



15 October 2024

OIAD-1309

9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 10 October 2024 to the Ministry for the Environment, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I would like to get a list of all the projects that were referred to ministers by the advisory panel that assessed the applications for the fast-track bill schedule 2.

I am seeking any documentation that outlines the advisory panel's assessment of Palmerston North City Council's Manawatu Regional Freight Ring Road application for the fast-track bill schedule 2.

I would also like to see any documentation that outlines advice to ministers regarding the Manawatu Regional Freight Ring Road for the fast-track bill schedule 2.

If the application was rejected by the advisory panel, I would like to see any documentation that outlines the reason for the Manawatu Regional Freight Ring Road application to be rejected.

Ministers recently received a report from an independent Advisory Group with recommendations on the suitability of projects for inclusion in Schedule 2 of the Bill. Due to the high public interest in the Bill, the Ministry has proactively released the report on our website. The report includes an overview of all assessed project applications, both successful and unsuccessful.

Therefore, the Ministry is refusing your request under section 18(d) of the Act, as the information you have requested is now publicly available. You will be able to find the Advisory Group's report on the Ministry's website at: <https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals-bill/>.

The 149 projects chosen by Cabinet to be listed in the Bill will be listed in Schedule 2 of the Bill once the Bill is reported back from the Environment Committee in mid-October. All projects listed in Schedule 2 of the Bill, once it is passed into law, will still be required to apply to an Expert Consenting Panel (Panel) for their consents. While the Bill process is faster than standard Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) processes, the Panel is still required to assess the environmental impacts of the project against the RMA, relevant national direction, and other relevant local planning documents, including Water Conservation Orders.

If they decide to grant an application, the Panel can also recommend conditions to ensure adverse effects of the project on the environment are managed appropriately. This process will be managed by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). More information about all projects in the consent process will be made available in due course on the EPA's website at: <https://www.epa.govt.nz/fast-track-consenting/status>.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decision to refuse this request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on their website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Frame', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Stephanie Frame

Manager, Fast Track Consenting

Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao