

2020-B-07255

Sarah Gardner  
Chief Executive  
Otago Regional Council  
s 9(2)(a)

Dear Sarah

**COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-Track Consenting) Act 2020 – Silverlight Studios – Comments sought**

In the week commencing 12 October 2020, the Minister for the Environment received an application to refer the above project to an expert consenting panel for consideration under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (the Act). The proposed project is located within the Otago region.

The project is described as follows, and a copy of the application is attached:

**Silverlight Studios**

Construction and operation of a film studio, post-production facilities, a film school, a screening theatre, a New Zealand film exhibition, and supporting facilities in Wanaka, Otago.

Under delegated authority from the Minister for the Environment, I invite you to provide written comments on the proposed project pursuant to section 21(2) of the Act (a template is attached for this purpose). Comment is sought on the specific matters outlined in the table on the next page, and any further information you consider relevant to the Minister for the Environment's decision on whether to refer the project to an expert consenting panel. If it is more efficient to discuss this application, please contact me or my team at [fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz) and we will make ourselves available for a discussion with you.

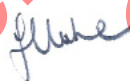
### Information requirements

1. The applicant may need to discharge wastewater to land if they cannot connect to the Council's wastewater system. If this is the case:
  - a. What potential environmental effects do you consider the proposal having on land and freshwater?
  - b. What level of treatment would you expect before discharge?
  - c. Are there any reasons why discharge of treated wastewater is unsuitable in this location?
  - d. What information should the applicant provide to the expert consenting panel regarding wastewater discharge if this project is referred?
2. The applicant may need to abstract groundwater for potable water. If this is the case:
  - a. Is groundwater and freshwater in the area fully allocated or over allocated?
  - b. What information should the applicant provide to the panel regarding potable water if this project is referred?
3. The applicant proposes to convert and expand the existing reservoir to a lake.
  - a. Are there any issues with this occurring?
  - b. What information should the applicant provide on earthworks and water takes for this activity if the application is referred?
4. If the project progresses to the expert consenting panel, are there any other technical reports that the applicant should provide in their consent application?
5. If the project progresses to the expert consenting panel, are there any groups that the expert consenting panel should invite to provide comments on the application? If so, please specify reasons.
6. Does the applicant, or a company owned by the applicant, have any environmental regulatory compliance history in your region?

If the Minister for the Environment decides to refer the project to a panel, you will have the opportunity to nominate a local authority representative (who could be a councillor or independent hearings commissioner) to sit on the panel and determine the application. Applicants will provide a detailed assessment of environmental effects at this next stage and you will have the opportunity to provide further comments to the panel. The Ministry for the Environment has prepared guidance on local authority involvement with fast-track consenting projects which you can access on the Ministry for the Environment website.

Please provide your comments via return email within 10 working days so that the Minister for the Environment can take your comments into consideration when deciding on the application.

Yours sincerely



Sara Clarke  
**Manager, Fast-Track Consenting Team**

Enclosures:

- A. Application to refer the Silverlight Studios project to an expert consenting panel including supporting information
- B. Response template for written comments

cc: Joanna Gilroy, Consents Manager, Otago Regional Council

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