

Hon Shane Jones

Minister for Oceans and Fisheries
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Resources
Associate Minister of Finance
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23 September 2026

Barrytown Minerals Project Expert Panel

Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – Barrytown Minerals Project application (FTAA-2605-1238)

Dear Expert Panel members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this substantive application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTAA 2024).

The FTAA 2024 has been established to provide a regime that makes it easier and quicker for regionally and nationally significant projects to gain the approvals needed for development, in support of this Government's economic growth objectives.

I have considered the application and its alignment with the priorities of my Regional Development and Resources portfolios. My comments are attached as Annex One.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S. Jones'.

Hon Shane Jones
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Resources

Annex One – Regional Development and Resources comments

Project overview

1. The applicant, Tāiko Critical Minerals Limited (Tāiko), seeks Fast-track approval to establish and operate mine sites, processing facilities, and ancillary activities for mineral sand extraction activities, processing, and transporting product at Barrytown in the West Coast region. The operation is proposed to occur over several stages.

Tāiko seeks consent for one of three resource blocks at its Barrytown site

2. Tāiko's overall operation, which is a listed project in Schedule 2 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024, is proposed to take place across three resource blocks, a central, southern and northern block, totalling approximately 700 hectares. Tāiko has already secured resource consents for the mining of the central block and a wet concentrator plant on the southern block.
3. This substantive application seeks all approvals necessary to establish and operate the mine site for mineral sand extraction activities on the southern block only (between Fagan Creek and Canoe Creek). The total application area comprises approximately 408 hectares, with a mine disturbance area of 280 hectares. Approvals are sought for a term of 35 years to provide sufficient time for mining activity to occur over stages, final rehabilitation and operational factors to take place. Mining of the northern block will likely not take place until the completion of operations on the southern block in 2050.
4. Economic analysis provided by the applicant identifies quantified impacts of the project. The analysis is based on a 22-year operation life and appears to include mining of the central and the southern blocks, but not later mining of the northern block. Expected impacts are:
 - a. additional annual gross domestic product (GDP) of around \$122.7 million
 - b. annual additional exports of around \$230 million per year
 - c. direct creation of an estimated 135 additional full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs, and approximately 189 additional jobs supported in the local economy.
5. In June 2026, Cabinet agreed to provide a \$20.0 million loan through the Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF) towards Tāiko's mining and mineral processing project at Barrytown. [CAB-26-MIN-0188].

Regional Development comments

6. Based on the information provided by the applicant, I consider the project is likely to have significant regional economic benefits in terms of the jobs it is expected to create, its contribution to regional economic output (estimated in the analysis to be 4.4 per cent of the West Coast region's current nominal GDP) and export growth.

Resources comments

7. The Government's Minerals Strategy for New Zealand to 2040 (the Strategy) sets a clear objective of doubling minerals export revenues to \$3 billion annually by 2035, recognising the importance of the minerals sector to economic growth, regional development and export diversification.
8. The applicant has projected that the operation will generate additional exports of \$230 million per annum. This would be a significant contribution to growing export receipts and materially supporting progress toward the Minerals Strategy's export growth target.

9. The Strategy also seeks to support the outcome of a resilient minerals sector, where our critical minerals are sought after and support resilient supply chains, here and overseas. New Zealand defines critical minerals to be minerals which are economically important and vulnerable to international or domestic supply disruptions.
10. New Zealand's Critical Minerals List, which was published alongside the Strategy identifies 37 critical minerals, including titanium, rare earth elements, and zirconium. These elements are also recognised internationally as critical minerals, and feature on the equivalent lists of jurisdictions including Australia, the European Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
11. The project is planned by Tāiko to export ilmenite, which is a form of titanium ore; concentrate containing rare earth elements; and zircon, a mineral containing zirconium. These exports would support international supply chains for these minerals, which are necessary for the objectives of New Zealand and our partners, such as the clean energy transition. I therefore consider that the project, as described in the application, would support the resilience outcome under the Minerals Strategy.