

Appendix 5: National policy statements and national environmental standards

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

Table 1: Project high-level assessment of relevant National Policy Statement and National Environmental Standards

NPS / NES	Assessment
National Policy Statement For Renewable Electricity Generation	Meridian's core business is the generation, marketing, trading and retailing of electricity and the management of associated assets and ancillary structures in New Zealand. In addition to being New Zealand's largest generator of electricity, Meridian is the country's largest generator of renewable electricity and is wholly committed to generating electricity from 100% renewable sources. This project will make a significant contribution to increasing renewable electricity production which is consistent with the NPSREG objective and associated policies.
National Policy Statement On Electricity Transmission & National Environmental Standard For Electricity Transmission Activities	The project will connect to the existing Transpower operated transmission grid, involving the construction of transmission lines and support structures (subject to a separate consent). The transmission connection will be designed to effectively manage the adverse environmental effects of the grid connection and the transmission corridor.
National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land	The Project is sited on land classified as Class 3 soils, is zoned Rural Environment and has not been identified by the District Council for future urban development. The site when developed for solar generation will be grazed with sheep to maintain the production value of the site and manage grass fire risk, whilst at a lower intensity than that of dairy grazing. The underlying productivity potential of the soil will remain.
National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management & National Environmental Standard For Freshwater	The site south-east corner contains an unnamed watercourse which flows from the site down to Lake Taupō. No previously identified wetlands are recorded on the site. The final assessment of whether there are any wetlands on the site will be confirmed when on-site ecology investigation work is completed. This is assessed as a low probability given the extensive pasture and dairy farming use on the site over time. The Project works are anticipated to be designed to avoid adverse effects to any freshwater environment to achieve Te Mana o te Wai. It is expected that natural stormwater runoff from the site, which feeds the watercourse, will be clean run off only; an environmental improvement for freshwater values from a nutrient load perspective.

NPS / NES	Assessment
National Policy Statement For Indigenous Biodiversity	The site has a small area of a 'Significant Natural Area', (SNA) and is adjoined by other sites which are classified as a SNA's. Whilst the layout design has not yet been confirmed, the Project will avoid the SNA on site, generally limit removal of indigenous vegetation where possible, and if necessary, compensate with additional planting and habitat restoration on site to result in no net loss of significant indigenous biodiversity habitat.
National Environmental Standard For Assessing And Managing Contaminants And Soil To Protect Human Health	The current land use of the site is dairy farming. There is no evidence of contamination on site. A Site Investigation will be undertaken to determine this and to design suitable responses, if required.