



EVENT BRIEFING

Visit to Christchurch – Connecting Canterbury: Strengthening Infrastructure for Growth Workshop, and meet with regional stakeholders, 9 April 2025

Date:	7 April 2025	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	0011634

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon James Meager Minister for the South Island	Attend and speak at the Connecting Canterbury: Strengthening Infrastructure for Growth Workshop. Meet with representatives from ChristchurchNZ. Meet with representatives from Murihiku Regeneration and Ngāi Tahu.	9 April 2025

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Karl Woodhead	General Manager Strategy, Planning and Performance, Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit (Kānoa)	Privacy of natural persons	
Cory Hagenaars	South Island Lead Advisor, Kānoa	Privacy of natural persons	✓

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

Minister's office to complete:

☐ Approved

☐ Declined

☐ Noted

☐ Needs change

☐ Seen

☐ Overtaken by Events

☐ See Minister's Notes

☐ Withdrawn

Comments



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Purpose

To provide background and supporting information for your attendance and participation at the following events on Wednesday, 9 April 2025:

- Opening address to the Connecting Canterbury: Strengthening Infrastructure for Growth Workshop.
- Meeting with representatives from ChristchurchNZ to discuss economic development plans.
- Meeting with representatives from Murihiku Regeneration and Ngāi Tahu to discuss regional development and opportunities in Murihiku Southland.

Recommendations

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment recommend you:

- a **Note** the information in this briefing to support your attendance and speech at the Connecting Canterbury: Strengthening Infrastructure for Growth Workshop.

Noted

- b **Note** the information in this briefing to support your meeting with representatives from ChristchurchNZ.

Noted

- c **Note** the information in this briefing to support your meeting with representatives from Murihiku Regeneration and Ngāi Tahu.

Noted

Karl Woodhead
General Manager Strategy, Planning and Performance
Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit, MBIE

07 / 04 / 2025

Hon James Meager
Minister for the South Island

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Summary

1. On Wednesday, 9 April 2025, you are visiting Christchurch. A summary itinerary is below:

Time	Activity	Venue
8.30am to 9.15am	Deliver the opening address to the Connecting Canterbury: Strengthening Infrastructure for Growth Workshop.	Koura II Room, Sudima Hotel, 49 Salisbury Street, Christchurch.
Noon to 1.00pm	Meet with representatives from ChristchurchNZ to discuss economic development plans.	Level 3, BNZ Centre, 101 Cashel Street, Christchurch.
1.30pm to 2.30pm	Meet with representatives from Murihiku Regeneration and Ngāi Tahu to discuss regional development and opportunities in Murihiku Southland.	Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Offices, 15 Show Place, Christchurch.

2. Information to support your attendance and speech at the Connecting Canterbury: Strengthening Infrastructure for Growth Workshop is attached at **Annex One**.
3. Information to support your meeting with representatives from ChristchurchNZ is attached at **Annex Five**.
4. Information to support your meeting with representatives from Murihiku Regeneration and Ngāi Tahu is attached at **Annex Seven**.
5. Cory Hagenaaars, South Island Lead Advisor, Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit (Kānoa) will support you at the first two engagements. His contact details are below.

Name	Position/ Organisation	Telephone
Cory Hagenaaars	South Island Lead Advisor	Privacy of natural persons

Annexes

Annex One: Connecting Canterbury: Strengthening Infrastructure for Growth Workshop

Annex Two: Draft speech notes to support opening address

Annex Three: Connecting Canterbury discussion points

Annex Four: Government's actions to enable economic growth throughout New Zealand

Annex Five: Meeting with representatives from ChristchurchNZ

Annex Six: ChristchurchNZ Economic Ambition

Annex Seven: Meeting with representatives from Murihiku Regeneration and Ngāi Tahu

Annex One: Connecting Canterbury: Strengthening Infrastructure for Growth Workshop

1. From 8.30am to 9.15am, you will attend and give the opening address at the Connecting Canterbury: Strengthening Infrastructure for Growth Workshop (the Workshop), at Koura II Room, Sudima Hotel, 49 Salisbury Street, Christchurch.
2. You will be met on arrival by Nick Leggett, Chief Executive, Infrastructure New Zealand. Mr Leggett will also invite up to the lectern for your speech. Draft speech notes on Going For Growth, infrastructure and other sector specific talking points are included at **Annex Two**.
3. The Workshop will be a strategy session on infrastructure in Canterbury. The format will be a roundtable discussion. An outline of the Workshop is included below.

Time	Duration	Session
8:30am	10 mins	Welcome and opening remarks Nick Leggett, Chief Executive, Infrastructure New Zealand
8:40am	10 mins	Ministerial Address Hon James Meager, Minister for the South Island
8:50am	5 mins	Context Setting - Presentation on current infrastructure challenges and opportunities in the region Catherine Shipton, Senior Associate, Simpson Grierson and Edward Norman, Partner, Simpson Grierson
8.55am	5 mins	Ngāi Tahu Address Todd Moyle, Chief Executive, Ngāi Tahu Holdings
9:00am	30 mins	Topic 1 / Topic 3 Discussions
9:30am	30 mins	Topic 1 / Topic 3 Report Back
10:00am	20 mins	Morning Tea
10:20am	30 mins	Topic 2 / Topic 4 Discussions
10:50am	30 mins	Topic 2 / Topic 4 Report Back
11:20am	10 mins	Closing Remarks, Summary and Next Steps Nick Leggett, Chief Executive, Infrastructure New Zealand
11:30am	Close	

Background

4. The Workshop will be hosted by Infrastructure New Zealand and Simpson Grierson.
5. Infrastructure New Zealand is a membership-based association, formed with the purpose of advancing development of transport, energy, water, telecommunications, and social infrastructure for New Zealand. It advances its mission through research, advocacy, and public and private sector collaboration.
6. Simpson Grierson is a commercial law firm with offices in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. It has various areas of specialty, including infrastructure law.
7. The purpose of the Workshop is to enable discussions and develop strategies to enhance Canterbury's infrastructure and economic growth, and explore opportunities and challenges for Canterbury, including:
 - strengthening transport links (ports, airports, road/rail integration)

- enhancing bridge infrastructure
 - exploring funding mechanisms, including asset recycling
 - developing long-term asset management strategies.
8. Information about these opportunities and challenges is included at **Annex Three**.
9. Information about the Government's actions to enable economic growth throughout New Zealand is included at **Annex Four**.

About the audience

10. Approximately 30 stakeholders are expected to attend the Workshop, including:
- local government representatives
 - infrastructure and transport experts
 - business leaders
 - policymakers
 - industry stakeholders.
11. Biographies of presenters are below:



Nick Leggett, Chief Executive, Infrastructure New Zealand

Nick was appointed Chief Executive of Infrastructure New Zealand in April 2023.

He is also the chair of Wellington Water and Hutt Mana Charitable Trust.



Prior to his appointment, he was Chief Executive of Ia Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand from 2018 to 2023, and Mayor of Porirua from 2010 to 2016.



Catherine Shipton, Senior Associate, Simpson Grierson

Catherine was appointed Senior Associate at Simpson Grierson in May 2022.

Prior to her appointment, she worked at Allen & Overy Limited Liability Partnership in London from 2016 to 2022.

	<p>Edward Norman, Partner, Simpson Grierson</p> <p>Edward was a Senior Associate at Simpson Grierson from 2021 to 2024. In January 2024, he was appointed Partner.</p> <p>Prior to Simpson Grierson, Edward worked at Clifford Chance in London from 2013 to 2020.</p>
	<p>Todd Moyle, Chief Executive, Ngāi Tahu Holdings</p> <p>Todd has worked at Ngāi Tahu Holdings since 2022, first as Chief Operating Officer, then Acting Chief Executive from April 2023. He was appointed Chief Executive at in March 2024.</p> <p>Prior to working at Ngāi Tahu Holdings, Todd worked in various roles at KiwiRail from 2014 to 2022.</p>

Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit managed funding in the Canterbury region

12. Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit (Kānoa) manages approved funding of \$127.40 million across 193 projects in the Canterbury region and as of 28 February 2025, has paid \$104.20 million into projects in the region. This investment attracted a total of \$101.90 million in co-investment.

Risks and mitigations

13. Funding mechanisms will be discussed as part of the Workshop. Any questions relating to government funding or projects should be directed to the relevant officials, specifically:
 - Any questions relating to City and Regional Deals should be directed to the Minister of Local Government or Kānoa officials, to follow-up with the Department of Internal Affairs (the City and Regional Deals secretariat).
 - Any questions regarding the Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF) should be directed to Kānoa officials.
 - Any other questions should be directed to Kānoa officials, who can follow up with the relevant officials and agencies.

Communications / Media

14. No media will be present at this event.

Annex Two: Draft speech notes to support opening address

You will be introduced to attendees by Nick Leggett, Chief Executive, Infrastructure New Zealand. Your speech is the opening address.

INTRODUCTION

- I'm very proud to be the MP for Rangitata and the country's first Minister for the South Island.
- I look forward to working across central and local government and across Te Waipounamu to ensure the huge potential of the South Island is realised.
- Today, I'll discuss how the recently introduced *Going For Growth* approach is a starting point for us – in particular the pillar that is most relevant to the workshop this morning – **infrastructure for growth**.
- Through my role as Minister for the South Island, I want to make sure that the South Island economy gets its fair share of economic growth and job creation so that we can all benefit from the opportunities and prosperity that economic growth provides us.
- There is a raft of untapped potential in Canterbury, and across the South Island. This was highlighted in ASB's recent Quarterly Regional Scoreboard, where the South Island secured the top four places for growth and performance. With Otago in first place, Canterbury in second, Tasman in third, and Southland taking the fourth place.
- With that being said, I'm looking forward to talking to you later on this morning to get your ideas about how we can work together to support this Government's goals.

Going For Growth

- This Government is working to unlock New Zealand's potential and make our economy grow faster through our *Going For Growth* approach, which was released by the Minister for Economic Growth earlier this year.
- Economic growth is key to raising living standards, creating higher-paying jobs and delivering the vital infrastructure and public services New Zealanders want and deserve.
- Going for Growth sets out five pillars driving the push for economic growth – **developing talent; competitive business settings; promoting global trade and investment; innovation, technology and science; and infrastructure for growth**.
- Our economic potential will also be unleashed by focusing on the five pillars and fostering investment, innovation and taking calculated risks. Removing barriers and creating incentives empowers businesses to drive growth, ensuring market forces fuel prosperity.
- The South Island makes up 24 per cent of New Zealand's population and 22 per cent of the national GDP and will be key to helping achieve our *Going For Growth* goals. Canterbury in turn is the largest South Island region in every sense, with the largest land area, population and economy. Success in Canterbury therefore drives success for the South Island and New Zealand as a whole.

Infrastructure For Growth

- Given the focus of this workshop, I'd like to delve a little deeper into the **infrastructure for growth** pillar.
- Well-planned infrastructure supports the efficient and sustainable movement of people, goods, and information, and facilitates trade and investment while also improving living standards.

- New Zealand's infrastructure deficit is limiting productivity and impacting living standards. Addressing our infrastructure deficit could increase real GDP by as much as 0.8 per cent in the long term.
- The affordability of large-scale infrastructure projects also remains a key issue, necessitating innovative funding and financing solutions
- This Government is taking a raft of actions to meet the infrastructure challenges New Zealand is facing and unlock opportunities for growth. Some key examples include the following:
 - We released the blueprint for resource management reform which will replace the Resource Management Act with two new pieces of legislation – a Natural Environment Act focused on managing the natural environment, and a Planning Act focused on planning to enable development and infrastructure. The new legislation will enable a shift from a precautionary to a more permissive approach will unlock development and streamline processes.
 - We passed the Fast-track Approvals Act to speed up consenting decisions of projects with significant regional or national benefits, including 22 projects based in Canterbury.
 - We have launched the new national infrastructure agency, National Infrastructure Funding and Financing Limited, which will provide specialised expertise in Public Private Partnerships and capital markets, and connect overseas investors and lenders into New Zealand's infrastructure pipeline.
 - We have developed a new Funding and Financing Framework, that will help drive better value for money from public investment by moving away from the default use of Crown grant funding for infrastructure, and towards user- and beneficiary pays.
 - And we have begun work on a National Infrastructure Plan, which will assess New Zealand's infrastructure needs over the next 30 years, including a strengthened National Infrastructure Pipeline which will provide a view of upcoming projects in the next 10 years.
- These examples should make it clear that we are taking **infrastructure for growth** seriously. I also think it's worthwhile discussing what our approach means for Canterbury in the context of specific sectors.

SECTOR-SPECIFIC TALKING POINTS

Housing

- Housing is good place to start as an enabler of growth and prosperity, and an area where we face some of our biggest infrastructure challenges.
- The unaffordability of housing is well-known. In 2002, New Zealand had a house price to wage ratio of 3:1. Now, house prices outstrip wages by over 6:1.
- We know that growing our towns and particularly our larger cities, like Christchurch, will grow our productivity because of the collaboration and innovation more people in one place encourages – but unaffordable housing is an impediment to this.
- While housing in Christchurch is more affordable than in some other New Zealand cities, there are still affordability challenges and a significant shortage of lower value and smaller homes, more of which will be needed in future to accommodate an ageing population.
- The population of the Canterbury region is forecast to grow, driving a greater need for an acceleration in the supply of housing. In the past, most new housing growth has been driven by urban expansion into greenfield developments, but there is a need for greater housing intensification in urban areas.

- To tackle our housing crisis, the Government has developed a separate Going for Housing Growth programme, led by the Minister of Housing with its own pillars:
 - Freeing up land for development and removing unnecessary planning barriers
 - Improving infrastructure funding and financing to support growth, and
 - Providing incentives for communities and councils to support growth.
- We have made good progress on developing the first pillar, which includes Housing Growth Targets for Tier 1 and 2 councils to “live-zone” 30-years of housing demand. This will make it easier for cities to expand, strengthening the intensification provisions in the National Policy Statement on Urban Development which put in new rules requiring councils to enable mixed-used development, and abolishing minimum floor areas and balcony requirements. Details about how Pillar 1 will be implemented will be announced in the coming months.
- Details of the second pillar, improving infrastructure funding and financing to support growth, were announced at the end of February, and comprise five key changes to our funding settings:
 - Replacing Development Contributions with a Development Levy System,
 - Establishing regulatory oversight of Development Levies to ensure charges are fair and appropriate,
 - Increasing the flexibility of targeted rates,
 - Improving the Infrastructure Funding and Financing Act, and
 - Broadening existing tools to support value capture.
- Essentially the Government is developing a flexible toolkit of mechanisms to ensure growth pays for growth. There is no funding and financing mechanism to suit all developments. But this flexible toolkit will help ensure a responsive supply of infrastructure.

Energy

- A modern, affordable, and secure energy system is fundamental to building a stronger and more productive economy. New Zealanders and businesses depend on affordable and secure energy, and increasingly expect their energy to be renewable. New Zealand’s energy system has served us very well to date and our long-term energy outlook is positive.
- However, the energy system is changing. Throughout the world economies are seeking to lower emissions and to shift to renewable energy. This process is also underway in New Zealand. Industry, transport, and other energy users are beginning to switch from fossil fuel-based energy to renewably generated electricity and are wanting access to alternative fuels such as hydrogen and bioenergy.
- There are several South Island regions that are more exposed to energy security risks than other parts of New Zealand. This is exacerbated by natural hazard risks which threaten regional energy security and resilience.
- Energy security will be critical for Canterbury to address the challenges ahead, including water, food production and climate change. I know the Mayoral Forum’s *Plan for Canterbury* has identified energy as a key opportunity that will support the region to foster partnerships to investigate barriers and harness opportunities to improve the region’s energy security.
- Canterbury’s high-country lakes provide water storage capacity that can enable more regional production. I know Environment Canterbury is looking to ways to harness hydropower options and improve Canterbury’s contribution to New Zealand’s electricity supply security.

- A number of actions are being taken by this Government to boost our energy security. These include:
 - Reducing restrictions on electricity lines companies investing in generation to help strengthen the energy network, driving further investment in generation while continuing to preserve competition.
 - Cabinet considering the creation of energy precincts and Special Economic Zones later this year. Special Economic Zones could include business-friendly regulations, infrastructure and facilities, investment support, and customs and trade facilitation. As well as fuel or energy sites, Special Economic Zones could apply to any strategically important areas of the country where infrastructure, ease of doing business and investment are critical to the economic interests of New Zealand.
 - Launching an electricity market performance review. The review will look at whether current regulations and market design support economic growth and access to reliable and affordable electricity, addressing areas including access to capital, market rules and competition, and market performance monitoring.

Transport

- Finally, I would like to touch upon the transport sector. Communities, businesses, and the export economy rely heavily on a strong and robust transport network. This is critical for people to connect, move in and around the region, as well as for moving goods and produce to domestic and international markets.
- The South Island transport network is vast and includes around 5,000 kilometres of state highways and over 35,000km of local roads as well as over 1,500km of rail lines (consisting of two main lines, two secondary lines and several branch lines).
- Canterbury has by far the largest road network of any region in New Zealand, and maintaining this network is important to both connecting industry to ports and for wider road user safety.
- Canterbury's current transport network is made up of a number of nationally and regionally significant transport routes connecting people and communities in the region to the north, south and west.
- Network resilience is also a concern for Canterbury, with a range of natural hazard risks including river flooding, surface flooding, and coastal inundation.
- This was highlighted in 2021, when the Ashburton bridge was damaged by flooding. It cut off the South Island's main north-south route, and the disruption to freight, travel and communities was massive.
- A total of \$1.8 billion investment into Canterbury is forecast in our National Land Transport Programme 2024-2027. This includes several Roads of National Significance and Roads of Regional Significance projects, which are works for strategic corridors that will support economic growth or represent the most essential corridors at a regional level.
 - One of these projects is the second Ashburton Bridge, a project that has been a long time in the making, and which will provide resilience for a connection which takes around 24,000 connections a day and where the next alternative is 27 kilometres away.
- The Government is also making use of alternative funding tools for the Transport sector in order to deliver new roads faster and increase the efficiency of our busiest roads. A Time of Use Charging Bill passed its first reading last month which will enable the New Zealand Transport Agency and local authorities to develop charging schemes for our most congested roads.

- Modelling shows that successful time of use charging – charging motorists to travel on certain roads at peak times – will encourage people to change the time or mode of travel and could reduce congestion by up to 8-12 per cent at peak times.

Linking back to the region and infrastructure for growth overall

- For each of these sectors, I've talked a bit about how the Government is already taking action to support **infrastructure for growth**.
- We know that Canterbury can play a huge role in growing the economy and creating more job opportunities, especially considering the size and economic contribution of the region, and the key connections it provides to much of the rest of the South Island.
- But we need to do more work, and we need to do it collaboratively – I am keen to work across multiple portfolios impacting infrastructure and economic growth to understand more about the challenges and opportunities facing Canterbury and the wider South Island.

CLOSING REMARKS

- Having spoken a bit about my South Island portfolio and what actions this Government is taking to grow our economy by addressing our infrastructure challenges, I'm keen to hear from you during the discussions we'll have this morning.
- I am particularly interested in learning more about your priorities and aspirations for infrastructure and economic growth in Canterbury, and the potential role you see the Government supporting these.

Annex Three: Connecting Canterbury key points

1. The Connecting Canterbury: Strengthening Infrastructure for Growth Workshop will focus on the following opportunities and challenges for Canterbury:
 - Transport links.
 - Bridge infrastructure.
 - Funding mechanisms and asset recycling.
 - Long-term asset management strategies.

Transport links

2. Canterbury has the largest road network of any region in New Zealand. This is made up of several nationally and regionally significant transport routes connecting people and communities in the region to the north, south and west. A key challenge for the Canterbury region is funding its large roading network.
3. Air transport in the region is supported by a long-distance international airport in Christchurch, and a domestic airport in Timaru. While air freight carries under one per cent of New Zealand's trade, by dollar value it carries 16 per cent of exports and 22 per cent of imports. Air transport is critical for the export and import of certain high-value and fresh goods, and for receiving time-sensitive imports, such as medical supplies.
4. There are two commercial ports in Canterbury, located in Lyttelton and Timaru. The Lyttelton port is owned by Lyttelton Port Company, and carries containers, bulky cargo and a wide range of other freight, including cars, grain and fishing equipment. The Timaru port feeds into the Port of Tauranga and carries containers and other freight such as cement and fertiliser. By volume, 99 per cent of New Zealand's trade is carried by sea, making ports critical to a robust economy.
5. Canterbury produces around 57 per cent of the South Island's gross domestic product. Communities, businesses, and the export economy rely heavily on a strong and robust transport network. This is critical for people to connect and move in and around the region, as well as for transporting goods and produce to domestic and international markets.

Infrastructure Investment

6. A total of \$1.80 billion is forecast to be invested in Canterbury in the current 2024-27 National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) period, a 50 per cent increase from the previous period of investment. Investment in Canterbury during the 2024-27 NLTP will support the region's critical role as the economic powerhouse of the South Island. This will be targeted at strengthening critical freight routes to boost economic growth and improving travel times.
7. Transport network resilience is a concern for Canterbury, with a range of natural hazard risks including earthquakes, river flooding, surface flooding, and coastal inundation.
8. On 4 March 2024, Hon Simeon Brown announced the re-introduction of the Roads of National Significance (RoNS) programme¹. Fifteen roads were identified to support economic growth and productivity, reduce congestion, improve safety, support housing development, and provide a more resilient roading network. One road is located in Canterbury, the SH1 Belfast to Pegasus motorway and Woodend Bypass, with construction planned to start in the 2024-27 NLTP period and is expected to take approximately four years.
9. Work on three Roads of Regional Significance (RoRS) in Canterbury was initially identified for the 2024-27 investment period: SH1 Rolleston access improvements, SH75 Halswell

¹ [Government press release: "GPS 2024: 15 new Roads of National Significance"](#)

Road improvements (including new bus lanes), and a second Ashburton bridge. An additional RoRS was confirmed for Canterbury in February 2025, with funding confirmed for SH76 Brougham Street upgrades².

Bridge infrastructure

10. The Canterbury Regional Land Transport Plan 2024 –34 has identified a range of bridges the region would like to see funded. The 2024-27 NLTP has identified four for funding during the current investment period. These are:
 - Second Ashburton Bridge.
 - Pages Road Bridge.
 - Elephant Hill Stream Bridge.
 - Waihao River North Bridge.
11. The Second Ashburton Bridge is a proposed urban bridge over the Ashburton/Hakatere river to connect Ashburton and Tinwald. The existing Ashburton Bridge is a key South Island freight link, carrying 24,000 vehicles a day. By investing in a second Ashburton Bridge, the South Island's supply chain will have significantly improved resilience, and it will also allow for further growth in Tinwald with a large amount of additional land being unlocked for development.
12. The Second Ashburton Bridge was one of the 149 projects listed under Schedule 2 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024³. In December 2024, the Government announced⁴ the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) and Ashburton District Council would work together on delivering this project.
13. The Pages Road Bridge is a key lifeline route into and out of New Brighton. The proposed project would replace the existing bridge which is almost 100 years old and suffered significant damage in the earthquakes.
14. The upgrades to the Elephant Hill Stream Bridge include adding an additional lane and improving the alignment with a tight bend on the southern side.
15. The piling system on the Waihao River North Bridge has reached the end of its life cycle and will be upgraded.

Funding mechanisms and asset recycling

Funding mechanisms

16. On 1 December 2024, the Government announced the establishment of a new national infrastructure agency, National Infrastructure Funding and Financing Limited (NIFFCo)⁵. NIFFCo provides expertise and advice on funding and financing for infrastructure projects, including:
 - connecting overseas investors and lenders into New Zealand's infrastructure pipeline

² [SH76 Brougham Street upgrades prioritised as a Road of Regional Significance | Beehive.govt.nz](#)

³ In October 2024, the Government released high-level information on 149 projects it decided to list in the Fast-track Approvals Bill: [Government press release: "Fast-track projects released". On 23 December 2024, the bill was enacted.](#)

⁴ [Government press release: "Funding confirmed for second Ashburton Bridge."](#)

⁵ [Government press release: "New infrastructure agency up and running"](#)

- providing advice on public private partnerships (PPP)⁶ and capital markets
 - providing financial and commercial support and expertise when developing business cases and procuring large scale projects.
17. Infrastructure New Zealand argues in a New Zealand Herald piece, Political Consensus Critical to the Future of Infrastructure⁷, that Government should explore other funding mechanisms to diversify how we fund and finance infrastructure, including:
- user charging mechanisms (eg. road tolling)
 - new PPP models
 - GST-sharing⁸ with councils.

Asset recycling

18. Asset recycling (also known as capital recycling) is the sale of existing government-owned assets or an operating concession to private sector investors. The capital raised from these transactions can then be reinvested into other government priorities (in lieu of further Crown borrowings). This allows the government to reprioritise the capital embedded in their existing assets into funding investments that otherwise would not have progressed.
19. Asset recycling has been used across local and central government, eg. central government recycled the proceeds of the 49 per cent initial public offering of the Gentailers into capital investments over the 2010s⁹, and in 2023 Auckland Council recycled \$833.00 million of airport shares to reduce debt¹⁰
20. The Treasury has recently published the Funding and Financing Framework¹¹ (endorsed by Cabinet [ECO-24-MIN-0264 refers]) which includes principles that encourages recycling of Crown capital where practical. The application of this framework in practice will be subject to the Coalition Government's public commitment not to undertake asset sales during this term.
21. Infrastructure New Zealand states in its November 2024 paper on asset recycling that central government should issue a policy direction to increase asset recycling's use, and to ensure that local and central government are:
- making consistent and optimal decisions that consider New Zealand's asset mix as a whole
 - balancing the strategic, financial, environmental and social outcomes of these transactions.

Long-term asset management strategies

22. The Local Government Act 2002¹² sets out a duty of care for councils to maintain and invest in assets appropriately. Section 101B requires councils to prepare and adopt an infrastructure strategy that spans at minimum 30 years. An infrastructure strategy must

⁶ A PPP is a partnership between the public sector and a private institution, where the private institution may design, construct, operate or maintain an asset on behalf of the public sector. The New Zealand PPP programme commenced in 2009, and eight PPP projects have been developed since 2011, including corrections facilities, state highways and schools.

⁷ [Political consensus critical to the future of infrastructure - Nick Leggett - NZ Herald](#)

⁸ The Housing Infrastructure (GST sharing) Bill had its first reading in Parliament in April 2023. The bill proposed government share 50 per cent of GST revenue from new housing developments with local councils to fund infrastructure costs associated with increased housing supply. The bill did not pass.

⁹ [Mixed Ownership Model for Crown Companies | The Treasury New Zealand](#)

¹⁰ [Auckland Council confirms sale of Auckland International Airport shares - OurAuckland](#)

¹¹ [Funding and Financing Framework | The Treasury New Zealand](#)

¹² [Local Government Act 2002 No 84 \(as at 01 October 2024\), Public Act – New Zealand Legislation](#)

outline how the council intends to manage its infrastructure assets, including renewal or replacement of assets, growth or decline in demand for asset's services, and ensuring resilience of infrastructure assets.

23. A 2021 New Zealand Infrastructure Commission (the Commission) report estimated New Zealand's public infrastructure deficit to be approximately \$104.00 billion (increasing to \$210.00 billion over the ensuing 30 years), driven by a combination of chronic under-investment as well as increasing demand from a growing population.
24. The Commission also found in its November 2024 asset management state of play report¹³ that for New Zealand to appropriately manage its assets:
 - a greater focus on demand planning and management is required
 - the biggest constraint to improving infrastructure management is capability and capacity, including resourcing, knowledge and governance
 - renewal and maintenance of infrastructure needs to be prioritised.
25. The report provides recommendations under four key areas:
 - Improving governance and leadership.
 - Improving transparency in asset management practices, infrastructure performance and medium-long term funding plans.
 - Better prioritising of resilience over 'recovery'.
 - Building asset management capacity and capability.

¹³ [Taking care of tomorrow today: Asset management state of play | Research & insights | Te Waihanga](#)

Annex Four: Government’s actions to enable economic growth throughout New Zealand

Going For Growth

1. On 13 February 2025, the Government released ‘Going For Growth’, an approach to enable economic growth throughout New Zealand. Going For Growth sets out the Government’s interest in a combination of reforms to support:
 - Increased capital investment by firms, supported by higher domestic savings and inbound overseas investment.
 - Secure, affordable and abundant electricity supply.
 - Tax and regulatory settings that support greater competition in key sectors (including banking, grocery and energy).
2. Going For Growth focusses on the following five pillars to drive growth:
 1. **Developing talent.**
 2. **Competitive business settings.**
 3. **Promoting global trade and investment.**
 4. **Innovation, technology and science.**
 5. **Infrastructure for growth.**

Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

3. The Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) aims to establish a permanent fast-track approvals regime for a range of infrastructure, housing, and development projects. The Act is a key part of the Government’s plan to rebuild the economy and cut through the red and green tape that has made it difficult to build the projects New Zealand needs.
4. The Act was enacted on 23 December 2024 and Schedule 2 includes a list of 149 projects¹⁴ which can apply directly for consideration.
5. Twenty-two projects listed in Schedule 2 of the Act are in the Canterbury region, and four projects are in the Southland region :

Canterbury:

Sector	No. of Projects
Housing and Land Development	10
Infrastructure	4
Mining and Quarrying	2
Renewable Energy	5
Aquaculture and farming	1
Total	22

¹⁴ In October 2024, the Government released high-level information on 149 projects it decided to list in the Fast-track Approvals Act: [Government press release: “Fast-track projects released”](#).

Southland:

Sector	No. of Projects
Infrastructure	1
Aquaculture and farming	3
Total	4

6. Since 7 February 2025, these projects and other unlisted projects have been able to apply directly to the Environmental Protection Authority to have their projects considered by an Expert Panel.

City and Regional Deals

7. City and Regional Deals (CRDs), previously known as Regional Deals, are a National Party/ACT Party Coalition Government commitment. CRDs will be based on a 30-year vision with a ten-year strategic plan for a region to deliver shared objectives and outcomes between local and central governments.
8. There may be targeted use of the RIF, however potential projects would still need to proceed through the agreed RIF application process for consideration.
9. On 29 July 2024, Cabinet approved the strategic framework for CRDs, and agreed Ministerial leadership for City and Regional Deals will be provided by the Infrastructure and Investment Ministers Group. Initially five regions were invited to submit proposals for consideration for CRDs.
10. On 11 November 2024, Cabinet agreed to extend this invitation to all regions to submit proposals. The final selection will be made by Infrastructure and Investment Ministers.
11. Currently the Assessment Panel is in the early stages of triaging proposals received to enable advice to the Ministerial and Infrastructure and Investment Ministerial Group in [REDACTED]
Confidential advice to Government [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Confidential advice to Gover

12. Confidential advice to Government [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
13. Confidential advice to Government [REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]
 - Confidential advice to Government [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

- Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

Canterbury

14. The 11 Canterbury Local Authorities submitted a joint Registration of Interest (RoI) for a CRD. No priority initiatives or projects were indicated in Canterbury's RoI.
15. Subsequently, the 11 Canterbury Local Authorities did not submit a proposal for a CRD. However, they advised the Minister of Local Government of their continued interest in a City and Regional Deal, "pending a thorough proposal being submitted at a later date". They are currently developing a regional economic development priorities statement, which may align with the development of a CRD proposal.
16. The objective of a regional economic development priorities statement is to:
 - develop a cohesive economic story for Canterbury
 - identify opportunities and strengths
 - confirm actions that will unlock or enable growth
 - maximise enablers to support economic development
 - minimise barriers that make it difficult to do business in Canterbury.
17. Any questions relating to CRDs should be directed to the Minister of Local Government or Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit (Kānoa) officials, to follow-up with the Department of Internal Affairs (the City and Regional Deals secretariat).

Resource Management Act 1991 reform

18. In 2024, the Government repealed Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) reforms enacted by the previous government and made targeted amendments, including repealing the permitted and restricted discretionary intensive winter grazing regulations and passing the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024.
19. On 24 March 2025, Hon Chris Bishop, as Minister Responsible for RMA Reform, announced Cabinet agreed an outline for the Government's replacement legislation for the RMA¹⁵. The replacement legislation will allow a more liberal planning system to enable economic and infrastructure growth. These changes are estimated to deliver a 45 per cent improvement in administrative and compliance costs when compared to the current system.
20. The government intends to introduce two bills to replace the RMA by the end of 2025. It is expected these bills will be put to select committees in 2026.
21. Key features of the planned legislation include:
 - a narrowed approach to effects management
 - enjoyment of property rights as a guiding principle
 - simplified national direction
 - a clearer legislative basis for setting environmental limits
 - greater use of standardisation

¹⁵ [Government press release: "New planning laws to end the culture of 'no'"](#)

- a requirement for each region to have a spatial plan
- streamlining of council plans
- strengthening environmental compliance monitoring and enforcement.

Annex Five: Meeting with representatives from ChristchurchNZ

1. From noon to 1.00pm, you will meet with representatives from ChristchurchNZ. Biographies of attendees are provided below in the 'about the attendees' section. The meeting will be held at Level 3, BNZ Centre, 101 Cashel Street, Christchurch. You will be met on arrival by Martin Cudd, General Manager, Innovation and Business Growth.
2. Key topics for discussion at this meeting are:
 - BioOra.
 - Cleantech.
 - Green hydrogen initiatives.
 - Economic development plans.

ChristchurchNZ

3. ChristchurchNZ is the economic development agency and regional tourism organisation for Canterbury. Its purpose is to improve Christchurch's productivity, growth and attractiveness, and ultimately make the city a better place to live.
4. On 27 March 2025, Hon Louise Upton, as Minister for Tourism and Hospitality, announced that ChristchurchNZ was a successful applicant for the Regional Tourism Boost Fund¹⁶. ChristchurchNZ will receive \$600,000 to lead a central South Island winter-focused marketing campaign. Please note a typo here. This should be "a", not "the".
5. ChristchurchNZ serves as the Regional Business Partner (RBP) for the Canterbury region. The RBP Programme is a government initiative that is co-funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (MBIE) and Callaghan Innovation. ChristchurchNZ's RBP programme aligns with its broader strategic goals of driving economic growth, supporting innovation, and improving business sustainability. The RBP Programme supports businesses by:
 - **Providing expert business advice:** offering tailored guidance on growth strategies, digital transformation, sustainability, and innovation.
 - **Facilitating funding and grants:** assisting businesses with access to capability-building grants, co-funding, and government backed financial support. This includes assisting business with applying for Callaghan Innovation Research and Development grants.
 - **Supporting key industry sectors:** Connecting businesses with industry networks and research institutions, and prioritising high-growth industries such as technology, agritech, manufacturing, and tourism.
 - **Enhancing business resilience:** helping businesses prepare for economic disruptions, climate related challenges, and market shifts.
6. Confidential advice to Government
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
7. Specifics around RBP should be directed toward MBIE Officials or the Hon Chris Penk.

¹⁶ The Regional Tourism Boost Fund opened in February 2025. It is a \$3.00 million contestable fund which Regional Tourism Organisations can apply for. The fund is intended to be used for short campaigns to attract international visitors over the 2025 Autumn/Winter period.

Discussion points

BioOra

8. BioOra is a New Zealand based biotech company that specialises in CAR T-cell therapy (CAR-T). CAR-T is a cancer treatment that genetically modifies a patient's immune cells to identify and destroy cancer cells. This treatment has shown success in New Zealand and overseas, including formerly terminal patients who are now in remission. However, the cost of treatment makes this therapy inaccessible for most people. For example, in Australia this treatment can cost up to \$700,000.
9. BioOra's mission is to make CAR-T equitable and affordable for all. BioOra's CAR-T is currently in a phase two clinical trial in New Zealand. This therapy differs from other CAR-T as it is safer, allowing out-patient treatment, and the manufacturing is automated, lowering the cost of therapy.
10. In November 2024, BioOra announced its intention to construct a manufacturing facility in Christchurch, investing \$10.50 million in the first year. This is the first step of a long-term plan to establish an immunotherapy centre in Christchurch where CAR-T is developed and administered.
11. It is hoped this will lead to an increase in research and development, attract innovators in the immunotherapy space, and enhance the health ecosystem in Christchurch. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) have predicted when BioOra's treatment commences, it will contribute about \$250.00 million a year to the city's gross domestic product.

Cleantech

12. Cleantech refers to companies that produce a product, process or service that reduces negative environmental impacts through innovation. ChristchurchNZ have identified cleantech as a key opportunity to move Christchurch towards a regenerative economy.
13. There are several leading cleantech companies in Christchurch, including:
 - **Zincovery** – recovers zinc from toxic acid waste, preventing it from leaching into the environment. Zincovery won the 2020 Callaghan Innovation C-Prize challenge. Zincovery currently operates a pilot plant which has recovered 200kg of Zinc from 9 different sources.
 - **Aspiring Materials** – developed technology that turns common rocks known as olivine into valuable materials like silica, iron oxide, nickel, cobalt, and magnesium hydroxide. These products replace other common materials (eg. cement, magnesium) that would typically create polluting gasses such as carbon dioxide. This process of creating the materials also generates hydrogen and oxygen, which can be used as clean fuel.

Green hydrogen initiatives

14. Green hydrogen is a zero-carbon fuel (a fuel that does not produce emissions when produced or used).
15. In Christchurch, the leading green hydrogen company is Fabrum, who research and develop technology that reduces waste when handling and storing green hydrogen. Fabrum's green hydrogen technology is used globally across a range of applications, including aerospace and motorsport.
16. Fabrum, Christchurch Airport, Airbus, Fortescue Future Industries, Air New Zealand, and Hiringa Energy established a hydrogen consortium in 2023 with the aim of making zero-emission aviation possible in New Zealand.
17. In 2025, Fabrum opened a hydrogen testing facility at Christchurch Airport.

Economic development plans

18. In November 2023, ChristchurchNZ adopted their strategic plan 'Leading the way in Economic Development and City Promotion'. The strategic plan brings together the Christchurch Economic Ambition (CEA), the Christchurch Identity and Place Brand, and Destination Management Plans (DMPs) for Christchurch and Banks Peninsula, aligning them into three goals:
 - Accelerate and amplify productivity, growth and regenerative transition of businesses.
 - Unlock the full potential of new and renewed city infrastructure and assets.
 - Elevate Christchurch's profile and reputation in national and global markets.
19. These goals are intended to shape the Christchurch economy into one where people and places thrive. In October 2023, ChristchurchNZ developed the CEA on behalf of the Christchurch City Council. The CEA aims to move Christchurch towards a regenerative economy, with a focus upon sustainability, efficient use of resources and minimising waste, emissions and pollution. Further information about the CEA is included at **Annex Six**.
20. The Christchurch Identity and Place Brand depicts what makes the city special and why it is a great place to play, live, work, study and invest. The Identity and Place Brand aims to create a distinct and positive image of the city that resonates with target markets nationally and internationally.
21. The DMPs for Christchurch and Banks Peninsula aim to encourage regenerative tourism across the region, and reflects the aspirations of local communities.





Canterbury regional priorities include:



22. Canterbury regional priorities were decided by the Canterbury Mayoral Forum (the Forum)¹⁷ in 2023. These include:
 - Sustainable environmental management (land, air, water, and ecosystems).
 - Shared prosperity.
 - Climate change mitigation and adaptation.
23. The Forum is leading the following work streams relating to Canterbury's regional economic development opportunities and challenges:
 - Development of a regional economic development priorities statement (as opposed to a strategy).
 - Development of a Canterbury Regional Energy Inventory.
 - Development of a Waitaha Canterbury Regional Housing Strategic Plan (WCRHSP).
 - Roading and transport.
 - Healthcare.
 - Wilding pines.
24. Details of these priorities, opportunities and challenges have been provided to you previously (briefing REQ-0009348 refers).
25. Information about the Government's actions to enable economic growth throughout New Zealand is included at **Annex Four**.

¹⁷ Sourced from: [Plan for Canterbury 2023-2025 - Canterbury Mayoral Forum](#). The Forum is comprised of the Mayors and Council Chief Executives from across Canterbury. The Forum prepares the strategy and action plan each triennium outlining the priorities for the Canterbury region.

About the attendees

26. You will be meeting with the ChristchurchNZ senior leadership team. Biographies of attendees are below:

	<p>Ali Adams, Chief Executive, ChristchurchNZ</p> <p>Ali was appointed Chief Executive of ChristchurchNZ in February 2022.</p> <p>Prior to her appointment, she worked in various roles at New Zealand Trade and Enterprise from 2012 to 2022, including leading work in the South Island and Europe.</p> <p>Ali graduated from Cambridge University with a first-class honours degree in natural science.</p>
	<p>Martin Cudd, General Manager, Innovation and Business Growth, ChristchurchNZ</p> <p>Martin Cudd was appointed General Manager, Innovation and Business Growth at ChristchurchNZ in 2022.</p> <p>Prior to his appointment, he worked at New Zealand Trade and Enterprise from 2014 to 2022 in Christchurch and San Francisco.</p>
	<p>Steve Backe-Hansen, General Manager of Marketing, Brand and Communications, ChristchurchNZ</p> <p>Steve was appointed General Manager of Marketing, Brand and Communications of ChristchurchNZ in 2022.</p> <p>Prior to his appointment, he worked across various sectors including private, tertiary and local government. He has a background in strategic and tactical marketing, digital and eCommerce and customer experience.</p>
	<p>Laura Dawson, General Manager of Strategy and Business Capability, ChristchurchNZ</p> <p>Laura was appointed General Manager of Strategy and Business Capability at ChristchurchNZ in 2019.</p> <p>Prior to her appointment she held various roles in governance, strategy and planning with Tourism Western Australia (Perth), Project Management Institute (New Zealand), New Zealand Singapore Business Council (Singapore) and the Inland Revenue Department.</p>

	<p>Cath Carter, General Manager of Urban Development, ChristchurchNZ</p> <p>Cath was appointed General Manager of Urban Development at ChristchurchNZ in 2020.</p> <p>She has over 20 years of experience in city regeneration, urban development and planning projects across public and private sectors in New Zealand and the United Kingdom.</p> <p>Cath worked as a senior planner and project manager following the Christchurch earthquakes and subsequent rebuild efforts.</p>
	<p>Loren Aberhart, General Manager of Destination and Attraction, ChristchurchNZ</p> <p>Loren was appointed General Manager of Destination and Attraction at ChristchurchNZ in 2018.</p> <p>She has extensive experience in senior tourism and major events roles. She currently is Chair of the New Zealand Event Association, a Trustee of Regional Tourism New Zealand and sits on Ringa Hora – the Services Sector Workforce Development Council.</p>

Risks and mitigations

27. No risks identified.

Communications / Media

28. No media will be present at this event.

Annex Six: ChristchurchNZ Economic Ambition

Christchurch Economic Ambition

1. In October 2023, ChristchurchNZ developed the Christchurch Economic Ambition (CEA) on behalf of the Christchurch City Council. The CEA aims to move Christchurch towards a regenerative economy, with a focus upon sustainability, efficient use of resources and minimising waste, emissions and pollution.
2. The CEA identifies four objectives and ten priorities that are intended to guide, grow and strengthen the city's economy over the next ten years. The four objectives are:
 - **Hua, Shared Value:** Enhance industry productivity and competitiveness while supporting a fair transition towards environment, climate and socially responsible models and practices.
 - **Tūāpapa, Building Foundations:** Raise city liveability and vibrancy, strengthen our global reputation and develop the infrastructure and services the city needs to support a regenerative future.
 - **Ako, Learning:** Maximise access to learning opportunities and develop the skills people and businesses need to build a strong workforce and a prosperous, equitable future.
 - **Kōkiri, Advancing:** Build effective partnerships and bring cross-sector organisations together to advance the city's economic ambition.
3. The ten priorities are:
 1. Connect businesses across industries and invest in innovation.
 2. Develop an enhanced business growth and support system to help businesses scale up, attract investment, maximise efficiency, and transition to net zero emissions.
 3. Adopt procurement policies that encourage businesses to implement environment, climate, and socially responsible business practices.
 4. Initiate urban development projects that develop the city centre as a sustainable, vibrant destination.
 5. Invest in infrastructure that is climate resilient and supports the city's goal of a transition to zero emissions and zero waste.
 6. Leverage the city's new and renewed infrastructure and assets to attract visitors and events and build business networks, knowledge and credentials.
 7. Connect industry, education and training providers, and community members to develop and deliver education programs.
 8. Ensure equitable access to technology and increase opportunities for all communities, particularly Māori, Pasifika and ethnic minorities.
 9. Promote Christchurch to national and international markets.
 10. Build local, regional, and national partnerships that honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
4. Priorities one, two, four, six, nine and ten have been identified as areas of focus for ChristchurchNZ over the next five years.

Annex Seven: Meeting with representatives from Murihiku Regeneration and Ngāi Tahu

1. From 1.30pm to 2.30pm, you will meet with representatives from Murihiku Regeneration and Ngāi Tahu to discuss regional development and opportunities in Southland. Biographies of attendees are provided below in the 'about the attendees' section. The meeting will be at Ngāi Tahu Offices, 15 Show Place, Christchurch.

Background

2. Murihiku Regeneration was established in 2020 by Hokonui Rūnanga following the potential closure of the New Zealand Aluminium Smelters (NZAS) at Tiwai and flow on impacts the closure could have on the Southland community.
3. Murihiku Regeneration's current purpose is to build a regenerative economy for future generations through collaboration with the Crown and ensure Treaty obligations to Ngāi Tahu are upheld. Murihiku Regeneration focuses on supporting local aspirations through community development, education and upskilling initiatives.

Discussion points

Ross Sea Sector and Murihiku ki te Tonga

4. The Ross Sea Sector spans from Southland to Antarctica. It is 1.55 million square kilometres, of which 1.22 square kilometres is protected (the largest marine protected area in the world). The Ross Sea is one of the least disturbed marine environments in the world, with extensive biodiversity and many endemic species.
5. Murihiku ki te Tonga (MKTT) is a programme managed by Murihiku Regeneration, Heritage Expeditions, and the Department of Conservation (DoC) to carry out research and monitoring in the Ross Sea Sector. This programme represents the first indigenous-led Antarctic Research Programme in the world. To date, four successful expeditions have been completed to the Subantarctic Islands and Ross Sea sector.
6. MKTT supports the objectives of the Ross Sea Region Marine Protected Area in the wider context of how this region is linked to Murihiku/Te Waipounamu.

Maukahuka (Auckland Island) Predator Free Project

7. In February 2021, DoC published a feasibility study on Pest Free Maukahuka (Auckland Island). The study estimated the project would take eight years and cost \$80.00 million. This project is supported by Ngāi Tahu ki Murihiku.
8. In January 2025, NZ Nature Fund¹⁸ announced that it is actively fundraising for the Pest Free Maukahuka project.

Energy

9. Murihiku Regeneration worked on the Southland Murihiku Regional Energy Strategy 2022-2050 with Great South. The aim of the strategy is to support energy resilience, affordability, and renewable energy, with the goal of enabling the region to become carbon neutral by 2050.
10. New Zealand Aluminium Smelters Expansion:

¹⁸ NZ Nature Fund is a philanthropic conservation organisation who work with the private sector and individuals to raise funds for DoC projects throughout New Zealand.

- In May 2024, Meridian Energy and New Zealand Aluminium Smelters (NZAS) agreed a fixed price power contract, allowing NZAS to continue operating until 2044.
- NZAS, Murihiku Rūnaka and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu agreed to work together to monitor and remediate NZAS.
- Rio Tinto, the owner of NZAS, is currently developing a carbon anode free smelting technology called Elysis. If this technology is successfully commercialised, the NZAS site may be redeveloped to utilise this technology. This would present an opportunity for the site to achieve net zero emissions.

11. Wind and solar developments:

- Wind is the best source of renewable energy available to meet the energy gap. Offshore wind in Southland is plentiful, ranging from 1100W/m² (watts per square metre) to 2200W/m² at 20 kilometres from the land's edge. Offshore wind presents many benefits, such as reduced noise, flicker, landscape impacts, land use and electromagnetic interference. Offshore wind farms are significantly more expensive when compared to onshore, however costs are forecast to reduce 30 per cent by 2030.
- Solar generation is a useful source of electricity to meet small demand or provide minor increases in generation. However, the current dollar per kilowatt-hour for solar developments in New Zealand is greater than wind developments, and the solar resource in Southland is lower than the New Zealand average. Solar generation is a potential solution being considered for Stewart Island, which currently relies on diesel generators for electricity.

12. Data centre:

- In July 2024, Datagrid announced plans to construct a data centre¹⁹ in Invercargill. This facility will draw energy from the Manapouri hydropower scheme. This may put strain on the existing regional electricity supply system which may result in new electricity generation required.

Regional development


13. In June 2023, Beyond 2025 Southland adopted the Beyond 2025 Southland Regional Long-Term Plan (the Plan) with support from Great South, Ngāi Tahu and Murihiku Regeneration. The Plan outlines regional development aspirations for Southland.
14. The Plan sets out five key priorities for regional growth:
- Aquaculture.
 - Agriculture.
 - Tourism.
 - Housing.
 - Energy.
15. Details of these priorities have been provided to you previously (briefing REQ-0011013 refers).
16. Information about the Government's actions to enable economic growth throughout New Zealand is included at **Annex Four**.
17. The discussion will also focus on topics related to your other portfolios. Material on these will be provided by your office.

¹⁹ A data centre is a building used to house computer servers to remotely store, process, or distribute data.

About the attendees

18. Biographies of attendees are below:

	<p>Tā (Sir) Tipene O'Regan, Murihiku Regeneration</p> <p>Tā Tipene O'Regan currently holds a governance role at Murihiku Regeneration. He is widely known for his role as the long-serving Chairman of the Ngāi Tahu Māori Trust Board, leading the Ngāi Tahu Claim process before the Waitangi Tribunal, culminating in the Ngāi Tahu Settlement.</p> <p>He has published and lectured extensively over many years on Ngāi Tahu traditional history, Polynesian migration, Treaty issues and the evolution of biculturalism.</p> <p>Tā Tipene was knighted in 1994. In 2022, he was named New Zealander of the Year.</p>
	<p>Michael Stevens, Awarua Representative to Ngāi Tahu and Director, Ngāi Tahu Research Centre</p> <p>Michael was appointed Representative to Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu in November 2023. Prior to his appointment, he held the Alternate Representative to Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu from 2017 to 2023.</p> <p>Michael has a background in history, completing a PhD and working as a lecturer in history for six years. He currently works at the University of Canterbury as a Director in the Ngāi Tahu Research Centre.</p> <p>He is also a trustee of Te Rūnaka o Awarua Charitable Trust and a gazetted Tāngata Tiaki.</p>
	<p>Mike Shatford, Portfolio Manager and Strategic Advisor, Murihiku Regeneration.</p> <p>Mike was appointed Strategic Advisor at Murihiku Regeneration in November 2020, taking on the Portfolio Manager role in addition in 2021.</p> <p>He has a military background, working as an Army Officer in the New Zealand Army for over 20 years.</p> <p>Mike has also worked in various roles relating to the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery, including as Deputy Chief Executive – Communications in the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority and Private Secretary to the Minister for Earthquake Recovery.</p>
	<p>Ben Bateman, Chief Executive Officer, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu</p> <p>Ben has worked at Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu since 2022, first as Chief Operating Officer before being appointed Chief Executive Officer.</p> <p>He has worked in executive leadership within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, as Chief of Staff, National Security Group, and as Deputy Director, Intelligence and Operations Law, New Zealand Defence Force.</p> <p>Ben has a military background, retiring after reaching the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.</p>

	<p>Terry Nicholas, Upoko o Hokonui Rūnanga, Hokonui Representative to Ngāi Tahu and Portfolio Director, Murihiku Regeneration</p> <p>Terry has worked as the Hokonui Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu representative since January 1999.</p> <p>Terry is also a member of the Southland Just Transition oversight group, to ensure the rights and interests of Murihiku hapū are being represented.</p>
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Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit (Kānoa) managed funding in the Southland region

19. Kānoa manages approved funding of \$167.70 million across 120 projects in the Southland region and as of 28 February 2025, has paid \$159.70 million into projects in the region. This investment attracted a total of \$374.80 million in co-investment.

Risks and mitigations

20. No risks identified.

Communications / Media

21. No media will be present at this event.