Response ID ANON-URZ4-5F8N-P

Submitted to Fast-track approval applications
Submitted on 2024-05-03 15:59:34

Submitter details

Is this application for section 2a or 2b?

2A

1 Submitter name

Individual or organisation name:
Kaimai Wind Farm Ltd

2 Contact person

Contact person name:
Glenn Starr

3 What is your job title

Job title:
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:

12 Madden Street
Auckland Central
Auckland 1010

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:

604 and 771 Rotokohu Road, Tirohia, Paeroa; and 6356 State Highway 26, Tirohia, Paeroa.

File upload:
Location of Kaimai Wind Farm.pdf was uploaded

Upload file here:
1-Site-Layout.pdf was uploaded

Do you have a current copy of the relevant Record(s) of Title?

Yes

upload file:
Kaimai Titles.pdf was uploaded

Who are the registered legal land owner(s)?

Please write your answer here:

Denize Brothers Ltd
Rotokohu Farms (2014) Ltd
Maureen Jackson

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:

The applicant is not the landowner, however legal mechanisms are in place that will allow for the turbines to be established on these properties, and for the ongoing operation of the wind farm. The registered legal land owners have all agreed in writing that the project can be undertaken on the above listed land.

Section 2: Project details

What is the project name?

Please write your answer here:
Kaimai Wind Farm

What is the project summary?

Please write your answer here:

This application is to establish a wind farm on the subject site. The project involves the establishment of 24 large scale wind turbines, with 17 having a tip height of 220m, rotor dimeter of 185m, and 7 having a tip height of 190m, rotor dimeter of 175m across the site area of 1304 hectares.

What are the project details?

Please write your answer here:

The purpose of the project is to establish a wind farm on the 1,304 ha subject site, with the objective of developing a renewable source of electricity close to major users of electricity in the Auckland-Waikato-Bay of Plenty triangle, and close to Transpower's transmission line. this will assist in further transitioning New Zealand away from fossil fuels and towards renewable sources of energy.

The site has excellent attributes to be a suitable candidate for wind generation at a commercial scale. The site co-incident with a Transpower connection point, with the Transpower 110kV Line passing directly along the southern boundary.

Activities involved in the project are:
*Construction of a new 110kV sub-station including two new lattice transmission towers;
*18.9km of internal roading network (The road is typically 6m wide)
*Twenty-four (24) turbine platforms including crane pad and (in most cases) turbine component laydown / storage areas.
*Three turbine component laydown and construction equipment storage areas
*Replacement of eight existing culverts along the existing farm access track (this involve existing culverts along the 'Proposed Road 1' alignment. Of these, only culverts located at Proposed Road 1 Chainage 100 and Chainage 780.
*Underground cable network to collect the electrical output from each turbine;
*Earthworks (at 460,000m2 in area, with a total cut volume of 900,000m3). Of this total cut volume, 113,500m3 will be placed as engineered fill along the road alignment, and the balance of 786,500m3 will be placed on site in specific suitable cleanfill disposal areas)
*Quarry areas - The road formation will require a large volume of aggregate to enable the aggregate pavement construction. To facilitate this, quarry borrow areas have been identified and designed.

We have provided a very good level of detail as the project was has been full investigated, designed and submitted for consents and notified through the standard RMA process. Full documentation can be found here:

https://www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz/rules-regulations-licences/resource-consents/publicly-notified-resource-consents/kaimai-wind-farm-project

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

Please write your answer here:

The project will be built in one stage

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

Please write your answer here:

Resource Management Act 1991 - resource consent
Wildlife Act 1953 - authority to do anything otherwise prohibited
Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 - archaeological authority

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

Please write your answer here:

Hauraki District Council
Waikato Regional Council

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

Please write your answer here:

Resource consent applications have been lodged with Hauraki District Council and Waikato Regional Council and notified in 2019. Several s92 requests ensued as well as extensive consultations and negotiations with submitters. Hauraki District Council received 220 submissions on the proposal, of which 57 were in support and 157 were opposed. Waikato Regional Council submissions totalled 143, with 96 against and 42 in support of the proposal. The project has been fully designed and investigated, documentation can be viewed here and is ready for a decision to be made:

https://www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz/rules-regulations-licences/resource-consents/publicly-notified-resource-consents/kaimai-wind-farm-project

A combined Hauraki District and Waikato Regional Council hearing for the proposed wind farm has not been held so no decisions have been made on these resource consent applications. We took the view of agreeing with submitters on mitigation. However, the process to progress has become frustrated by discussions, hui and negotiations. Those negotiations have recently come to a end, while at times there as good progress towards a resolution, the other counter-parties have now withdrawn so the korero has ended.

Also, in the interim 5 years since the project was notified, new and updated turbines have come onto the market. The optimised turbine diameter is now 175 and 185m diameter, which markedly improve the sites yield and are a more efficient use of the resource. The environmental effects of increasing the turbine diameter are less than minor as shown by memo from the projects experts (notably landscape, noise and ecology). However the change in turbine dimensions would now require a re-notification - a re-notification would then incur another round of s92 requests and hence further delays to the project.

Also at critical issue is the Transpower grid connection. The project will need a new sub-station (and towers) to connect in the existing 110kV network. This infrastructure has been applied for in the current consent process. The project was submitted formally to Transpower in 2023 and is now in the second phase of that process - "Investigation". If a consent cannot be obtained within the next 12 months or so then the project will likely fail due to inability to hold onto the grid connection right.

Should the project be accepted into the fast track process, we will withdraw the current RMA applications.

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

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

Site Owners: The three landowners, who have all executed options for easements with a draft easement for installation of turbines for up to 50 years (two turbine cycles).

Transpower: Of critical importance is the grid connection of the wind farm. The queue is now very long for connection with a full 79 project last various stages in the process - wait times are about 5 years to fully progress in that system through, 1. Application submitted, 2. Application received, 3. Investigation and 4. Delivery The project is now in "Investigation" phase of the Transpower queue. Deposits of s 9(2)(b)(ii) have been paid to Transpower to maintain the place in the queue. The Investigation process will likely complete in about 12 months, then much larger deposits will need to be made to Transpower to move into delivery. If we do not have a confirmed consent by that stage then it will be very difficult to remain in the Transpower Queue. Therefore admission into the fast track process and completion of a consent in the next 12 months are of critical importance.

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

Please write your answer here:

1. Transpower Consultant Investigation Studies - Q1 2025
2. Resource Consents via fast track - Q2 2025
3. Transpower completion of Investigation Phase - Q2 2025

4. Transpower beginning of Delivery phase (and deposits required) Q3 - 2025
5. Civil and Electrical Design completion - Q4 2025
6. Financing - Debt and Equity - Q1 2026
7. Ordering and procurement of turbines from overseas suppliers - Q2 2026
8. Letting contracts - Q3 2026
9. Site construction starts Q4 2026 - roading, foundation, earthworks,
10. Commercial Operation Q2 2028

Section 3: Consultation

Who are the persons affected by the project?

Please write your answer here:

Hauraki District Council
Waikato Regional Council
Ngati Tara Tokanui
Ngati Tamatera
Ngati Hako
Ngati Rahiri-Tumutumu
Hauraki Maori Trust Board

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:

Statement on how Consultation has Informed the Project:

Iwi: The application has changed due to the following mitigations: 1) Part of the wind farm site (100Ha) will be returned to Iwi ownership at no cost to Iwi 2) Legal access to Romaru Stream for traditional kai gathering. 3) Provision of one cattle beast per year per Iwi 4) Option offered for removal of turbine no. 6 due to sensitivity of that maunga (drawing not yet updated). 5) Low cost power for whanau in need. 6) Legal access to two Urupa (currently land locked 7) KWF has negotiated a market rental to be paid on the use of the urupa land by local farmer 8) Funds allocated to a trust administered by Iwi and KWF for the sole purpose of purchasing land for return to Iwi 9) Ground viibration sensing progamme to ensure two local Urupa are not disturbed from the turbine operation.

Hang Gliding Association: Agreement to curtail the turbine operation to allow hang gliders to pass through the site safely on specific days and times (especially during competitions)

Waikato Regional Council: Improved sediment controls, improved culvert design for fish passes.

Hauraki District Council: Funds provided to support local community initiatives

Overview of Iwi Consultations

Ngati Tamatera, Ngati Hako, Ngati Tara tokonui and Ngati Tumutumu

Up until 2017 the Hauraki Trust board was the key communication pathway. However since then the following individual Iwi have been consulted with extensively. The summary of many consultations and communications is attached.

These four Iwi made submissions on the consent application. At various times it seemed that agreement may be forthcoming on some aspects of the project and some mitigations possible. However some reasons kept arising to withdraw and back away from resolutions.

Notably in 2022 a partnership proposal was prepared by KWF and submitted to all Iwi for consideration. The package was discussed and expanded in various hui since then and seemed to get to some level of acceptance in 2023. The key features of the package are listed above. A MoU was in negotiation through Iwi lawyers and seemed to be concluding however announcements by the current government of this Fast Track process seems to have coincided with a withdrawl in korero. Possibly also at play is commercial interests by Iwi in completing solar developments in the area. No korero or negotiations are currently being carried out with Iwi.

Hauraki (Maori) Trust Board
Initial consultation began in November 2005 as a letter advising of the project. In 2005 the we sent a letter advising monitoring masts being erected as part of investigation to construct a wind farm. Hauraki Trust Board signed a letter of no-objection for the monitoring mast application. In 2007 engagement with the Hauraki Trust Board became more frequent through a series of emails/phone calls, providing them with information packs and querying whether a Cultural Values Assessment (“CVA”) would be produced. The project was put on hold for some time pending wind data collection etc and more land added to the project. In 2017 emails were sent, along with information packs. The applicant reached out in April 2018 seeking advice on potential to contribute to iwi projects or initiatives. The response from the trust board was that individual approach needed to be made to each iwi. That the Trust Board wants to be kept informed but not directly involved.

Upload file here:
Record of consultations @ May 2024.docx was uploaded

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:

Not Applicable

Section 4: Iwi authorities and Treaty settlements

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

Please write your answer here:

Ngāti Rāhiri Tumutumu
The Crown and Ngāti Rāhiri Tumutumu initialled a Deed of Settlement on 13 July 2017.

Ngāti Tamaterā
The Crown and Ngāti Tamaterā initialled a Deed of Settlement on 20 September 2017.

Ngāti Tara Tokanui
The Crown and Ngāti Tara Tokanui signed a Deed of Settlement on 28 July 2022.

Ngati Hako
Claim not settled at this time.

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?

Yes

If yes, what are they?:

There are is one Urupa within the wind farm site, identified as Tauwharangi Tapu (Urupa), identity number 310 in Schedule 6.1.6.7 of the Hauraki District Plan.

There are is one Urupa immediately outside of the wind farm site, identified as Tauwharangi Tapu (Urupa), identity number 319 in Schedule 6.1.6.7 of the Hauraki District Plan.

No part of the wind farm will be constructed within the Urupa area.

Presently no legal access to the Urupa is available to Iwi nor are they receiving payments for grazing occurring on thier land. KWF has negotiated legal access (with one of the landowners) to the Urupa and proper payments to be made to Iwi when the wind farm begins construction.

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:
No file uploaded

Section 5: Adverse effects

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

Please describe:

Assessment of Effects (2024) - larger rotors - up to 185m
Recent changes to the project include allowing for larger turbines - as the turbine designs have increased in size over the past 5 years. The larger machines (turbines 1 to 17) proposed on site have increased from 160m diameter to 185m diameter. A brief assessment of those changes can be found attached.

Assessment of Effects in 2018 - smaller rotors - up to 160m
A full assessment of the effects was carried in 2018 and submitted to Hauraki District Council. Subsequent further studies were carried out in 2019 and 2020. Expectations on ecological monitoring - especially bats have increased over the past 2 years. We have commissioned Bofa Miskel to carry out extra bat monitoring they are on site at the time of writing and will conclude a report in the coming weeks. A full complement of AEE can be found here:

https://www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz/rules-regulations-licences/resource-consents/publicly-notified-resource-consents/kaimai-wind-farm-project

A number of specialist assessments have been undertaken to assess the viability of the project and to inform the most appropriate scale and layout of the proposed wind farm. This has been an iterative process, and the current design – involving 24 turbines, represents a reduced design so that adverse effects on the environment are managed to the extent that they are not significant. The summary below, reflects the findings of the specialist reports that have been undertaken in support of the proposal.

The impacts on landscape, visual amenity and character of the surrounding environment have been assessed by Mike Moore, referencing Project photomontages completed by Energy3 Services Ltd. Mr Moore concludes that there will be 'adverse / high' effects on the landscape character and values as a result of the upper group of seven turbines, and 'adverse / moderate' effects for the main lower group of turbines. 'Adverse / high' to 'adverse / very low' impacts are assessed in respect of visual amenity effects on the various affected viewing audiences. Impacts are most pronounced on close-by residents and from viewpoints to the east of the Ranges due to the highly natural landscape context of the upper ranges as viewed from the east. It is not possible for a wind farm to avoid adverse visual effects given the necessary scale and positioning of turbines along ridges to efficiently and economically utilise available wind resources. KWF proposes to plant around 23.5ha of current pastoral land sloping towards the Kaimai Mamaku Conservation Park in native vegetation to reduce the adverse landscape effects to the east to 'moderate / high' in the long term.

An acoustic assessment has been undertaken by Dr Stephen Chiles of Chiles Ltd to determine the predicted ongoing noise levels from the operation of the wind farm and noise effects associated with construction. The wind farm will operate within a 40 dB LA90 noise limit at the closest houses to the wind farm. This limit is set under the New Zealand Standard on Acoustics – Wind Farm Noise (NZS 6808: 2010), specifically to protect health and reasonable amenity. Vibration from wind farms has been shown to be within acceptable thresholds. Dr Chiles concludes that the noise effects of the Kaimai Wind Farm are acceptable in this environment.

An assessment of the potential ecological effects associated with the construction and operation of the wind farm has been undertaken by Kessels Ecology Ltd following extensive investigations from 2009-2017. Supplementary ecological investigations have been undertaken by Ecology New Zealand Ltd ("ENZL"). Both reports draw similar conclusions. The ENZL report concludes that the effects of the project in terms of vegetation clearance and effects on bats, birds, herpetofauna (lizards) and freshwater resources, will not be significant. This includes the effects of turbine blade strike on bats and both native and migrating shore bird species, based on studies of similar operating wind farms in New Zealand. Mitigation is proposed and includes providing funds to support local restoration and rehabilitation projects. In addition to the native revegetation along the eastern side of the Kaimai Ranges ridgeline, 1km of the Waitoki Stream will be retired from stock, fenced and planted in native species. KWF will also offer to contribute to conservation management at the Miranda Shore Bird centre to maintain or enhance that habitat and/or breeding success of water birds. An additional Long Tailed Bat monitoring programme has been initiated.

The potential for 'Shadow Flicker' has been assessed by Energy3 Services Ltd with a specific focus on 39 dwellings near the wind farm. Generally accepted international exposure levels are 30 hours in total per year on a modelled basis, 10 hours per year actually experienced, or no more than 30 minutes per day. Energy3 estimates that 15 occupied residences may be exposed to shadow flicker for more than 30 hours per year (ranging from 30.1 hours to 92.6 hours) and have outlined mitigation measures that could be explored in the event that shadow flicker becomes a nuisance, which KWF is open to providing.

A geotechnical assessment has been undertaken by KGA Geotechnical Ltd (KGA) relative to the specific ground conditions at the Site, and this concludes there are no significant geotechnical issues that would prevent the safe formation of the Project on the Site.

Tranzcarr Heavy Haulage Ltd have assessed and confirmed that transportation of the turbine equipment to the site is feasible, albeit with the necessary input and approvals from the transport authorities and potential modifications along the route from Port of Tauranga to the Site.

Gray Matter Ltd have assessed traffic impacts, addressing the safety and efficiency effects of the Project on the wider transport network through the construction and operation of the wind farm. The construction phase is likely to generate approximately 104 vehicles per day (vpd) with peaks up to 218 vpd for a duration of 18 months, and thereafter traffic movements will be negligible (1-2 vpd). Access to the wind farm for construction and operation can be adequately and safely achieved, and any increased traffic generation from the Project can be adequately accommodated within the surrounding traffic network, adopting recommended mitigation in terms of localised road widening and a construction traffic management plan.

A comprehensive and supplementary erosion and sediment control plan has been prepared by Ridley Dunphy Environmental Ltd, which addresses the effects associated with the bulk earthworks, aggregate extraction operation and the culvert replacements. The report confirms that erosion and sediment controls can be effectively employed for the construction phase of developing the wind farm. Together with a robust construction methodology and continued management, monitoring and reporting of sediment controls and methodologies, any sediment related runoff to receiving environments will be minimised.

The management of stormwater from the road alignment and cross-road culverts has been assessed by Civil Engineering Services Ltd. This concludes that the potential effects of discharges to land and water associated with stormwater from the road alignment will be appropriately managed and mitigated.

An archaeological assessment has been undertaken by Andrew Hoffman, demonstrating that none of the known or probable heritage features on the Site will be affected by the Project.

Impacts on aviation activities have been assessed by Peet Aviation Ltd, concluding that effects on activities such as hang-gliding and paragliding, as well as glider aircraft from the Matamata Soaring Centre can be appropriately managed and mitigated.

Lambda Communications Ltd have assessed that effects on radio communications services will be minimal.

In addition, there will be positive effects from the project - This renewable energy will effectively assist in meeting the Government targets for reducing CO2 emissions. There are both National and Local benefits from a security of supply perspective to having increased renewable energy such as that provided by Kaimai Wind Farm, reduce national security of supply risk as demand increases.

Overall, the project is not expected to have significant effects on the environment, and the project offers benefits in terms of reductions of greenhouse gas emissions.

We can supply copies of specialist reports, should it be requested during this process.

Upload file:
Section 5 - AEE - increased rotor.pdf was uploaded

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:

1. National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Generation 2011 (“NPS:REG”).
The Objective of the NPS-REG is: To recognise the national significance of renewable electricity generation activities by providing for the development and continued operation of new and existing renewable electricity generation activities, such that the proportion of New Zealand’s electricity generated from renewable energy sources increases to a level that meets or exceed the Government’s national target for renewable energy generation.

Kaimai Wind Farm will produce 120MW of renewable electricity and will assist in increasing the overall proportion of renewable electricity in New Zealand and will assist in meeting the Government's target for renewable generation.

2. National Policy National Policy Statement for Electricity Grid Transmission (“NPSEGT”):
The National Policy Statement on Electricity Grid Transmission sets out the national significance of the national electricity grid and provides guidance for RMA decision makers. The objective of the NPSEGT is “to recognise the national significance of the electricity transmission network by facilitating the operation, maintenance and upgrade of the existing transmission network and the establishment of new transmission resources to meet the needs of present and future generations, while:
managing the adverse environmental effects of the network; and
managing the adverse effects of other activities on the network.”

The proposed wind farm will connect to the grid and may require minor works to achieve this. It is considered that the project will be managed in a manner that is consistent with the intent of the NPSEGT.

3. National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land 2022 (NPS-HPL)
There is no Land Use Capability Class 1, 2, or 3 land on the site - the site is predominantly classes 6 and 7 land and therefore is not highly productive land which the NPS-HPL requires to be protected from development.

4. NPS Indigenous Biodiversity 2023 (NPS-IB)
Clause 1.3(3) of this NPS states that the NPS does not apply to the development, operation or maintenance of renewable energy generation assets. Therefore, the NPS is not relevant to the project.

Thats said, there are no Significant Natural Areas, including significant areas of vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna, on the site. However, fauna (birds and bats) may use the site for foraging from the roosting areas of the adjacent Kaimai Forest Park, which is a SNA. There is one small area of native trees which will be removed, but this area is currently grazed by cattle. A twenty-three-hectare area adjacent to the Forest Park is proposed for revegetation into native species. There are no significant wetlands on the site, the site being generally too steep. The project is not inconsistent with this NPS and its objectives and policies.

5. National Policy Statement for Freshwater (NPS-FM) 2020
There are no significant wetlands on the site, and the proposal will not impact upon the health of the numerous small streams on the properties. There is potential for these streams to be impacted by earthworks to be undertaken during the access roads and turbine foundation development. A comprehensive erosion and sediment control plan has been prepared which addresses the effects associated with the bulk earthworks, aggregate extraction operation and the culvert replacements. The report confirms that erosion and sediment controls can be effectively employed for the construction phase of developing the wind farm. Any sediment related runoff to receiving environments will be minimised.

Stormwater from earth-worked areas is to be treated before being discharged, and stormwater generated on the site once development is completed will be treated through either an engineered wetland or other treatment device to ensure there are no adverse effects upon downstream river systems.

In summary, we believe the project will be consistent with the Objective and Policies in the NPS-FM.

6. NES Freshwater 2020 (NES-F)
The NES-F applies standards to freshwater and, of potential relevance to this project to natural inland wetlands. Controls relate to activities within, or within a 10m or 100m setback from any natural inland wetland. There is no intention to disturb any wetland on the site - all turbine locations will be located on ridgelines, away from low lying areas where there may be wetlands. Limited stream crossings may be necessary for accessways but the existing road network will be fully utilized and the project will not involve the removal of wetlands or reclamation of streams. The project will protect freshwater streams and wetlands through maintaining suitable setbacks for both earthworks and turbine platforms.

The project is evaluated as being consistent with this NES.

National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health 2011 (NES-CS)

The site history review indicates that no potentially contaminating activities included on the Ministry for the Environment's Hazardous Activities and Industries List (HAIL) have occurred on the areas where earthworks will occur for the wind farm site.
Local knowledge, site inspection and historic photos reveal the wider site has been used for hill country pastoral farming for the past century or more. There is no woolshed and associated stock/dipping facilities on the turbines or roading footprints. No HAIL activities are identified within the wind farm site.
As no HAIL activities were identified there is no risk to human health or the environment if the proposed steel plant and associated construction and operation occurs. As there is no potential source of contamination within the site, there is no ground contamination-related risk to people or ecological receptors during disturbance of soil as part of preparation works for the steel plant facility.

File upload:
No file uploaded

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 fast-track process will enable the project to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way.
If the fast-track process was not available, resource consent would need to be granted by the two local authorities.

Current experience is that this is a very costly and time-consuming process. Kaimai Wind Farm has already spent many years getting all the information needed and entering into negotiations with parties oppose to the project. Such delays have now caused some of the investigations to go "out of date" - especially ecology monitoring. Some monitoring is now occurring on site to bring up to date.

Also the turbine technology has moved on in the past 5 years so for the most efficient use of the resource the turbines should be increased from 160m diameter to 185m diameter. This will require re-notfication and more s92 requests from council. Once that is complete then a local hearing will be convened after an expense s42a report is prepared.

The processing time under the Resource Management Act 1991 is expected to a minimum of 3 years. By contrast, the consenting timeframe under the fast-track process is likely to be 6 to 12 months.
This is a significant time saving, compared to a standard process and will enable the national benefits (through renewable electricity supply) some 2.5 years ahead of a standard process.

Also at critical issue is the Transpower grid connection. The project will need a new sub-station (and towers) to connect in the existing 110kV network. This infrastructure has been applied for in the current consent process. The project was submitted formally to Transpower in 2022 and is now in the second phase of that process - "Investigation". If a consent cannot be obtained within the next 12 months or so then the project will likely fail due to inability to hold onto the grid connection right (with large deposits required to Transpower during 2025)

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

Please write your answer here:

It will have a positive effect in terms of providing confidence to the developers of the likely timing of consents and remove uncertainty associated with dealing with the Council processes. As with most wind farms, there are two main issues - visual landscape, and ecology.

Note that the assessment of effects of the project has been fully investigated, with some on-going fill in ecological monitoring.

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

Central government plan or strategy

Please explain your answer here:

No

Will the project deliver regionally or nationally significant infrastructure?

Regional significant infrastructure

Please explain your answer here:

Yes. The proposal meets the definition of Infrastructure under the Resource Management Act of "facilities for the generation of electricity".

The proposal meets the definition of Regionally Significant Infrastructure under the Waikato RPS. It is also considered to be nationally significant given its potential power generation capability and ease to which it can be distributed throughout New Zealand.

Kaimai Wind Farm is considered to be nationally significant given its potential generation capability (157 megawatts) and ease to which it can be distributed throughout New Zealand.

Will the project:

contribute to a well-functioning urban environment

Please explain your answer here:

The Project will not increase the supply of housing nor address housing needs. However the electricity generated by the project will contribute to the functioning of adjacent urban environments (i.e., Auckland and Hamilton) through the provision of electricity.

Will the project deliver significant economic benefits?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

With an installed capacity of circa 157MW, this will put downward pressures on the wholesale electricity price in real time. An expected annual production level of circa 450GWh which is sufficient for c. 50,000 houses and will be available to be sold forward into the contracts market. Therefore, the Kaimai Wind farm will aid competition in the New Zealand Wholesale Electricity Markets having the ability to result in lower overall electricity prices for consumers in New Zealand. This potential lowering of electricity prices, also has economic benefits for consumers.

Design, Construction and Operation of the project will create considerable employment for local and regional businesses.

Economic benefits for windfarms of a similar size to that proposed are as calculated by a BERL study carried out for the NZ Wind Energy Association:

• Planning/Design/Project Management: 0.81FTE/MW – 130 FTE - estimated 24 months
• Construction: 1.79FTE/MW – 282 FTE – estimated 24 months
• Operation: 0.15 FTE/MW – 24 FTE - estimated 25 years
The expected capex is s 9(2) which is made up of turbines and transport/balance of plant at s 9(2)(b)(ii) respectively. The development and balance of plant will mostly be sourced locally within the region.
The above indicates the expected economic benefits could be considered as significant.

Will the project support primary industries, including aquaculture?

No

Please explain your answer here:

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

No

Please explain your answer here:

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

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

Greenhouse gases will be produced during the construction of the Project. These emissions will be typical of a construction project of this nature (material production and transport), however the transport emissions will be minimised due to the proximity of the site to an urban area (Hamilton and surrounding districts) that can supply the labour force and some materials and its relative proximity to Auckland or Tauranga Ports (for turbines).

Once operational the electricity generated by the wind farm will not release any greenhouse gases. The wind farm will provide a positive relationship for activities that are reliant on electricity to reduce their emissions. the project will in part assist achievement of Government greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

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

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

Access tracks and turbine platforms will require geotechnically engineered designs to ensure they are stable and are resilient to hazards. Because of the placement of turbines in ridge area the project is located well away from flood prone areas. The turbines are obviously designed to withstand high wind speeds.

Will the project address significant environmental issues?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

Yes, significant riparian planting and protection will occur, plus pest control targeted to improve the local bat population plus revegetation of c. 20ha of native forest.

Also See section 5 of this application for an overview assessment of effects.

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

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

The project has been designed to comply with planning documents such as the Hauraki District Plan and the Waikato Regional Plan - please refer to section 5 in respect of effects - there will be few environmental effects from the project.
The Waikato Regional Policy Statement Energy, Infrastructure and transport objectives for example include that energy use is managed, and electricity generation and transmission is operated, maintained, developed and upgraded, in a way that recognises and
provides for the national significance of renewable electricity generation activities, and reduces reliance on fossil fuels over time. The project is directly consistent with this Objective,

Anything else?

Please write your answer here:

The Project will have economic, power generation and greenhouse gas benefits. The proposed activities will have at worst, minor, adverse environmental effects. For these reasons, both the development itself and use of the fast-track legislation promotes the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

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:

The project is not one that is vulnerable to natural hazards and climate change, comprising no sensitive or vulnerable activities. Although some areas of the site are may be subject to a flood hazard (streams) no turbines, buildings or access tracks will be located within these areas. The risk of land instability will be mitigated through geotechnically engineered design, with final turbine placements made accordingly.

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:

the applicant company has not been subjected to any compliance and/or enforcement actions taken against it.

Load your file here:
No file uploaded

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:
Glenn Starr

Important notes