Response ID ANON-URZ4-5F95-X

Submitted to Fast-track approval applications
Submitted on 2024-05-02 21:59:46

Submitter details

Is this application for section 2a or 2b?

2B

1 Submitter name

Individual or organisation name:
New Zealand Energy Limited

2 Contact person

Contact person name:
David Inch

3 What is your job title

Job title:
Managing Director

4 What is your contact email address?

Email:
s 9(2)(a)

5 What is your phone number?

Phone number:
s 9(2)(a)

6 What is your postal address?

Postal address:

P O Box 113
Motueka 7143
Nelson

7 Is your address for service different from your postal address?

No

Organisation:

Contact person:

Phone number:

Email address:

Job title:

Please enter your service address:

Section 1: Project location

Site address or location

Add the address or describe the location:

Matiri West Bank Road,
Matiri,
Murchison 7077

File upload:
Matiri Renewable Energy Project Location Plan v1.pdf was uploaded

Upload file here:
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Do you have a current copy of the relevant Record(s) of Title?

Yes

upload file:
Matiri Renewable Energy Land Parcels and Titles v1.pdf was uploaded

Who are the registered legal land owner(s)?

Please write your answer here:

New Zealand Energy Limited
James Inman Turnbull, Georgina Ethel Turnbull, Hamish Francis Turnbull and Rebecca Emily Turnbull

Detail the nature of the applicant's legal interest (if any) in the land on which the project will occur

Please write your answer here:

NZ Energy has the legal interest in the land where the proposed hydro electric scheme on the true right bank of the Matiri River. NZ Energy has agreements with the landowner on the East Branch of the Matiri River.

Section 2: Project details

What is the project name?

Please write your answer here:
Lower Matiri Renewable Energy Project

What is the project summary?

Please write your answer here:

The Lower Matiri Renewable Energy Project proposal is to build two small run of river hydroelectric schemes downstream of the current Matiri Hydroelectric Scheme owned by Southern Generation Limited Partnership.

What are the project details?

Please write your answer here:

The existing Matiri Hydroelectric Scheme is regionally significant, supplying electricity to the Murchison and wider Nelson District. The renewable resources in the area could be further utilised to improve the security of electricity supply and resilience for these communities.

The initial stage of this project is to construct a 3 MW hydroelectric scheme downstream of the current station. It is projected that this part of the project would produce 15GWh annually. In addition it is proposed to construct a small 1MW hydroelectric scheme utilising the fall in the East Branch of the Matiri River.

Describe the staging of the project, including the nature and timing of the staging

Please write your answer here:

NZ Energy could commence construction of these projects within 1 year of fast-track approval starting with procurement of equipment and its estimated that both schemes that make up the Lower Matiri Renewable Energy Project could be commissioned within 30 months of approval.

What are the details of the regime under which approval is being sought?

Please write your answer here:

Resource Management Act resource consent
Wildlife Act - both during the consent application assessment process and once consent is granted.
Concessions under the Conservation Act 1987 (Marginal Strip)

If you seeking approval under the Resource Management Act, who are the relevant local authorities?

Please write your answer here:

What applications have you already made for approvals on the same or a similar project?

Please write your answer here:

None

Is approval required for the project by someone other than the applicant?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

Some stages of the project may require agreement with the neighbouring landowner which has already been agreed in principle with the landowner

If the approval(s) are granted, when do you anticipate construction activities will begin, and be completed?

Please write your answer here:

As many of the background studies have been completed as part of the consenting and construction of the existing scheme only an updating exercise is required. This work along with detailed design and arranging funding will be completed in parallel and is expected to take 6 months.
Procurement would occur immediately upon acceptance of the detailed design.
While delivery of some turbo-mechanical equipment may take 12 to 15 months construction could begin within 12 months of project fast tracking approval.
Completion and Commissioning is expected to take 18 months.

Section 3: Consultation

Who are the persons affected by the project?

Please write your answer here:

The project works are almost entirely on private land. Some small areas of Crown Land and Public Conservation Estate may be involved.

To the best of our knowledge there are no treaty settlements, protected customary rights, etc over the land.

The local authority is the Tasman District Council.

Detail all consultation undertaken with the persons referred to above. Include a statement explaining how engagement has informed the project.

Please write your answer here:

This project is an enhancement/extension of an existing consented power scheme and transmission infrastructure with the majority of the project located on private land.
Consultation has been had with the Turnbull Family (landowner) and they are very supportive of what is being proposed. There are no other immediate neighbours.
The impacts and affected parties are likely to be those involved in stakeholder engagement for the Matiri Hydroelectric Scheme upstream. This scheme was completed in 2020.

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Describe any processes already undertaken under the Public Works Act 1981 in relation to the land or any part of the land on which the project will occur:

Please write your answer here:

None

Section 4: Iwi authorities and Treaty settlements

What treaty settlements apply to the geographical location of the project?

Please write your answer here:

None

Are there any Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019 principles or provisions that are relevant to the project?

No

If yes, what are they?:

Are there any identified parcels of Māori land within the project area, marae, and identified wāhi tapu?

No

If yes, what are they?:

Is the project proposed on any land returned under a Treaty settlement or any identified Māori land described in the ineligibility criteria?

No

Has the applicant has secured the relevant landowners' consent?

Yes

Is the project proposed in any customary marine title area, protected customary rights area, or aquaculture settlement area declared under s 12 of the Māori Commercial Aquaculture Claims Settlement Act 2004 or identified within an individual iwi settlement?

No

If yes, what are they?:

Has there been an assessment of any effects of the activity on the exercise of a protected customary right?

No

If yes, please explain:

Upload your assessment if necessary:
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Section 5: Adverse effects

What are the anticipated and known adverse effects of the project on the environment?

Please describe:

This Lower Matiri Renewable Energy Project has been a number of years in the planning with a staged approach with the first hydro scheme on the Matiri River commissioned in 2020. Opportunities have been investigated and chosen based on minimising the impacts on the environment. Many of the adverse effects of this Lower Matiri proposals are known from the experience in consenting the existing scheme. The resource consent conditions of the existing scheme are an example of how these can be addressed.

While the investigations into the Lower Matiri Renewable Energy Scheme are in the conceptual stages apart from the diversions, intake and downstream tailrace most of the infrastructure has low visual impact and is located on private farmland.
Hydro power schemes have been in existence in New Zealand for well over 100 years now. The effects on the environment are well and truly understood and measures to avoid, minimise and mitigate these effects are also well and truly known.

Ecological studies have identified, as with the existing consent, there will be a reduction of flow in the Matriri River due to the diversion for hydropower and there will be some effect in this area.

The very nature of the hydro scheme's infrastructure is that it creates very little effect on the environment for the following reasons:
• The intake structure is designed to take a finite amount of water while letting facilitating a residual flow based on ecological baselines to pass downstream providing flow connectivity with the river below the schemes. the residual flow pass on downstream. To a minor extent, flows will be reduced, reducing potential riverbank erosion. At flood stage the river will be unaffected by the scheme in that the limited take of the system will remain finite whilst the high volume flood stage will be natural in volume.
• The take/use of the waters of the Upper Matiri Renewable Energy Scheme is non-consumptive. That is, the resource is utilised briefly to generate electricity before returning to Matiri River various streams utilised.
• Most of the conveyance structures include either open canals or buried pipelines and careful planning will ensure construction impacts will baree minimised and temporary.
• There will be some discharge of sediments in the stream during construction but again with careful planning these impacts will be minimised and temporary.

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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?

Please write your answer here:

The National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation (NPS-REG) is highly relevant to this Project. The contribution of renewable electricity generation, regardless of scale, towards addressing
the effects of climate change plays a vital role in the wellbeing of New Zealand, its people and
the environment.

The Lower Matiri Renewable Energy Project is consistent with:
Policy A: noting the national, regional and local benefits including increasing electricity generation capacity while avoiding, reducing or displacing greenhouse gas emissions; increasing security of electricity supply at local, regional and national levels by diversifying the type and/or location of electricity generation; using renewable natural resources rather than finite resources; the reversibility of the adverse effects on the environment of some renewable electricity generation technologies; and avoiding reliance on imported fuels for the purposes of generating electricity.
Policy C1: as the Project will be co-located with existing structures and infrastructure including 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.
And Policy E1, E2 and E3.

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Section 7: Eligibility

Will access to the fast-track process enable the project to be processed in a more timely and cost-efficient way than under normal processes?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

The Project is relying on economies of scale to both construct and deliver the electricity to the market. There are two individual hydro generation plants that would otherwise need to go through individual consenting processes which would take years and would be prohibitively expensive. Especially when having to duplicate the process twice to gain access to DoC land (Marginal Strips) through the concession process. However, when combined they provide the necessary scale to proceed with the development. This fast-track approvals process is an essential tool and would allow the development to proceed forthwith once approval is gained. This project would start on the detailed design and planning of first stage immediately the fast-track approval is received.

What is the impact referring this project will have on the efficient operation of the fast-track process?

Please write your answer here:

This Project is not complicated to approve - construction is to occur predominately on land away from the public, a lot of which is either private, LINZ or road reserve and this Project demonstrates a commitment to maximise the use of natural renewable resources to achieve a reliable and resilient supply of electricity to the regional community and economy.

The lower Matiri hydro scheme is proposed below the existing hydro power station so the same effects are present and conditions to monitor the activity are already in place with the existing scheme.

Also relevant is that Hydro power schemes have been in existence in New Zealand for well over 100 years now. The effects on the environment are well and truly understood and measures to avoid, minimise and mitigate these effects are also well and truly known. s

Referring this Project for the fast-track process will avoid the current bottleneck in consenting which re-invents the wheel on each and every new application, even when an activity is identical to an existing consented activity at the same location.

Has the project been identified as a priority project in a:

Central government plan or strategy

Please explain your answer here:

Construction of new renewable generation capacity is essentially a central government priority if New Zealand is to meet its international commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Use of electricity in transport and industrial processes is forecast to increase demand for electricity significantly. Every additional capacity increment contributes to this substantial task. In addition, connecting generation capacity within distribution networks reduces the need for new investment in transmission and distribution infrastructure.

Will the project deliver regionally or nationally significant infrastructure?

Regional significant infrastructure

Please explain your answer here:

The entire Project will deliver ~20GWh of electricity each year - the annual usage of electricity of 2,800 average households (7033kWh av. Consumption in March 23 year; 2.7 people per household).

Murchison is remote from utility-scale generation output which must then be transported long distances on a stringy transmission grid - where about 11% of the electricity is lost during the journey. This area has abundant water resources for hydro generation which the area should be increasingly benefiting from.
As the demand for electricity grows through electrification and EVs, The top of the south is going to need more electricity. This project will meet some of those needs for the foreseeable future.

Will the project:

contribute to a well-functioning urban environment

Please explain your answer here:

Electricity is essential to a well-functioning society - both urban and rural environments.

It is a forgotten essential service when it comes to district planning for new housing developments.

No consideration is given to where is the energy going to come from to supply the new housing developments or commercial and industrial enterprises that have been approved. So, where land is being made available for the above, equally renewable energy projects need to be incrementally approved to supply the power to these houses and businesses.

Additionally, now with the push for EV's, the same consideration needs to be given to "where is the power going to come from to charge the EVs". This is a significant consideration for the top of the south, being one of New Zealand premium tourist routes.

Will the project deliver significant economic benefits?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

The economic benefits will be significant for the region during construction - employing up to 20 staff and contractors during the peak of the builds. It is expected the staged approach will take 2-4 years to complete, providing a significant boost to the local economy.

This Project is also expected to result in a lower cost of electricity for the region - providing economic stimulus to business and improving the cost of living for households. In addition, there is the economic benefit of not losing supply of electricity. The savings in electricity lost through transmission and distribution losses is estimated at greater than 11%.

Will the project support primary industries, including aquaculture?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

This Project is embedded in the local rural economy and will support all primary industries and regional tourism. As technologies develop this will lead to on farm carbon reduction through the use of green hydrogen that will be produced at the source by this renewable electricity project.
Importantly it will assist with the electrification of the transport sector.

Will the project support development of natural resources, including minerals and petroleum?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

This Project supports the use of natural resources that are continuously replenished (renewable) with minimal impact on the environment. Extraction of other natural resources, including minerals requires electricity for processing. It will have the capacity to produce green hydrogen and methanol from the renewable electricity it produces. This will future proof adoption of evolving technologies like hydrogen powered heavy transport vehicles.

Will the project support climate change mitigation, including the reduction or removal of greenhouse gas emissions?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

The project will have a significant impact on climate change mitigation. The total output of 20GWh per annum of renewable electricity will displace approx 4,000t/yr greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuels to generate electricity. This may also include avoiding members of the community using diesel generation plant as well as reducing the need to run utility-scale fossil-fueled generation plant in the North Island.

Will the project support adaptation, resilience, and recovery from natural hazards?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

The Project improves resilience for the surrounding community – on a daily basis and during recovery from natural hazards. The generation plant will be designed to run islanded so that it can be generating when the area is disconnected from the national transmission and distribution networks.

Will the project address significant environmental issues?

No

Please explain your answer here:

No but the Project is also not expected to create significant environmental issues.

Is the project consistent with local or regional planning documents, including spatial strategies?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

The current district plan is silent on renewable energy.

Anything else?

Please write your answer here:

It is essential that forward planning and development of renewable energy projects is happening right now. In the Upper South Island, the existing transmission system is nearly full capacity and new generation in the area will help avoid very costly and lumpy investment in transmission upgrades. New generation must be developed now.

More distributed generation is needed in the Upper South Island and this project will help significantly with this.

Does the project includes an activity which would make it ineligible?

No

If yes, please explain:

Section 8: Climate change and natural hazards

Will the project be affected by climate change and natural hazards?

No

If yes, please explain:

Section 9: Track record

Please add a summary of all compliance and/or enforcement actions taken against the applicant by any entity with enforcement powers under the Acts referred to in the Bill, and the outcome of those actions.

Please write your answer here:

NZ Energy has over the years received minor enforcement notices from the Horizon Regional Council for non-compliance with consent conditions. These are generally minor in nature, many of which are administrative like reporting requirements.

NZ Energy has had no noncompliance at it's two existing power stations in South Westland for 25 years.

NZ Energy would be happy to provide any further details should they be required.

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Declaration

Do you acknowledge your submission will be published on environment.govt.nz if required

Yes

By typing your name in the field below you are electronically signing this application form and certifying the information given in this application is true and correct.

Please write your name here:
David Graeme Inch

Important notes