Fast-track

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

MINUTE 7 OF THE PANEL CONVENER

Next steps following expert conferencing and joint reporting memorandum

Wairakei South [FTAA-2605-1227]

6 November 2026

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[1] In Minute 6 I directed that, following expert conferencing arranged by the parties on various stormwater and water quality related workstreams, Joint Witness Statements (JWS) be filed in respect of all conferenced topics together with a Joint Reporting Memorandum. Those directions were complied with on 30 October 2026.

[2] The purpose of this minute is to acknowledge the information provided in response to the directions, and to confirm next steps towards panel appointment and commencement.

[3] In summary, the Joint Memorandum confirmed that:

a. Two days of facilitated expert conferencing were held on 19 and 20 October 2026 in respect of stormwater/flood modelling and water quality. Following a site visit to the application site BPRC's ecologist advised that no conferencing was required in respect of wetland delineation and ecological matters, on the basis that they could be addressed in BPRC's invited comments in due course;

b. A number of matters remain unresolved and require further work to be undertaken following expert conferencing:

i. On stormwater/flood modelling, the Applicant is updating its model to address matters identified in the JWS and will report on the results of the updated model to enable the experts to conclude

whether the Applicant's model provides a reliable basis for assessing the actual and potential stormwater and flooding effects. The report will be peer reviewed by Awa. BPRC's expert will then undertake his assessment of the relevant effects. This approach is being adopted in place of a full calibration, validation and verification process for the model.

ii. On stormwater pumping infrastructure, the Applicant continues to work with BPRC to provide the required information;

iii. On water quality, the Applicant has provided BPRC with more recent water quality data which is currently being reviewed. The water quality experts have agreed that additional work is required to establish appropriate limits for stormwater contaminants and that this can be done via consent conditions.

[4] As I read the Joint Memorandum, the timing for the completion of this further work is as follows:

a. The further modelling work will be completed within 8 weeks of the expert conference, namely by the week commencing 14 December;

b. Review of the updated water quality data will be completed by BPRC by 16 November;

c. Other matters (including BPRC's assessment of the stormwater and flooding effects following completion of the modelling work and work on conditions) can be progressed via the invited comments process following commencement of the expert panel.

Next steps and directions

[5] In Minute 6 I indicated that in order for the panel to commence work and meet the first of its procedural obligations prior to the end of year break in working days (under the RMA as imported into the FTAA) it would need to be appointed no later than 25 November and commence no later than 2 December. That would enable the invitation to comment to be sent by 16 December.

[6] Given the steps I have directed the parties to take since the first convener conference, there has been a necessary delay to panel set up to ensure that the panel has all the information it needs to progress efficiently with its decision-making task. While there remains some outstanding work to finalise the stormwater and flooding-related workstreams that the parties have identified over the past several months, I consider that the work undertaken to date has been constructive and appears capable of completion before the end of year break.

[7] On that basis, and subject to any request to the contrary from the Applicant or any of the councils, I intend to progress with panel appointment and commencement on the following basis:

a. The panel will comprise:

   i. Gerald Lanning (chair)

   ii. Greg Hill (local authority appointee)

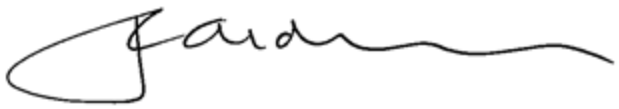
   iii. Kyle Christensen (stormwater engineer).

b. The appointment date will be 23 November 2026 and the commencement date will be Monday 30 November 2026;

c. I will fix the decision timeframe at 80 working days following the receipt of comments. The decision will therefore be due on **28 May 2027**, having regard to the suspension of working days over the end of year holiday period, and assuming the invitation to comment is sent by **14 December 2026**;

d. Any comments on the proposed commencement date, having regard to the projected delivery date for the further information identified in paragraphs [3] and [4] above, should be provided to EPA no later than **5pm on Wednesday 11 November 2026**;

e. Following receipt of any comments I will release a final minute formally recording the panel appointment and timeframe decisions.



Jennifer Caldwell

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