



FTAA-2604-1223: Application received for referral of the project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – Stage 1 decisions

Project Name: Milbrow Estate

Date submitted:	26 May 2026	Tracking #: 26-BRF-01392	
Security level:	In-Confidence	MfE priority:	Urgent

	Action sought:	Response by:
To Hon Chris Bishop, Minister for Infrastructure	Decisions on recommendations in Table A	3 June 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 the Milbrow Estate project 3. List of the Māori groups referred to in section 18(2)

Ministry for the Environment contacts:

Position	Name	Cell phone	1 st contact
Principal Author	Ashley Sycamore		
Manager	Stephanie Frame	s 9(2)(a)	✓
General Manager	Ilana Miller	s 9(2)(a)	

Project location



Image 1: Approximate project area indicated with red marker (left), and project plan (right)

Key messages

1. This briefing seeks your initial decisions on an application from Caland Holdings Limited (the applicant) to refer the Milbrow Estate 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 for the reasons set out section 21, or provide the application to, and invite comments from, the parties identified in section 17. If you do not decline the application, you will receive a further briefing following receipt of comments, to inform your final decision on whether to refer the project.

Project description

3. The project is described as a residential development comprising a 92-lot lifestyle subdivision and the construction of 90 dwellings on approximately 83.3 hectares of rural land at 66 and 70 McFetridge Drive and 89 Tauranga Direct Road, Hamurana, Rotorua.
4. The project comprises:
 - a. subdivision of approximately 83 hectares, including the creation of approximately 92 rural residential lifestyle lots
 - b. construction of no less than 90 new dwellings
 - c. retention of two existing dwellings
 - d. formation of internal roads, accessways, and internal walking tracks
 - e. earthworks to establish building platforms and infrastructure
 - f. installation of stormwater treatment and attenuation systems

- g. reticulated wastewater connection
 - h. potable water and power supply
 - i. landscaping, planting, and boundary treatments
 - j. vesting of roads and reserves.
5. The project seeks resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) to authorise the project. No other approvals are sought via the fast-track approvals process.

Initial recommendations

6. We have undertaken initial analysis of the referral application, and this is presented along with our considerations and recommendations in Table A.
7. 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.
8. 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. Bay of Plenty Regional Council and Rotorua District Council as 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. the Associate Minister of Housing as the other relevant portfolio Minister
 - d. the parties in Appendix 3 as the identified Māori groups.
9. We also recommend that you invite written comments from the following additional persons under section 17(5) of the Act:
- a. the Chief Executive of NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi – as the agency responsible for State Highway 36 adjoining the project area
 - b. the Chief Executive of Transpower New Zealand Limited (Transpower) – as Transpower's 110 kV National Grid transmission line is located within the project area
 - c. the Minister for Regional Development
 - d. the Minister for Economic Growth.

Action sought

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

Signature



Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

Table A: Stage 1 analysis

	Project Name	Applicant	Project Area	
Project details	Milbrow Estate (the project)	Caland Holdings Limited (the applicant)	The project area encompasses approximately 83.3 hectares of rural land at 66 and 70 McFetridge Drive and 89 Tauranga Direct Road, Hamurana, Rotorua.	
Project description	The project is a residential development on approximately 83.3 hectares of rural land in Hamurana, Rotorua, involving a 92-lot lifestyle residential subdivision and the construction of 90 dwellings. The project comprises: a. subdivision of approximately 83.3 hectares, including the creation of approximately 92 rural residential lifestyle lots b. construction of no less than 90 new dwellings c. retention of two existing dwellings d. formation of internal roads, accessways, and internal walking tracks e. earthworks to establish building platforms and infrastructure f. installation of stormwater treatment and attenuation systems g. reticulated wastewater connection h. potable water and power supply i. landscaping, planting, and boundary treatments j. vesting of roads and reserves. The project will require the proposed approvals under the fast-track approvals process: a. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) as described in section 42(4)(a) of the Act.			
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, or ngā hapū o Ngāti Porou	Notified in writing, the relevant administering agencies, or the holder of land to be exchanged
	– Bay of Plenty Regional Council (BOPRC) – Rotorua District Council (RDC)	– Te Maru o Ngāti Rangiwewehi Iwi Authority – Raukawa Settlement Trust – Te Arawa Lakes Trust	Not applicable	Not applicable
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)] The only current GPS is the GPS on Grocery Competition. The project is for a residential development and therefore, we consider there to be no GPS relevant to your decision. You <u>may</u> consider any of the following matters, or any other matters the Minister considers relevant. The applicant considers the project, being a residential development in the Rotorua District, is a development project that would have significant regional benefits, for the reasons outlined below: <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 applicant states that the economic assessment provided with the application (Appendix I) identifies constrained supply in the premium lifestyle housing segment within the Rotorua District, particularly in Hamurana, Ngongotahā, and surrounding rural areas. The applicant notes that current market evidence indicates a limited number of lifestyle dwellings or lots available at any one time, with demand estimated at around 15 dwellings per annum, resulting in less than one year of effective supply within this segment. The applicant considers that the project would deliver 92 premium lifestyle lots within an indicative price range of approximately \$1.095 million to \$1.75 million. The applicant states that this would represent a material addition to district-wide lifestyle housing capacity, equating to approximately six years of supply based on recent uptake rates, and would significantly improve short- to medium-term development capacity in this market segment. <i>Will deliver significant economic benefits [s22(2)(a)(iv)]</i> The applicant states that the project is estimated to generate approximately \$27.2 million in GDP during construction and support 175 full-time equivalent jobs over this period, providing a short- to medium-term economic stimulus to the Rotorua District and wider Bay of Plenty region. The applicant considers that, while the project does not directly address lower-cost housing, it contributes to market efficiency by increasing housing choice and typological diversity, supporting relocation within the district, and enabling housing market fluidity across price brackets. The applicant states that, once established, the development would support approximately 92 households, generate around \$2.0 million in GDP per annum, and provide approximately 20 ongoing full-time equivalent jobs across retail, accommodation, food services, and related sectors. The applicant considers that the project may also attract and retain higher-income households within commuting distance of employment centres, supporting business investment, local spending, and economic diversification.			

	<i>Will address significant environmental issues [s22(2)(a)(ix)]</i> The applicant states that the project is located within the Lake Rotorua groundwater catchment, where existing dairy farming generates diffuse nitrogen and phosphorus discharges through stock grazing and fertiliser application. The applicant notes that Lake Rotorua has experienced long-term water quality degradation due to elevated nutrient inputs, and that a sustainable nitrogen load for the lake has been established, requiring significant reductions from historical levels. The applicant considers that achieving and maintaining these reductions is a regional priority, supported by regulatory frameworks, investment, and co-governance arrangements. The applicant identifies that the project will result in the cessation of pastoral grazing and associated fertiliser use. The applicant considers that a substantial portion of the site's nitrogen allocation will be permanently surrendered, and that the project will deliver a permanent reduction of approximately 1.1 tonnes of nitrogen per year entering Lake Rotorua, alongside reductions in phosphorus losses. The applicant states that this reduction represents a meaningful contribution to nutrient reduction targets and lake restoration objectives, and considers that the project addresses a significant environmental issue of regional importance. <i>Is consistent with local or regional planning documents, including spatial strategies [s22(2)(a)(x)]</i> The applicant considers that the project is consistent with the relevant Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement (RPS) and Rotorua District Plan (RDP) provisions relating to water quality, land use change, and housing supply. In particular, the applicant refers to RPS Urban Growth Policies UG 14B and UG 15B, which provide for development capacity and the integration of land use with infrastructure and environmental outcomes, and to RDP Subdivision (SUB-O1; SUB-P1–P4) and Rural Zone (RURZ-O1; RURZ-P1–P7) objectives and policies. The applicant considers the project aligns with these provisions by enabling development while managing subdivision design and rural land use effects.		
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 applicant states that, although the fast-track approvals process involves significantly higher upfront statutory fees and levies than standard RMA pathways, it is likely to be more cost-effective overall when assessed against total project delivery costs, timeframes, procedural duplication, and appeal risk. The applicant considers that the fast-track approvals process would provide a single, integrated approval pathway, avoiding the need for multiple sequential processes under the RMA, such as a private plan change, subdivision consents, regional consents, and potentially additional approvals. The applicant notes that these standard processes would involve separate applications, reporting requirements, hearings, and a higher likelihood of appeals, contributing to greater complexity, longer timeframes, and increased costs. The applicant further states that the fast-track approvals process reduces the risk of extended litigation and limits appeal rights primarily to points of law, in contrast to the full merits appeals available under a private plan change, which could result in significant additional planning, legal, and holding costs, as well as delays to project commencement. The applicant also considers that delays associated with sequential RMA processes can increase financing, infrastructure, consultant, and legal costs, and create uncertainty for investment decisions. <i>Is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process [s22(1)(b)(ii)]</i> The applicant considers that referring the project is appropriate given its scale, and states that the proposed site is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process. The applicant considers that the project would reinforce the value of the fast-track approvals process for regionally and nationally significant projects, and supports the strategic significance and contiguous nature of the land holding.		
Minister invites comments	<i>You must copy the application to, and invite written comments from [s17(1)]:</i> - relevant local authorities: - BOPRC - RDC - the Minister for the Environment, the Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti, and the Minister for Māori Development - other relevant portfolio Ministers: - the Associate Minister of Housing – as the project is for a residential development and subdivision - the Māori groups identified in Appendix 3.	<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 reasons specified: - Chief Executive of NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) – as the agency responsible for State Highway 36 adjoining the project area - Chief Executive of Transpower New Zealand Limited (Transpower) – as Transpower's 110 kV National Grid transmission line is located within the project area - Minister for Regional Development - Minister for Economic Growth.	<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 have not identified any further information to be sought at this stage.
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 Milbrow Estate 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: BOPRC and RDC as the relevant local authorities under section 17(1)(a)			Yes / No

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)	Yes / No
iii.	the Associate Minister of Housing as the other relevant portfolio Minister under section 17(1)(b)	Yes / No
iv.	the parties in Appendix 3 as the identified Māori groups under section 17(1)(d)	Yes / No
v.	any parties you are required to invite comments from under section 17(1)(d) and (e) who may be subsequently identified.	Yes / No
h.	Agree to provide the application to and invite written comments from the following additional persons under section 17(5):	
i.	the Chief Executive of NZTA – as the agency responsible for State Highway 36 adjoining the project area	Yes / No
ii.	the Chief Executive of Transpower – as Transpower's 110 kV National Grid transmission line is located within the project area	Yes / No
iii.	the Minister for Regional Development	Yes / No
iv.	the Minister for Economic Growth.	Yes / No
i.	Note that you have agreed to delegate to the Secretary for the Environment your responsibility to send all correspondence, other than to Ministers.	Noted
j.	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 the Milbrow Estate project

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

Name of group	Type of group (section of Act)
Te Maru o Ngāti Rangiwewehi Iwi Authority	iwi authority (s18(2)(a))
Te Tāhuhu o Tawakeheimoa Trust	Treaty settlement entity – Ngāti Rangiwewehi Claims Settlement Act 2014 (s18(2)(a))
Raukawa Settlement Trust	iwi authority (s18(2)(a)); Treaty settlement entity (s18(2)(a))
Ngāti Uenukukōpako Iwi Trust	iwi authority (s18(2)(a))
Te Pūmautanga o Te Arawa Trust	iwi authority (s18(2)(a))
Te Komiti Nui o Ngāti Whakaue Trust	iwi authority (s18(2)(a))
Te Arawa Lakes Trust	iwi authority (s18(2)(a))
Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group	other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))
Tarimano (Awahou) Marae	other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))