



# Departmental Briefing

## In Confidence

GS ref: 22-B-0618  
DOCCM 7144066  
MBIE: 2223-1001  
MOT: OC220826

**To:** Minister of Conservation  
Minister of Tourism  
Associate Minister of Transport

**Date:** 21 September 2022

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**Subject:** Ministerial visit to Piopiotahi Milford Sound on 3 – 4 October 2022

**Action sought:** Note programme arrangements for your visit to Piopiotahi Milford Sound and that you will discuss these with officials prior to your visit. Ask the MOP Board to focus its work programme to feasibility, planning and scoping of MOP Masterplan recommendations. s9(2)(g)(i) Advise Destination Milford Sound that decisions will not be made prior to the completion of feasibility testing and public consultation. Note a draft media release.

**Time Frame:** 3 October 2022

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<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	MOP Masterplan recommendations are contentious among some stakeholders and could draw negative media attention. Clarity of scope is required to ensure the MOP Board and Unit meet expectations.	<b>Department's Priority:</b>	High
		<b>Level of Risk:</b>	High

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## Contacts

Name and position	Cellphone	First contact	Principal author
<b>Marie Long, Deputy Director-General National Programmes and Regulatory Services, Department of Conservation</b>	<b>s9(2)(a)</b>	✓	
<b>Dale Elvy, Manager, Tourism Operations and Partnerships; Labour, Science and Enterprise; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment</b>		✓	
<b>Jessica Ranger, Manager, Placemaking and Urban Development, Ministry of Transport</b>		✓	
<b>John Arathimos, Principal Advisor (Policy) Milford Opportunities Project, Department of Conservation</b>			✓

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Proactively released

## Executive summary – Whakarāpopoto ā kaiwhakahaere

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1. You are visiting Piopiotahi Milford Sound on 3 and 4 October to gain a better understanding at place of recommendations in the Milford Opportunities Project (MOP) Masterplan. You will meet with the MOP Board and Destination Milford Sound during your visit.
2. Your meeting with the MOP Board is an opportunity to help ensure that the Board and MOP Unit understand the scope of their work programme. Phase three of the MOP should be focussed on providing advice to you on the feasibility of MOP Masterplan recommendations so that you can decide how to progress them. It is not for the Board or Unit to implement or enable those recommendations.
3. Your meeting with Destination Milford Sound is an opportunity to provide assurance that decisions concerning Masterplan recommendations will not be made prior to the completion of feasibility testing and extensive public consultation.

## We recommend that you ... (Ngā tohutohu)

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	Decision
a) <u>Note</u> the draft programme arrangements for your visit to Piopiotahi Milford Sound on 3 and 4 October 2022	
b) <u>Agree</u> to advise the MOP Board and Unit that their work programme should focus on feasibility, planning and scoping in accordance with Cabinet Minute decisions	Yes / No
c) <u>Agree</u> to advise the MOP Board and Unit that they are to provide advice on the feasibility of the Masterplan recommendations to you so you can decide how to progress them	Yes / No
d) <u>Note</u> that the MOP Board and Unit and/or agencies will determine delivery vehicles for implementation of MOP Masterplan recommendations at the completion of the feasibility testing phase.	
e) <u>Confirm</u> that you have agreed to extend the feasibility testing phase of the Milford Opportunities Project to 30 June 2024	Yes / No
f) <b>s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(f)(iv)</b>	Yes / No
g) <u>Agree</u> to advise Destination Milford Sound that decisions concerning recommendations in the MOP Masterplan will not be made prior to the completion of feasibility testing and extensive public consultation	Yes / No
h) <u>Note</u> a draft media release for your visit	



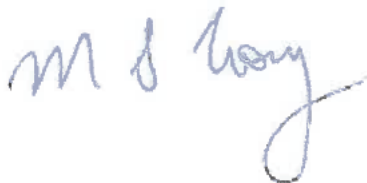
Date: 21 / 9 / 22

**Dale Elvy**  
**Manager, Tourism Operations and Partnerships**  
**Labour, Science and Enterprise,**  
**Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment**



Date: 21 / 9 / 22

**Jessica Ranger**  
**Kaiwhakahaere, Whakaaweawe i ngā Taura Here**  
**Manager, Placemaking and Urban Development**  
**Te Manatū Waka Ministry of Transport**



Date: 21 / 9 / 22

**Marie Long**  
**Deputy Director General, National Programmes and Regulatory Services**  
**For Director-General of Conservation**  
**Department of Conservation**

Date: / /

**Hon Poto Williams**  
**Minister of Conservation**

Date: / /

**Hon Stuart Nash**  
**Minister of Tourism**

Date: / /

**Hon Kieran McAnulty**  
**Associate Minister of Transport**

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## Purpose – Te aronga

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1. The purpose of this paper is to support your attendance at the following events:
  - Site visits in Piopiotahi (Milford Sound) and along the Milford Corridor
  - Discussions with the Milford Opportunities Project (MOP) Board
  - Meeting with Destination Milford Sound (DMS).

## Background and context – Te horopaki

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2. You will visit Piopiotahi on 3 and 4 October 2022 to gain a better understanding at place of recommendations in the Milford Opportunities Project (MOP) Masterplan. Your draft programme and list of attendees is attached (Appendices 1 and 2 refer). You will meet with officials to discuss your visit prior to your departure date.
3. The key recommendations of the Masterplan are to:
  - Restrict private vehicle access to Piopiotahi through a permit and public transport system
  - Charge international visitors for access to Piopiotahi based on the value of the place, creating a self-funded sustainable system
  - Prohibit cruise ships from entering Piopiotahi
  - Close the aerodrome (fixed-wing runway) at Piopiotahi and replace it with an expanded heliport
  - Redesign the facilities and attractions on the Milford Road to encourage longer and slower visitor experiences. The primary transport mode in and out of the area would be by regular hop-on/hop-off bus services
  - Make Te Anau the primary transport hub for the journey to Piopiotahi, reducing day trips from Queenstown
  - Introduce a new governance and management structure for Piopiotahi village and surface waters of the Sound to the Tasman Sea and the Milford Road corridor to improve efficiency and function
  - Use revenue collected from visitors to increase the funding for conservation, mana whenua and community aspirations, transport, infrastructure, and the visitor experience
  - Build a world-class cable car to reach a higher elevation, combined with walks up Bowen Valley and a lookout over Bowen Falls.
4. The MOP Board and Unit were recently established to undertake the next stage of work which is feasibility testing of Masterplan recommendations. This includes investigation of potential legislative pathways and detailed business case assessments. It will also involve extensive stakeholder consultation. The outcomes of the feasibility testing will inform what work progresses to the implementation stage.
5. You have a separate meeting with DMS. This is a group of tourism businesses, who formed in response to the MOP Masterplan. s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i)

## Objectives of the visit

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6. The key objectives for the visit are that you:
  - Better understand MOP Masterplan recommendations including opportunities and critical issues at place

- Support the newly established MOP Board and Unit to understand their role and the expected deliverables of the feasibility testing phase
- Listen to the views of DMS on the MOP Masterplan and give them confidence that consultation and full testing will be fundamental to the feasibility assessment of the Plan's recommendations.

## Key points

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### *Messages to convey to the MOP Board*

7. The MOP Board is newly formed, and still in the process of understanding the scope and complexity of its work. Board members may ask you to implement some 'enabling' recommendations of the Masterplan as soon as possible. This could include asking for a decision in principle for the creation of a new entity and governance model for Piopiotahi.
8. Subject to your agreement, officials propose that you convey to Board members that:
  - The Government agrees that change is required in Piopiotahi
  - You look forward to receiving an outline of the MOP Board and Unit's work programme in due course
  - You expect that the feasibility phase of the project will provide you with advice by 30 June 2024 on the viability of the recommendations in the Masterplan. This will be based on identification of different options for achieving and implementing the recommendations and business case analysis.
  - You will determine what recommendations in the Masterplan should be further progressed following receipt of that advice
  - In saying the above, you expect that the work will be approached in tranches where that makes sense, and that advice will be delivered as it is developed
  - Implementation of many of the recommendations before or close to 30 June 2024 is unrealistic if adequate feasibility testing is to occur. A process of extensive consultation and further policy development and advice will be required as outlined in paragraph 22.
  - The MOP Board and Unit and/or agencies will also need to determine delivery vehicles for implementation of MOP Masterplan recommendations at the completion of the feasibility testing phase.

9.

**s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(f)(iv)**

10.

### *Messages to convey to the DMS*

**9(2)(g)(i)**

12. Subject to your agreement, officials propose that you assure DMS that:
- No decisions will be taken concerning recommendations in the MOP Masterplan until the completion of feasibility testing and ministerial review
  - The feasibility stage will include comprehensive public consultation, robust business case analysis and appropriate governance through government involvement in the Board and the Ministerial Group.

## Critical issues

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### *Scope of the MOP Board and Unit work programme*

13. Your Ministerial group recently selected the MOP Board. It includes officials from the Department of Conservation (DOC), Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and Ministry of Transport (MOT) as ex-officio members, and Ngāi Tahu representatives. The Board reports to you and oversees a MOP Unit which will undertake the next stage of the MOP work programme.
14. The MOP Unit needs to work closely with the three agencies to ensure that, where relevant, they inform the work programme. DOC hosts the MOP unit and manages a \$15m funding allocation.
15. The Board will supply advice to the Ministerial group on feasibility options and their recommendations for implementation. You will also receive advice from their officials on the Board's recommendations. Due to complexity and challenges in the recruitment process, the Board and the dedicated MOP Unit have only recently been established. The MOP Unit is currently developing its work programme, and this is expected to be discussed with officials in coming weeks.
16. **9(2)(g)(i)** [REDACTED] On 23 June 2021, the Cabinet Economic Development Committee (DEV-21-MIN-0135 refers):
- a) 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 MOP Stage Three can commence
  - b) Noted that budget has been secured to fund detailed planning and feasibility for the next two years [DEV-21-MIN-0067].
17. Deliverables would include 'scoping' any capital funding required for implementation of the Project's recommendations, including repayment options. The body of the paper to Cabinet described enabling considerations concerning recommendations in the Masterplan. **9(2)(g)(i)** [REDACTED] the above-mentioned decisions are very specific in terms of what the feasibility testing phase of the project entails.
18. In regard to paragraph 16 (b) above, officials were advised that you agreed with the MOP Board to extend the feasibility assessment phase of the project to 30 June 2024. This is due to the recent appointment of the MOP Board and Unit. Please confirm this. We expect that advice will be delivered in tranches prior to that date to ensure momentum in progressing the project.
19. Officials interpret Cabinet's instructions to be that 'feasibility' testing should focus on identifying what Masterplan recommendations are feasible, and of those that are feasible, which can or cannot be implemented within current legislation. Feasibility testing should also identify potential legislative pathways, where relevant, and include detailed business case analysis of the recommendations.

20. The current funding envelope is not sufficient for detailed business case analysis on all the Masterplan recommendations. Therefore, there are specific topics within the Masterplan that officials consider should be prioritised, namely:
- Finding solutions for managing access and minimising congestion in Fiordland National Park and the Milford Road Corridor
  - Developing a potential revenue model that will help to fund the effective management of conservation values and infrastructure that improves the overall visitor experience
  - How to best manage the place in partnership with Ngāi Tahu.
21. Officials consider that implementation of any recommendations before the end of the feasibility testing work is inappropriate as many of the recommendations are interdependent of each other.
22. Officials consider that an indicative timeline for completion of policy analysis and final decisions by Ministers and Cabinet could be as follows:
- Detailed analysis/advice on options presented to ministers by 30 June 2024
  - Extensive public consultation (8 weeks) on options agreed to by ministers (2024)
  - Analysis of submissions (2024)
  - Final recommendations to ministers and Cabinet (2024)
  - Potential legislative bids approved by ministers and presented to Cabinet Office (2024/2025)
  - Legislation passed (2025/2027)
  - Potential budget bids submitted to Treasury in the annual budget round (2025)
  - Infrastructure development (2025 onward).
23. The MOP Unit confirming the work programme, and then communicating timeframes of the different steps is critical for stakeholders to understand and have assurance as to how they can engage in the process.

#### ***Scale and significance of MOP***

24. The recommendations within the MOP Masterplan are of national significance due to their scale and complexity. Piopiotahi is one of the iconic visitor destinations in Aotearoa New Zealand, and changes to the area and how it is accessed will likely affect national visitor flows. If implemented, recommendations in the Masterplan will present opportunities for how tourism and conservation land is managed across the country.
25. The scale of change in the recommendations has significant implications for the Crown, including in legislation reform and Treaty partner responsibilities, and has created uncertainty for operators who hold existing concessions in Piopiotahi.

#### ***Legislative implications***

26. Some of the MOP recommendations, if adopted, may require amendments to existing legislation or creation of new legislation. Officials consider that part of the feasibility testing work to be undertaken is to better understand short, medium and longer-term options to implement MOP recommendations.
27. MOP Masterplan recommendations include management of access and charging for entry to Piopiotahi. These controls are not allowed under current legislation including the Conservation Act, National Parks Act, and transport legislation. Testing and consulting on options for management of access and charging is critical due to the potential and



perceived impacts on the local community, tourism operators, businesses, other stakeholders, and the public (including a loss of social licence).

28. Within the Conservation Act, specific activities in Piopiotahi are managed under the Fiordland Park National Management Plan (FNPMP). The existing FNPMP does not allow many of the recommendations in the MOP Masterplan.
29. The FNPMP is due for review, but this has not yet begun and is expected to take several years. Developing a new park plan within the context of MOP Masterplan recommendations and upholding the Government's commitment under Section 4 of the Conservation Act will be challenging. It will likely require changes to DOC's current planning mechanisms. This also presents an opportunity to ensure that the new next FNPMP is agile and able to meet changing needs while upholding conservation values.
30. If implemented, some Masterplan recommendations could require significant changes to existing concession arrangements. Whilst this could result in constructive outcomes, it could entail complex and potentially costly negotiations.
31. **s9(2)(f)(iv)**  
**s9(2)(f)(iv)** Importantly, DOC must manage concessions to meet the requirements of the current FNPMP and cannot pre-determine the outcomes of the MOP work.
32. It is also likely changes will be needed to transport legislation to restrict access to Piopiotahi. **s9(2)(h)**

#### Existing concession context

33. Most activities in Piopiotahi are carried out under a DOC concession. There are currently 21 businesses that are based at Piopiotahi - of which 11 are tourism-focused, one is a commercial fishing venture, and nine provide infrastructure or support services. Many concessions, particularly those involving infrastructure, have historically been issued for long periods of time (up to 30 years) to enable businesses certainty and quality investment.
34. Infrastructure at Piopiotahi is primarily managed by two companies - Milford Sound Infrastructure and Milford Sound Tourism Limited. Milford Sound Infrastructure manages the hydroelectric system, gas and the drinking water, while Milford Sound Tourism Limited manages the wastewater, rubbish and recycling, and the carparking facilities.
35. **s9(2)(b)(ii) and s9(2)(g)(i)**

#### ***Proposed closure of the aerodrome***

36. The Masterplan recommends that the aerodrome (fixed-wing runway) at Piopiotahi is closed and replaced with an expanded heliport. It proposes that this would allow significantly more effective use of the limited space in Piopiotahi and an improved experience for most visitors. It is estimated that five percent of total visitors to Milford Sound arrive by fixed wing aircraft.
37. There has been significant public discussion on this issue, and some stakeholders (especially those holding concessions for fixed wing flights into the aerodrome) have been very vocal in their opposition to the proposal. Queenstown Milford User Group (QMUG) represents these operators and is a foundation member of the DMS.

38. There are structural issues associated with the aerodrome. The existing runway is deteriorating and is built on relatively poor foundations. It is susceptible to water ingress during very high tides and sea level rise.
39. There have been concerns raised that closing the aerodrome would negatively affect emergency response capabilities. Regardless of the outcome of the feasibility testing stage, MOT is committed to ensuring that air emergency and Search and Rescue functions will operate at a sufficient level.
40. MOT owns and manages the aerodrome and contracts day-to-day management activities to a specialist third party.

s9(2)(g)(i); 9(2)(g)(i)

#### ***Prohibition of cruise ships entering Piopiotahi***

41. The MOP Masterplan recommends removing cruise ships from Piopiotahi. This needs to be analysed, tested and consulted on during the feasibility stage of the project. DOC will determine a view on this once feasibility assessments are completed. MBIE considers that the feasibility testing phase of the project should prioritise actions as stated in paragraph 20.

42. s9(2)(g)(i)

#### ***Engagement with stakeholders***

43. Officials expect robust engagement with stakeholders to inform the MOP Board's recommendations to you on the feasibility of the Masterplan's recommendations. This means engaging with a full range of views and incorporating these views into the feasibility assessment.
44. It is also critical stakeholders can engage in good faith, i.e., on the understanding no decisions have been made on the Masterplan's recommendations and their feedback will help inform the feasibility assessment.
45. Officials will continue to work closely with the MOP Board and Unit to reinforce the need for this kind of robust engagement, and to make sure stakeholders understand no decisions have been made by you on how to progress the recommendations.

#### ***Risk assessment – Aronga tūraru***

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46. There is an overall high level of risk associated with your visit. This is because:
  - The MOP Masterplan is complex, transformative, and contentious among many stakeholders. There is high public interest and the Masterplan's content is frequently in the media.
  - The MOP Board and Unit are new and are developing an understanding of the magnitude of the work and their roles

• 9(2)(g)(i)

47. These risks will be mitigated by:

- The feasibility testing stage of the project which will highlight the impacts and benefits of each recommendation
- The associated public consultation processes and the MOP Unit and officials working with key stakeholder groups
- Officials continuing to support the establishment of the MOP Board and Unit, including clarifying their roles, their work programme, and the expectations for the feasibility stage of work
- Drawing upon the following key messages:
  - MOP is a key priority for the government, and you are visiting Piopiotahi/Milford Sound on 3 and 4 October to meet with those involved and to hear the local context
  - It is generally acknowledged by all those with a stake in Milford Sound that the current status quo is not an option
  - The initial work of the Milford Opportunities Governance Group was to develop a plan for how we might protect this incredible place and transform the way tourism interacts with the environment and conservation
  - What they achieved is innovative and challenging, however no decisions have been made at this point.

48. The next phase of work for MOP is to undertake robust assessment and planning work to determine the feasibility of the masterplan's specific recommendations. That work will include an extensive programme of consultation with the local community, tourism operators, businesses, other stakeholders and the public.

#### **Treaty principles (section 4, Conservation Act) – Ngā mātāpono Tiriti (section 4, Conservation Act)**

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49. Ngāi Tahu has been involved in the Masterplan's development through their Papatipu Rūnanga and is supportive of the project. The current visitor experience at Piopiotahi is lacking a significant cultural element, and the current management may be an area where they are keen to see significant improvements and decision-making shifts. The Masterplan addresses this issue by providing an avenue to actualise Ngāi Tahu's aspirations including how Milford Sound is managed. Ngāi Tahu Papatipu Rūnanga have two representatives on the MOP Board.

#### **Media**

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50. At the time of writing, we understand that there will be no media presence for your visit. Attached, for consideration of your offices, is a draft media release for joint release from the Ministerial Oversight Group (Appendix 5 refers).

#### **Attachments – Ngā tāpiritanga**

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Appendix 1 – Draft programme

Appendix 4 – **Out of scope**

Appendix 2 – Event Attendees

Appendix 5 – **Not released as publicly available**

Appendix 3 – **Out of scope**

**ENDS**

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# Run Sheet

Event: Ministers' Visit to Piopiotahi

Date: 3 – 4 October 2022

<b>Ministers</b>	Hon Poto Williams, Minister of Conservation	Hon Stuart Nash, Minister of Tourism	Hon Kieran McNulty, Associate Minister of Transport
<b>Aides</b>	Ryan Jones	TBC	TBC
<b>Government Officials</b>	Penny Nelson (Director General, DOC)	Heather Kirkham, (General Manager Tourism, MBIE)	Jessica Ranger (Manager Placemaking & Urban Development, MOT representative on MOP Board)
	Marie Long (Deputy Director General National Programmes and Regulatory Services, DOC)		James Caygill (Director Regional Relationships, Waka Kotahi)
	Aaron Fleming (Director Operations Southern South Island, DOC)		Sophie MacDonald, (Graduate Advisor, Placemaking & Urban Development, MOT)
	Claire Spencer (Manager Regional Visitor Planning, DOC)		
<b>MOP Board</b>	<b>MOP Unit</b>		
Keith Turner (Chair)	Chris Goddard, Director		
Muriel Johnstone (Ngāi Tahu)	Simon Moran (MOP Unit, Transport Lead)		
Michael Skerrett (Ngāi Tahu)	John Twidle (MOP Unit, Heritage Lead)		
Michelle Trapski (Independent)			
Andrew Patterson (Independent)			
Cameron McIntosh (CE, Southland District Council)			
Wilma Falconer (CE Environment Southland)			
Bill Day (Independent)			

Marie Long, DOC representative			
Heather Kirkham, MBIE representative			
Jess Ranger, MOT Representative			
<b>Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu</b>			
Arihia Bennett (Chief Executive)			

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Day 1 Monday 3 October, Queenstown

Time	Programme	Attendees	Notes
3.25pm	Ministers Nash and McAnulty arrive in Queenstown and are met by Aaron Fleming	Minister Nash Minister McAnulty Aaron Fleming	
3.50pm	Minister Williams and Arihia arrive and are met by Aaron Fleming and Chris Goddard	Minister Williams Arihia Bennett Aaron Fleming Chris Goddard	
4.00pm – 4.30pm	Board bus and introductions	Ministers and aides Government Officials MOP Board and Unit (referred to below as 'all')	
4.30pm – 6.30pm	Depart from Queenstown Airport and travel to Te Anau by bus	All	Packed afternoon tea for the bus trip
6.30pm – 7.00pm	Rest stop in Te Anau	All	
7.00pm – 8.45pm	Travel to Milford Lodge, comfort stop at Knob's Flat if required.	All	Ngāi Tahu storytelling
8.45pm – 9.00pm	Check in and settle into rooms for those staying at Milford Lodge	Ministers and aides Penny Nelson Arihia Bennett Marie Long Muriel Johnstone Michael Skerrett Keith Turner	
9.00pm – 10.30pm	Dinner at Milford Lodge Retire for the evening		



Day 2 Tuesday 4 October, Piopiotahi

Time	Programme	Attendees	Notes
6.45am – 7.15am	Ministers and Government Officials breakfast at Milford Lodge (to be confirmed – this will not be required if Government Officials have an opportunity to orally brief the Ministers prior to this event)	Ministers and aides Government Officials	
7.15am – 7.45am	Ministers and MOP Board breakfast	Ministers and aides MOP Board and Unit	
7.45am – 8.00am	Check out and board bus	All	
8.00am – 8.20am	Visit Milford Airport and receive aerodrome context	All	
8.20am – 8.35am	Brief bus tour of Piopiotahi – Milford Hotel, car parks, bus parks and boat terminal	All	
8.35am – 9.35am	Disembark bus at Milford Terminal and walk around site	All	
9.35am – 9.55am	Bus tour of Deepwater Basin	All	
9.55am – 11.55am	<p>Travel towards Te Anau, with commentary provided at key sites (no stops):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homer Tunnel operations and upgrade works</li> <li>• Gertrude Valley</li> <li>• Hine Pīwai and Wananga proposals</li> <li>• Gunns Camp</li> <li>• The Divide</li> <li>• Cascade Creek camp</li> <li>• Knobs Flat and proposed development</li> </ul>	All Kevin Thompson, Manager Milford Road Alliance and Grant Tremain, DOC Principal Ranger Heritage & Visitors to join bus and provide commentary.	Morning tea and lunch packs to be provided for bus trip



Time	Programme	Attendees	Notes
11.55am – 12.10pm	Comfort stop in Te Anau	All	
12.10pm – 2.10pm	Travel to Queenstown Airport	All	
2.10pm – 2.40pm	Disembark, unload bus, say farewell, get to meeting room for those in DMS meeting	All	
2.40pm – 3.10pm	Meet with Destination Milford Sound	Ministers and aides Government Officials <b>DMS:</b> Mark Quickfall - Tourism Roger Wilson - Water Paul Anderson - Land James Stokes - Air	Coronet Peak meeting room at Queenstown Airport booked
3.10pm	Trip concludes, go to gates for departing flights. 4pm to Wellington, 4.20pm to Christchurch		

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**APPENDIX 2 – LIST OF OFFICIALS AND BIOGRAPHIES**

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Proactively released

Photo	Name	Organisation	Role/Biography
	<b>Penny Nelson</b>	DOC	Director General
	<b>Marie Long</b>	DOC	Deputy Director General National Programmes and Regulatory Services  MOP Board Member
	<b>Aaron Fleming</b>	DOC	Director, Operations Southern South Island
	<b>Claire Spencer</b>	DOC	Manager, Regional Visitor Planning
	<b>Heather Kirkham</b>	MBIE	General Manager, Tourism  MOP Board Member
	<b>Jessica Ranger</b>	MOT, MOP Board Member	Manager, Placemaking & Urban Development

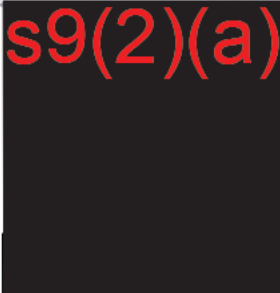





Photo	Name	Organisation	Role/Biography
	Sophie MacDonald	MOT	
	James Caygill	Waka Kotahi	Director, Regional Relationships
	Grant Tremain	DOC	Principal Ranger Heritage & Visitors, Te Anau
<b>Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu</b>			
	Arihia Bennett	Chief Executive Officer Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu	CEO of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu since 2012 (~70,000 iwi members), tribal whakataukī: Mō tātou, ā, mō kā uri ā muri ake nei – for us and our children after us. Member of Māori advisory panel to the Ombudsman. Member of Global Women and the Tuahiwi Māori Women's Welfare League. New Zealand Order of Merit for services to Māori and the community, 2008. Arihia lives in North Canterbury.
<b>Milford Opportunities Project Board</b>			
	Dr Keith Turner	Milford Opportunities Board - Chair	Keith has over 39 years of executive experience in the power industry, and for the latter 25 years, held senior executive positions.  He has extensive experience of working with the major economic and environmental policy departments of government. Keith has been Chair of the previous stages of the Milford Opportunities Project since 2017.








Photo	Name	Organisation	Role/Biography
	<b>Muriel Johnstone</b> <b>MNZM, Ōraka Aparima</b>	Milford Opportunities Board - Ngāi Tahu representative	Muriel is an expert in Ngāi Tahu place names, whakapapa, traditions and history. She has voluntarily dedicated more than 40 years to Ngāi Tahu, Oraka-Aparima and her community on numerous governance boards. Muriel recently received the Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit, for her services to Māori and her work in conservation.
	<b>Michael Skerrett QSM</b>	Milford Opportunities Board - Ngāi Tahu representative	Kaumātua Michael whakapapa's to Waihōpai Rūnanga. Michael has extensive experience in both commercial and educational governance, and strong skills in ensuring alignment of organisational activities to both tikanga and legislative requirements. Michael was awarded the Queen's Service Medal for services to Maori and the community in 2013.
	<b>Bill Day</b>	Milford Opportunities Board	Bill is well known and highly respected, including by tourism operators, in the region for his many efforts and contributions. He has 40 years corporate experience, and his previous board experience includes Wanaka Airport Users Group Chair; Wanaka Marina Company Director; Waikato Link PSAF Investment Committee Director; LandSAR NZ Director.
	<b>Andrew Patterson</b>	Milford Opportunities Board	A vivid architectural storyteller with a passion for Māori history and mythology, Andrew is an advocate for architecture that responds to our history, the landscape and sense of place. Andrew won NZ Australian and Awards for Architecture multiple times.
	<b>Michelle Trapski</b>	Milford Opportunities Board	Michelle has a track record of business improvement, commercial success and excellence in leadership. Michelle has a range of board and senior executive experience across the tourism and education sectors.









Photo	Name	Organisation	Role/Biography
	<b>Cameron McIntosh</b>	Milford Opportunities Board, ex officio	Chief Executive, Southland District Council.
	<b>Chris Goddard</b>	Milford Opportunities Board – Director, Milford Opportunities Project Unit	Chris lives in Tarras with his wife, Donna. They have their own consultancy business focused on culture, management, labour supply, and merger and acquisition support. He has a background in mining and project management and is well versed in engagement with government, diverse communities and the general public.
	<b>Simon Moran</b>	MOP Unit	
	<b>John Twidle</b>	MOP Unit	MOP Unit
<b>Destination Milford Sound</b>			

Photo	Name	Organisation	Role/Biography
	Mark Quickfall	Committee Chair, Destination Milford Sound, &  Tourism Representative	Mark has experience in managing and operating tourism, marine, adventure and aviation businesses.  He is sole director and shareholder of Omni Tourism Group and Totally Tourism Limited (TTL), founder and director of TTL from 1999 to present, owner of Mitre Peak Cruises Ltd, and Chair of Destination Queenstown (7 years).  §
	Roger Wilson	Deputy Chair of DMS Committee & Water Representative	Roger is a consultant with Findex, specialising in corporate advisory work. He is also Director and Board Chairman for Milford Sound Tourism, Ltd, and a member of the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee for Queenstown Lakes District Council.  He is former Director (1989-2017) of Real NZ Ltd (formerly Real Journeys).
	Paul Anderson	DMS Committee Member & Land Representative	Paul is Chief Executive Officer of Queenstown-based NZSki Limited, which owns and operates Coronet Peak, The Remarkables and Mt Hutt ski area. He is also Director of Trojan Holdings Limited and former General Manager, Corporate Services at Christchurch City Council.
	James Stokes	DMS Committee Member & Air Representative	James is Owner and Managing Director of Glenorchy Air, a commercial pilot and an executive member of the National Party, Wakatipu Branch.

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# DRAFT media release

October 2022

## Ministers visit Milford Opportunities Project

Tourism Minister, Stuart Nash, Associate Transport Minister, Kieran McAnulty, and Conservation Minister, Poto Williams are visiting Piopiotahi/Milford Sound today to meet with the newly established Milford Opportunities Board and hear local context.

“Creating a world-class experience at Milford Sound, that manages visitor impacts whilst supporting the aspirations of Ngāi Tahu, local communities, and businesses, is a priority for the Government. This work embodies the intent of the Government’s Tourism Strategy—that tourism growth is productive, sustainable and inclusive, and enriches Aotearoa now and into the future,” says Minister of Tourism Stuart Nash.

“We must act as guardians of this natural wonder and World Heritage Site.”

In June 2021 Cabinet approved \$15 million to fund the next stage of the Milford Opportunities Project (MOP), including establishing a unit to undertake feasibility planning, a MOP Board to guide the unit, and a Ministerial Group (comprising the Conservation, Tourism and Transport Ministers) to oversee it.

Conservation Minister Poto Williams said the next phase of MOP will be to stringently test the recommendations of the Milford Opportunities Masterplan delivered last year.

“While not everyone agrees with all elements of the masterplan’s recommendations, there is strong support for the purpose of this work—to protect and restore Piopiotahi and ensure an outstanding visitor experience.”

“The masterplan outlined some innovative, aspirational and challenging recommendations for overcoming tourism pressures and better honouring the area’s significant natural and cultural heritage. However, its recommendations are not a fait accompli,” said Poto Williams.

“Considerable assessment, feasibility testing and planning work is now needed, including an extensive programme of consultation with stakeholders and the public.”

Since the masterplan’s delivery, the project has focussed on developing structure, systems and processes for the feasibility testing phase. The Ministerial Oversight Group, MOP Board and MOP Unit have been established and a Programme Business Case, high level work programme and draft engagement strategy have been developed.

“Given the existing safety concerns, infrastructure pressures, and congestion, there is general consensus that change is needed to protect this incredible place,” said Kieran McAnulty, Associate Transport Minister.

“There is considerable momentum behind this project currently, and I’m delighted to see first-hand the passion, energy and commitment of all those involved.”

ENDS

## **Background**

A record 946,000 people visited Milford Sound Piopiotahi in 2018. As visitor numbers rose so did the pressure on this World Heritage area, resulting in overcrowding at key sites, pressure on aging infrastructure, a degrading of the visitor experience and safety, and adverse effects on conservation. Although tourism numbers have dropped significantly due to COVID-19, predictions indicate the return of pre-COVID-19 numbers in coming years.

## **Milford Opportunities Project (MOP)**

The Milford Opportunities Project was established in response to pressures that tourism was placing on Milford Sound Piopiotahi and the Milford Road corridor.

This work provides a valuable test case for transformational change of tourism in line with strategic direction from the New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy and DOC's Heritage and Visitor Strategy.

MOP works to address these visitor pressures and enhance and sustain the visitor experience and harness opportunities to support the communities of Southland.

MOP is a collaborative project led by Independent Chair Dr Keith Turner with Ngāi Tahu, Department of Conservation (DOC), Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), Ministry of Transport (MoT), Southland District Council, Queenstown Lakes District Council, Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency (Waka Kotahi), and local businesses.

MOP Board members were [announced by Minister of Conservation Poto Williams](#) on 29 July 2022.

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