
MINUTE 8 OF THE PANEL CONVENER
Further Convener's Conference Waihi North [FTAA-2504-1046]

16 June 2025

Further conference to be held

[1] At the convener conference for this application held on 11 June 2025 I posed a number of queries to participants in relation to the section 18 report provided by the Ministry for the Environment. Some participants had not seen the section 18 report and others, the Department of Conservation (DOC) in particular, were not able to answer my specific questions. Unfortunately, none of the iwi authorities or Treaty settlement entities identified in the section 18 report were in attendance at the conference.

[2] I indicated to all conference participants that I would likely reach out to some specific iwi authorities and Treaty settlement entities in order to satisfy myself that there were no decision-making obligations arising out of relevant Treaty settlements that would have a bearing on my panel appointment and decision timeframe decisions.

[3] Following the conference, the EPA was contacted by DOC, who had in turn been contacted by several iwi entities advising that they had not received their invitation to the conference. The EPA administrators then checked relevant contact details against the details provided in the section 18 report and formed the view that, while some details in the report were inaccurate, others appeared to be correct and that invitations should have been received by the recipients they were

directed to.

[4] In light of the deficiency in the issue of conference invitations, and to ensure compliance with any relevant Treaty settlement obligations, I have scheduled a further conference for all iwi authorities and Treaty settlement entities identified in the section 18 report, to ensure that they have an opportunity to express their views as to panel appointments and decision timing, as well as any matters of tikanga that they would like to bring to my attention. I have also provided them with the name of a potential panel appointee with extensive te ao Māori and Māori development expertise, and asked them to communicate whether they have any concerns with that potential appointee.

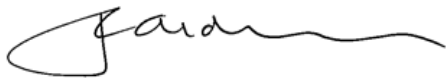
[5] The further conference has been scheduled for Wednesday 18 June at 10.00am. I directed the EPA to advise the Applicant of the further conference and the reasons for it and that the Applicant would not be invited to attend the conference. This is on the basis that the matters I intend to canvass with the iwi entities are directly relevant to my section 7 obligations and were signalled to conference participants at the conference. I could have chosen to make further enquiries by correspondence, but I consider that these are matters that warrant the respect of a meeting at which iwi can feel comfortable to raise issues of tikanga. It is also appropriate that I seek their views on a potential panel appointment and the conference provides an efficient opportunity to do so. The Applicant was offered an opportunity to comment on the section 18 issues that I raised at the conference and made no comment other than to acknowledge receipt of the section 18 report.

[6] The conference on 18 June will be recorded, however publication of all or part of that recording is subject to any confidential matters that may be raised by iwi.

[7] I note that Counsel for the applicant has asked that the applicant have an opportunity to make submissions on any matters that are raised in the 18 June

conference that may result in my setting a longer decision timeframe than what was discussed by parties at the first conference. Noting that I made no commitment to a specific timeframe during the first conference, and that the Act does not require that the applicant be consulted before making my decision, no provision will be made for further submissions from the applicant.

[8] Finally, I am mindful of my obligations under section 10 of the Act. Following the additional conference I expect to be able to move to panel appointments and to fix the decision timeframe in a timely manner.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Caldwell', with a long, horizontal, wavy line extending to the right.

Jennifer Caldwell

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