

Section 6: National Policy Statements and National Environmental Standards

What is the general assessment of the project in relation to any relevant national policy statement (including the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement) and national environmental standard?

The assessment of effects has concluded that the effects can be managed so that the health and wellbeing of the affected water bodies is protected.

- **National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity 2023 (NPSIB):**

The NPSIB came into effect on 4 August 2023. At clause 1.3(3) It states:

Nothing in this National Policy Statement applies to the development, operation, maintenance or upgrade of renewable electricity generation assets and activities and electricity transmission network assets and activities.

The relevant definitions of the NPSIB are listed below.

renewable electricity generation assets means the physical components required for renewable electricity generation, along with the assets and infrastructure (such as cabling, access roads, and tracks) required to store the generated electricity and connect it to transmission or distribution networks or direct to end users

electricity transmission network assets means the physical components of the electricity transmission network, along with all access roads and tracks required to operate and maintain those assets

The application seeks development, maintenance and operation of a renewable electricity generation asset. Therefore the NPSIB is not a relevant consideration as it does not apply to proposed scheme.

- **National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land 2022 (NPSHPL):**

This NPS came into effect after the Queenstown Lakes District Plan and Partially Operative Otago Regional Policy Statement 2019. The site is in a qualifying zone being identified as part of the Rural Zone. However, the NPS-HPL is not considered of direct relevance to the proposal because the site does not contain LUC 1-3 soils.

- **National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 (NPSFM):**

The proposal involved an activity that supports the ability of people and communities to provide for their well-being. This qualifies under the 3rd priority of the NPSFM Objective. However, the proposal does not compromise the health and wellbeing of the relevant waterbodies and freshwater ecosystems, or the use of water to serve the health needs of people. The proposal will ensure water is managed as part of New Zealand's integrated response to Climate Change in the sense that it can be used to generate a renewable source of electricity without compromising the health and well-being of the water body through the adoption of residual flows at the intake to maintain the wellbeing of the water body between the take and return locations.

- **National Policy Statement on Renewable Electricity Generation 2011 (NPSREG):**

The NPS recognises the importance of renewable energy and aims to help New Zealand achieve Central Government's target of (what was then) 90 per cent of electricity from renewable sources by 2025.

A brief policy assessment is provided below:

A. Recognising the benefits of renewable electricity generation activities
POLICY A

Decision-makers shall recognise and provide for the national significance of renewable electricity generation activities, including the national, regional and local benefits relevant to renewable electricity generation activities. These benefits include, but are not limited to:

- (a) maintaining or increasing electricity generation capacity while avoiding, reducing or displacing greenhouse gas emissions;*
- (b) maintaining or increasing security of electricity supply at local, regional and national levels by diversifying the type and/or location of electricity generation;*
- (c) using renewable natural resources rather than finite resources;*
- (d) the reversibility of the adverse effects on the environment of some renewable electricity generation technologies;*
- (e) avoiding reliance on imported fuels for the purposes of generating electricity*

The scheme will have a number of positive renewable electricity generation effects that align to the matters identified in this policy in (a) through to (e) and the proposed activity is consistent with this policy.

B. Acknowledging the practical implications of achieving New Zealand's target for electricity generation from renewable resources
POLICY B

Decision-makers shall have particular regard to the following matters:

- (a) maintenance of the generation output of existing renewable electricity generation activities can require protection of the assets, operational capacity and continued availability of the renewable energy resource; and*
- (b) even minor reductions in the generation output of existing renewable electricity generation activities can cumulatively have significant adverse effects on national, regional and local renewable electricity generation output; and*
- (c) meeting or exceeding the New Zealand Government's national target for the generation of electricity from renewable resources will require the significant development of renewable electricity generation activities.*

The scheme will contribute to achievement of the New Zealand Government's national target for the generation of electricity from renewable resources and is consistent with this policy.

C. Acknowledging the practical constraints associated with the development, operation, maintenance and upgrading of new and existing renewable electricity generation activities
POLICY C1

Decision-makers shall have particular regard to the following matters:

- (a) the need to locate the renewable electricity generation activity where the renewable energy resource is available;*
- (b) logistical or technical practicalities associated with developing, upgrading, operating or maintaining the renewable electricity generation activity;*
- (c) the location of existing structures and infrastructure including, but not limited to, roads, navigation and telecommunication structures and facilities, the distribution network and the national grid in relation to the renewable electricity generation activity, and the need to connect renewable electricity generation activity to the national grid;*
- (d) designing measures which allow operational requirements to complement and provide for mitigation opportunities; and*

(e) *adaptive management measures.*

The scheme is an integrated scheme that utilises two tributaries within the same catchment. This allows common distribution infrastructure to be utilised to convey electricity generated to the wider network. The development of the scheme is not possible if this economy of scale is not achieved because the costs of developing the connection to the distribution network cannot be justified if only one part of the generation scheme were to be developed. These are logistical or practical matters that need to be given regard when considering this integrated proposal.

- **National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission 2008 (NPSET)**

The proposed hydroelectricity scheme will connect to the electricity distribution network, therefore the NPSET is not directly relevant to this proposal.