
MINUTE OF THE PANEL CONVENER

Conference outcomes

FTAA-2604-1207

(19 June 2026)

[1] Southern Link Property Ltd seeks approvals to establish and operate an inland port and logistics hub at 270-292 Dukes Road North, North Taieri.

[2] A conference was held on 3 June 2026 concerning the application filed by Southern Link Property Ltd under the Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024.

[3] The applicant has complied with the conference directions and has filed:

- (a) supplementary or amended (tracked change) reports and new condition sets;
- (b) a memorandum confirming, on behalf of the authors, that reports attached to the application and subject to a disclaimer, may be relied upon by the panel and participants; and
- (c) has provided a description of the issues raised by adjoining landowners and occupiers.

[4] A copy of the Treaty Impact Assessment, prepared on behalf of Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou, has also been filed.

[5] I have not received any further notification of legal or interpretation issues. I conclude that there are none, apart from the single issue recorded in Minute 4

dated 4 June 2026. I am satisfied that the timeframe is adequate for any further technical report to be filed, if required.

Production of new and supplementary information and updated sets of conditions

[6] Participation under the Fast-track is meaningful only if information is sufficient and, I add, current. While this application is complete and within scope (s 46), the applicant is continuing to engage with the local authorities and iwi to narrow and reduce the matters in contention. Because of that engagement, new and supplementary information has been produced and the original sets of conditions substantially revised.

[7] I directed the applicant to produce this information before the panel commenced. I did so for two reasons: (a) to enable meaningful engagement by participants invited to comment and (b) to reduce inefficiency and costs associated with the panel working off out of date information.

[8] I am grateful for the applicant's response, its willingness to remain engaged and to front-foot the production of information is best practice.

[9] I do not know whether the proposed condition sets and further information address the issues raised by the Local Authorities. The Treaty Settlement Report records that:

...the proposed Southern Link Inland Port will result in cultural impacts across multiple areas including wāhi tupuna, wai, mahika kai, taoka species, and the broader cultural values of whakapapa, rakatirataka, mana, kaitiakitaka, manaakitaka, and whānau ora. The mitigation measures proposed in the technical reports are extensive and provide a foundation for managing effects but, from a cultural perspective, require enhancement.

[10] I am confident, however, that the applicant will continue to engage and work to narrow or reduce the matters in issue.

Issues

[11] At the conference the Dunedin City Council and Otago Regional Council addressed the principal issues/topics in contention. These are in addition to a range of other impacts which the panel will need to assess but which, at this stage, appear capable of resolution.

[12] For Dunedin City Council the likely principal issues/topics are:

- (a) the impact on the road network (likely to be a key topic for the local community);
- (b) the impact of noise on adjoining landowners and occupiers; and
- (c) the impact of lighting on adjoining landowners and occupiers

[13] The City Council has engaged five consultants from Beca and Styles Group and six inhouse experts to review this project.

[14] ORC records its uncertainty about the effects on freshwater quality and ecology of Silver Stream arising from the discharge of construction and operational phase stormwater. Allied to this are mana whenua concerns around the wastewater and stormwater system design.

[15] For ORC, the principal issues include:

- (a) for a site that is subject to a flood hazard, do conditions adequately reflect the outcomes that must be achieved by the detailed engineering design?
- (b) are the proposed conditions clear, certain, and enforceable?
- (c) for conditions supporting management places, are there suitable trigger and response type provisions?
- (d) is documentation control adequate and can the panel be satisfied that the monitoring, reporting, accountability and correction action requirements are consistently specified within conditions?

[16] The Regional Council has engaged seven consultants employed by Beca and Morphum, together with other inhouse experts.

[17] I will not summarise the principal issues that arise for Te Rūnaka o Ōtākou,¹ these are carefully set out in the Treaty Impact Statement.

Timeframe for the decision

[18] The timeframe for the decision is 65 working days; this is reduced from the timeframe I was contemplating prior to the conference.

[19] This is a complex application. Attached to the application are 40 appendices, many of which are technical reports or are based on technical reports. Overall 46 documents have been filed comprising in excess of 2000 pages. Numerous approvals are sought, and, in addition, the applicant has accepted that approvals for additional consents are required and has responded by updating the application.

[20] This documentation is set to substantially increase after comments are received.

[21] While the volume of technical information is consistent with the scale of the proposal, it gives rise to a moderate level of evidential and factual complexity due to the volume of technical material, number of approvals sought, and reliance on expert evidence.

[22] I agree with ORC's caution that careful assessment (and adequate time) is required to ensure that the information is understood and any inaccuracies, inconsistencies, or issues are identified and interrogated. The timeframe should respond to this complexity appropriately. Underestimating time impacts the

¹ Te Rūnaka o Ōtākou, supported by Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki and Te Rūnangs o Moeraki.

quality of the decisions made under this Act, and if granted, may impact the project itself.

[23] Finally, I have accounted for the fact that the applicant did not engage with the adjacent owners and occupiers until after the application was filed. Their position is unknown, but time has been allowed for engagement to be meaningfully pursued.

[24] The panel commencement date, for the purpose of section 53 of the Act, is 30 June 2026. The panel will invite comments from participants by 15 July 2026 2026; comments will be due by 12 August 2026. The applicant's response will be due by 19 August 2026. Subject to the processing of the application being suspended for any of the reasons outlined in section 60 of the Act, the decision on the application will be due on 12 November 2026.

The panel

[25] I will appoint the following persons to the expert panel:

- (a) Cindy Robinson (Chair)
- (b) Ray O'Callaghan (Local Authority nominee)
- (c) Steve Abley

[26] The panel collectively has the knowledge, skills, and expertise relevant to the approvals sought, including expertise in environmental matters.

[27] The panel includes members with an understanding of te ao Māori and Māori development.

[28] Mr Abley advised me that he and Mr Bob Fulton, a Director of Chalmers Properties Limited which is owned by Port Otago Limited, worked for Fulton Hogan in the 1990s. Having declared this relationship, I am satisfied that no conflict of interest arises.

[29] The appointment will be effective on 23 June 2026 with the panel commencement date, for the purpose of s 53, being 30 June 2026.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane". The letter "J" is large and loops around the "ane".

Jane Borthwick

Panel convener for the purpose of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024