



COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Stuart Nash Hon Kiritapu Allan Hon Michael Wood	Portfolio	Tourism Conservation Transport
Title of Cabinet paper	The Milford Opportunities Project	Date to be published	9 August 2021

List of documents that have been proactively released

Date	Title	Author
23 June 2021	The Milford Opportunities Project	Office of the Minister of Tourism Office of the Minister of Conservation Office of the Minister of Transport
28 June 2021	Milford Opportunities Project DEV-21-MIN-0135 Minute	Cabinet Office

Information redacted

YES

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with MBIE's policy on Proactive Release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Some information has been withheld for the following reasons:

- Commercial information
- Confidential advice to Government
- Free and frank opinions



Cabinet Economic Development Committee

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Milford Opportunities Project

Portfolios **Tourism / Transport / Conservation**

On 23 June 2021, the Cabinet Economic Development Committee (DEV):

- 1 **noted** that on 19 June 2019, DEV:
 - 1.1 agreed that the Milford Opportunities Project (the Project) should advance to stage two to develop a Master Plan to improve the future management and protection of the Milford Sound Piopiotahi and the Milford access corridor, while recognising and protecting national park values;
 - 1.2 invited the Minister of Tourism to report back with the draft Master Plan;[DEV-19-MIN-0159]
- 2 **noted** the recommendations of the Project's Master Plan, attached as Appendix 1 to the paper under DEV-21-SUB-0135;
- 3 **noted** that a number of the Master Plan's recommendations are likely to give rise to public discussion, including:
 - 3.1 restricting private vehicle access to Milford Sound Piopiotahi through a permit and public transport system;
 - 3.2 charging international visitors for access to Milford Sound Piopiotahi based on the value of the place;
 - 3.3 prohibiting cruise ships from entering Milford Sound Piopiotahi;
 - 3.4 closing the aerodrome (fixed wing runway) at Milford Sound Piopiotahi and replacing it with an expanded heliport;
 - 3.5 introducing a new governance and management structure for Milford Sound Piopiotahi village and inland waters to the Tasman Sea and the Milford Road corridor to improve efficiency and function;
 - 3.6 using the revenue collected by the visitor to increase the funding for conservation, mana whenua and community aspirations, and the visitor experience;
 - 3.7 building a world class cable car to reach a higher elevation, combined with walks up Bowen Valley and a lookout over Bowen Falls;

- 4 **noted** that:
- 4.1 free access would be maintained for New Zealanders through an option to self-drive to Milford Sound Piopiotahi;
 - 4.2 all access will be managed through a permit system, with allocations specified for users such as recreational users and local staff working in the Park;
- 5 **noted** that it is intended that:
- 5.1 the majority of visitors would access Milford Sound Piopiotahi through a public transport system with an intended hub at Te Anau;
 - 5.2 any visitors using the public transport system would pay for the service;
- 6 **agreed** that any international visitors (but not New Zealanders) entering Milford Sound Piopiotahi would pay an entry fee, which is likely to be collected via a charge through the permit system;
- 7 **agreed** that the Project would be self-funding via differential pricing access for international visitors collected through the permit system and through revenue generated from the public transport system, a contribution from which would fund conservation work in the wider Fiordland National Park;
- 8 **noted** that further work would be undertaken during the detailed planning and feasibility phase on scoping any capital funding required for implementation of the Project's recommendations, including repayment options;
- 9 **noted** that further work would be undertaken on how to address managing potential monopoly conditions being created by the Project's governance and management recommendations and transport system;
- 10 **noted** that the Milford Opportunities Project Governance Group intends to publicly launch the Milford Opportunities Project Master Plan in July – August 2021;
- 11 **agreed** to the formation of a dedicated unit and Establishment Board, with Dr Keith Turner appointed as the Chair, by July 2021, so that the detailed planning and feasibility phase of Stage Three can commence;
- 12 **agreed** that the Establishment Board must include two Ngāi Tahu representatives;
- 13 **agreed** that a Ministerial group, comprising the Ministers of Tourism, Conservation and Transport, would be decision maker on Stage Three, including the Establishment Board representation, the unit structure and project deliverables;
- 14 **noted** that funding has been secured to fund detailed planning and feasibility for the next two years [DEV-21-MIN-0067];
- 15 **invited** the Ministers of Tourism, Conservation and Transport to report back to DEV in December 2021 with a progress update on the Project;

- 16 **noted** that any legislative changes that may be proposed in relation to the Project will be submitted to Cabinet for approval.

Janine Harvey
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon Grant Robertson (Chair)
Hon Dr Megan Woods
Hon David Parker
Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Hon Poto Williams
Hon Stuart Nash
Hon Kris Faafoi
Hon Willie Jackson
Hon Michael Wood
Hon Dr David Clark
Hon Meka Whaitiri
Hon Phil Twyford
Rino Tirikatene MP
Dr Deborah Russell MP

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Officials Committee for DEV