functioning urban environment (within the meaning of policy 1 of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020) [s22(2)(a)(iii)]</i> The project involves a landfill gas electricity generation component, to supply the local Auckland grid. The applicant states that the project will contribute to a well-functioning environment through its provision of essential waste infrastructure and renewable energy generation that supports housing development, population growth and access to services necessary for communities' social, economic and cultural wellbeing. The application also describes potential transport benefits including dispersing truck movements reducing congestion on the Auckland Harbour Bridge and western and southern road network (compared with the counterfactual scenario of the Redvale Landfill being closed and not replaced with a new landfill in the north of Auckland). <i>Will deliver significant economic benefits [s22(2)(a)(iv)]</i> The application considers the project will have significant economic benefits, based on two economics reports (from NERA and NZIER), which compare the project against a counterfactual scenario of the Redvale Landfill closing and not being replaced, including: - In the counterfactual scenario, the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (which measures market concentration) is estimated to rise from 3,760 to 5,782, which is described as well beyond the thresholds competition regulators use to identify a substantial lessening of competition. Landfill gate prices are estimated as being 10-30% higher without the project. For example, a 15% gate price increase is estimated to equate to about \$26.42 per tonne of waste, which would amount to about \$42.2 million additional disposal costs per year across Auckland's projected 1.6 million tonnes of waste in 2035. - the project would provide an estimated direct saving of about \$17.3 million per year in transport costs, with associated transport emissions reductions estimated at 3.7 million CO2-e per year). The application also describes the traffic dispersal effects (reduced congestion) noted above in terms of potential economic benefit. - employment and capital investment during construction of the site and its infrastructure, and retained employment and operational expenditure in the Auckland region once operational. Retaining landfill capacity within Auckland also avoids the region becoming dependent on disposal capacity outside its boundaries. <i>Will support climate change adaptation, reduce risks arising from natural hazards, or support recovery from events caused by natural hazards [s22(2)(a)(viii)]</i> The applicant notes landfills provide waste disposal infrastructure which is critical to support recovery from events caused by natural hazards (noting material and debris from events such as Auckland Anniversary floods must be disposed of, rather than reused). The applicant considers ensuring this capacity is available in Auckland, through the development of ARL to be essential for resilience at a national and regional level. <i>Will address significant environmental issues [s22(2)(a)(ix)]</i> The application provides a range of technical memorandums, and considers that environmental issues have been adequately assessed and addressed. <i>Any other matters that may be relevant [s22(b)]</i> None identified		
Referring the project to the fast-track approvals process [section 22(1)(b)]	<i>Would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes [s22(1)(b)(i)]</i> The application states the project "is not expected to be operational until the mid-2030s", and provides an anticipated project construction commencement timeframe of "early to mid-2027" acknowledging a long lead in time is needed before the site can become operational. We note RMA approvals for the project are currently subject to court appeal proceedings. We also note this referral application includes multiple approval types that cannot otherwise be obtained through the existing RMA process (including Wildlife Act authority, archaeological authority, and potentially freshwater fisheries approvals). We consider referral to the Fast-track process has potential to facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effectively way than under normal processes. In light of project timeframes, and the FTAA timeframes and appeal / judicial review pathways, we recommend further information be sought from the applicant on this subject, including in relation to the proposed construction commencement timeframe (how the FTAA process would facilitate that, and any implications for a delay in terms of the project's overall operational timeframe). <i>Is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process [s22(1)(b)(ii)]</i> The applicant states that relevant experts have been engaged over a lengthy period, due to the project's appeals process, the project has had extensive involvement of other parties and consultation (with feedback that will be used to inform and refine mitigation measures, other than those determined through council-level and Environment Court processes), no Māori related considerations required to be considered are affected (Ngāti Manuhiri are project partners, and the applicant has reached agreement with all other interested iwi), and the applicant has extensive experience operating within Auckland and nationwide.		
Minister invites comments	<i>You must copy the application to, and invite written comments from [s17(1)]:</i> - relevant local authorities: – Auckland Council (including Watercare Services Limited and Auckland Transport) - the Minister for the Environment, the Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti, and the Minister for Māori Development - other relevant portfolio Ministers: – Minister of Conservation – Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage - relevant administering agencies: – Department of Conservation – Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga	<i>You may copy the application to, and invite written comments from, any other person [s17(5)]:</i> We recommend you invite comments from the following additional persons, for the specified reasons: - the Minister for Economic Growth, given the project's potential economic benefits, including a potential reduction in competition should the Redvale Landfill close without this project as replacement - the Minister for Auckland, given the project's implications in Auckland including waste disposal capacity, electricity and traffic following closure of Redvale Landfill	<i>The Minister may request further information about a referral application from the applicant, the relevant local authorities, or the relevant administering agencies to be provided within the time frame specified in the request.</i> We recommend you seek further information from the applicant to inform a decision on this referral application: - further details about the applicant's described construction commencement date (early to mid-2027), how a FTAA process would help facilitate that, and any implications for any delay in terms of the project's overall operational timeframe - further detail about how the FTAA process would enable the approvals for project to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes, particularly in light of

	e. the Māori groups identified in Appendix 3	c. the Minister for Regional Development, given the project's potential flow on implications related to waste disposal capacity in surrounding regions (Northland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty) d. the Minister for Energy, as the project proposes a landfill gas energy generation component e. the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery, given the project's potential to support natural hazard and disaster recovery through waste disposal capacity f. the Chief Executive of Vector Limited, as the project's landfill gas energy component is proposed to connect to the local electricity network g. the Chief Executive of New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi, given the potential for the project to involve direct site access onto State Highway 1, and other potential traffic implications	ongoing proceedings in relation to RMA approvals, and the FTAA's appeal and judicial review provisions c. description of any approvals required from New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi for works involving construction and/or permanent site access onto State Highway 1, and any contingencies should any necessary approvals not be obtained d. the extent to which any of the existing interests listed on titles would affect the applicant's ability to undertake the project (for example, notices under s195(2) of the Climate Change Response Act, and caveat by Springhill Estate Limited
Recommendations			Minister's decision
a.	Note that section 25 of the Act permits you to decline the referral application without inviting comments from the parties under section 17.		Noted
b.	Note that you have not yet provided the application to, nor sought any written comments on it from, the parties listed in section 17(1) but that you are required to do so if you do not decline the application under section 21 of the Act.		Noted
c.	Note that section 17(5) of the Act permits you to forward an application to, and invite written comments from, any other person.		Noted
d.	Note that if comments have been sought and provided within the required time frame you are required to consider it, along with the referral application, before deciding to decline the application.		Noted
e.	Note that section 20 of the Act permits you to request further information from the applicant or relevant local authorities or relevant administering agencies at any time before you decide whether to accept or decline an application.		Noted
f.	Agree to progress the Auckland Regional Landfill project to our Stage 2 analysis (invite written comments and request section 18 Treaty report).		Yes / No
g.	Agree to provide the application to, and invite written comments from: i. Auckland Council (including Watercare Services Limited and Auckland Transport) as the relevant local authority under section 17(1)(a) ii. the Minister for the Environment, the Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti, and the Minister for Māori Development under section 17(1)(b) iii. the Minister of Conservation, and the Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage as the other relevant portfolio Ministers under section 17(1)(b) iv. Department of Conservation and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga as the relevant administering agencies under section 17(1)(c) v. the parties in Appendix 3 as the identified Māori groups under section 17(1)(d) vi. any parties you are required to invite comments from under section 17(1)(d) and (e) who may be subsequently identified		Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No
h.	Agree to provide the application to and invite written comments from the following additional persons under section 17(5): i. the Minister for Auckland ii. the Minister for Regional Development iii. the Minister for Economic Growth iv. the Minister for Energy v. the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery vi. the Chief Executive of Vector Limited vii. the Chief Executive of New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi		Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No

i. Agree to seek further information from the applicant:	
a. further details about the applicant’s described construction commencement date (early to mid-2027), how a FTAA process would help facilitate that, and any implications for any delay in terms of the project’s overall operational timeframe	Yes / No
b. further detail about how the FTAA process would enable the approvals for project to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes, particularly in light of ongoing proceedings in relation to RMA approvals, and the FTAA’s appeal and judicial review provision	Yes / No
c. description of any approvals required from New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi for works involving construction and/or permanent site access onto State Highway 1, and any contingencies should any necessary approvals not be obtained	Yes / No
d. the extent to which any of the existing interests listed on titles would affect the applicant’s ability to undertake the project (for example, notices under s195(2) of the Climate Change Response Act, and caveat by Springhill Estate Limited	Yes / No
e. Note that you have agreed to delegate to the Secretary for the Environment your responsibility to send all correspondence, other than to Ministers.	Noted
f. Agree to send the email to invite written comments from Ministers.	Yes / No

Signed:

Hon Chris Bishop
Minister for Infrastructure

Date:

Appendix 1: Statutory framework summary

1. You are the sole decision maker for referral applications. If you accept a referral application, then the whole or part of the project will be referred to the fast-track approvals process.
2. If a Treaty settlement, the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011, the Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019, a Mana Whakahono ā Rohe or a joint management agreement provides for consideration of any document or procedural requirements, you must, where relevant:
 - a. give the document the same or equivalent effect through this process as it would have under any specified Act; and
 - b. comply with any applicable procedural requirements.
3. You must decline a referral application if:
 - a. you are satisfied the project does not meet the referral criteria in s22
 - b. you are satisfied the project involves an ineligible activity (s5)
 - c. you consider you do not have adequate information to inform your decision.
4. You may decline an application for any other reason, including those set out in s21(5) and even if the application meets the s22 referral criteria.
5. You can decline an application before or after inviting comments under s17(1). However, if comments have been sought and provided within the required time frame, you must consider them, along with the referral application, before deciding to decline the application.
6. If you do not decline a referral application at this initial stage you must copy the application to, and invite written comments from:
 - a. the relevant local authorities
 - b. the Minister for the Environment, the Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti, and the Minister for Māori Development
 - c. any other relevant portfolio Ministers
 - d. the relevant administering agencies
 - e. the Māori groups identified by the responsible agency
 - f. the owners of Māori land in the project area (if applicable)
 - g. you may provide the application to and invite comments from any other person.
7. You can request further information from an applicant, any relevant local authority or any relevant administering agency at any time before you decide to decline or accept a referral application (see section 20 of the Act).
8. However, if further information has been sought and provided within the required time frame you must consider it, along with the referral application, before deciding to decline the application.

Appendix 2: Application documents for Auckland Regional Landfill project

Appendix 3: List of the Māori groups referred to in section 18(2)

Name of group	Type of group (section of Act)
Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whātua	Iwi authority (s18(2)(a)); Treaty settlement entity (s18(2)(a)); negotiating mandate (s18(2)(d))
Ngāti Manuhiri Settlement Trust	Iwi authority (s18(2)(a)); Treaty settlement entity (s18(2)(a))
Te Kawerau Iwi Trust	Iwi authority (s18(2)(a)); Treaty settlement entity (s18(2)(a))
Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki Trust	Iwi authority (s18(2)(a)); Treaty settlement entity (s18(2)(a))
Ngāti Pāoa Iwi Trust	Iwi authority (s18(2)(a)); Treaty settlement entity (s18(2)(a))
Ngāti Maru Rūnanga Trust	Iwi authority (s18(2)(a)); Treaty settlement entity (s18(2)(a)); negotiating mandate (s18(2)(d))
Ngāti Te Ata Claims Support Whānau Trust	Iwi authority (s18(2)(a)); negotiating mandate (s18(2)(d))
Taonga o Marutūāhu Trustee Limited/ Marutūāhu Rōpū Limited Partnership	Treaty settlement entity (s18(2)(a)); negotiating mandate (s18(2)(d))
Te Kawerau Iwi Tiaki Trust	other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))
Ngā Maunga Whakahii o Kaipara Development Trust	other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))
Ngāti Tamaterā Settlement Trust	other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))
Ngaati Whanaunga Ruunanga Trust	other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))
Hako Tūpuna Trust	other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))
Ngātiwai Trust	other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))
Ngaati Whanaunga Ruunanga Trust	other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))
Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei Trust	other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))
Te Uri o Hau Settlement Trust	other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))
Te Roroa Whatu Ora Trust	other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))