

Submitted to Fast-track approval applications
Submitted on 2024-04-30 17:02:39

Submitter details

Is this application for section 2a or 2b?

2A

1 Submitter name

Individual or organisation name:
Tauhara North No.2 Trust

2 Contact person

Contact person name:

s 9(2)(a)

3 What is your job title

Job title:
Group CEO – Tauhara North No.2 Trust

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:

s 9(2)(a)

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

Yes

Organisation:
Mitchell Daysh Limited

Contact person:

s 9(2)(a)

Phone number:
s 9(2)(a)

Email address:
s 9(2)(a)

Job title:
Associate

Please enter your service address:

s 9(2)(a)

Section 1: Project location

Site address or location

Add the address or describe the location:

The location of the site is located approximately 10km north east of Taupo at 162 Rapids Road, Rotokawa, Taupō 3378. The project is also wholly located on Tauhara North No.2 Trust land northeast of Lake Rotokawa (refer uploaded file).

File upload:

Site Map.pdf was uploaded

Upload file here:

No file uploaded

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

Yes

upload file:

ROTs.pdf was uploaded

Who are the registered legal land owner(s)?

Please write your answer here:

Identifier 387447 owners are: Rotokawa Joint Venture Limited

Identifier SA49B/626 owners are: s 9(2)(a)

as responsible trustees jointly, no survivorship

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 a joint venture partner with Mercury NZ in Rotokawa Joint Venture Limited and is landowner of SA49B/626. Therefore, the applicant has full access over the project land and can access at any time through existing approvals and/or direct ownership.

Section 2: Project details

What is the project name?

Please write your answer here:

Rotokawa Solar Farm

What is the project summary?

Please write your answer here:

To support New Zealand's growth while contributing to the Electrify NZ goal to double renewable electricity generation, Tauhara North No.2 Trust seeks to establish and operate a nominal 105 Megawatt ("MW") solar farm on their land at Rotokawa approximately 12 km northeast of Taupō township. The solar farm will be located adjacent and east of the existing Rotokawa (33MW) and Nga Awa Purua (140MW) geothermal power stations – also located on Tauhara North No.2 Trust land.

What are the project details?

Please write your answer here:

The solar farm will use either a fixed tilt photovoltaic (PV) system or a single axis PV tracking system. The latter enables photovoltaic modules (panels) to track the sun east to west throughout the day). Each of these solar farm system types will occupy a similar footprint of approximately 117ha of Tauhara North No.2 Trust land. The solar farm will nominally generate up to 105 MW (depending on solar farm option and final design).

The solar farm will comprise the following main components:

- Upgrades to existing and some new internal access tracks (access to the site itself is already in place via Rapids Rd, Nga Awa Purua Road and Rua Hoata Road);
- Site access gate and 1.8m security perimeter fencing;
- Solar tables;
- Solar panels – fixed to solar tables;
- Up to 23 inverter and transformer units;
- Underground cabling;

- Switch-gear;
- Substation (approximately 4,200 m2 in area) and an adjacent electrical switch gear area (40m2) to enable connection with the existing 220 kV transmission lines;
- An operations and maintenance building (approximately 100 m2 in area);
- Designated laydown areas (for construction and maintenance uses);
- An equipment storage building (approximately 100 m2 in area); and
- A weather station

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

Please write your answer here:

When solar farm construction begins, this will be carried out in a single stage. Construction is expected to be over a period of approximately 18-months.

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

Please write your answer here:

Resource Management Act 1991 – Resource Consent

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

Please write your answer here:

Taupō District Council

No Resource consents are required from the Waikato Regional Council

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

Please write your answer here:

N/A. No applications have been made for this project.

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

No

Please explain your answer here:

No other permits, resource consents or concessions are needed for the project

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

Please write your answer here:

Detailed design begins: 1 month after grant of consent
 Procurement: 4 months after grant of consent
 Site construction works: 8 months after grant of consent
 Completion: 26 months after grant of consent

Section 3: Consultation

Who are the persons affected by the project?

Please write your answer here:

Potentially Affected Parties

s 9(2)(a)

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:

Potentially Affected Parties

s 9(2)(a)

s 9(2)(a)

s 9(2)(a)

s 9(2)(ba)(i)

Upload file here:
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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:

N/A

Section 4: Iwi authorities and Treaty settlements

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

Please write your answer here:

Affiliate Te Arawa Iwi and Hapū Claims Settlement Act 2008

Ngāti Tahu-Ngāti Whaoa is a member of the Te Arawa Iwi and Hapū Affiliate who negotiated a deed of settlement with the Crown. This settlement passed into law with the enactment of the Affiliate Te Arawa Iwi and Hapū Claims Settlement Act 2008. Within this legislation, Statutory Acknowledgment is given to a range of land areas and resources in the vicinity of the solar farm site including:

- Part of the Waikato River (Atiamuri Dam to Huka Falls); and
- Rotokawa geothermal field.

Ngāti Tūwharetoa Claims Settlement Act 2018

Ngāti Tūwharetoa's Deed of Settlement with the Crown was passed into law with the enactment of the Ngāti Tūwharetoa Claims Settlement Act 2018. Within this legislation, Statutory areas and geothermal fields are listed in Schedule 1. Of relevance to this solar farm site are:

- The Waikato River and its tributaries within the Ngāti Tūwharetoa area of interest (Statutory Area);
- Rotokawa geothermal field (Geothermal Field);
- Lake Rotokawa (Statutory Area).

The Ngāti Tūwharetoa Claims Settlement Act 2018 also requires the Ngāti Tūwharetoa trustees, the Minister of Conservation and the Director-General to enter into a partnership agreement (Te Piringa). This agreement is now in place to recognise and provide for Ngāti Tūwharetoa mana whakahaere, tino rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga in the governance and management of land managed by the Department of Conservation for the benefit of present and future generations. This agreement includes the management of land within the Lake Rotokawa Scenic Reserve located to the southwest of the site, but does not include the project site.

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?:

The project site sits on Ahu Whenua land administered by the Tauhara North No.2 Trust (the applicant). There are no wāhi tapu on the project site.

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:

Refer separate uploaded assessment document.

Upload file:

Draft Rotokawa Solar Farm - Effects Assessment.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:

§ 9(2)(b)(i)

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File upload:
Draft Rotokawa Solar Farm - Statutory Assessment.pdf was uploaded

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?

The fast-track process will likely result in a more timely and cost-efficient way to secure consent for the proposed solar farm for the following key reasons:

[illegible]

11/11/2014

Government	Percentage
Current government	85%
Previous government	15%

s 9(2)(ba)(i)

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

Please write your answer here:

The fast-track process could reduce the time to secure resource consents by 12-18 months and avoid around s 9(2)(b)(ii) of associated processing cost.

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

Other

s 9(2)(ba)(i)

Will the project deliver regionally or nationally significant infrastructure?

National significant infrastructure

Please explain your answer here:

The solar farm will deliver nationally significant renewable electricity generation infrastructure that will efficiently connect to the 220kV transmission lines that traverse the site, thereby, taking strategic advantage of existing physical resources.

The Solar Farm will generate up to an additional 105MW on a site that already has 165MW of installed renewable geothermal generation capacity. In turn, once the solar farm is commissioned, the site will generate a total of 270MW, making it one of the highest yielding Māori land blocks for renewable electricity generation in the country.

Will the project:

contribute to a well-functioning urban environment

Please explain your answer here:

To the extent that the site will provide additional reliable and renewable electricity to the National Grid, it will add to the security of electricity supply to New Zealand's urban areas, and in turn, contribute to the overall function and resilience of these areas.

Will the project deliver significant economic benefits?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

The project will provide the following economic benefits:

- Increased national and local economic surpluses through purchasing and employment of new plant and materials required for the project's construction;
- Economic surpluses to Tauhara North No.2 Trust which, in turn, enables expansion of cultural, social and health initiatives to support beneficiaries, wider whānau, marae and social improvement programs in the region;
- Offsetting current high variable cost electricity generating plant and delivering competitively priced electricity into the wholesale electricity market;
- Due to the characteristics of the national grid, the local Taupō area generally has a greater chance of lower electricity prices than in the rest of the North Island;
- Additional solar energy from the project also helps New Zealand improve security of supply through fuel diversification away from a single fuel dependency; and
- Benefits for New Zealand energy users choosing renewable electricity, since imported fossil fuels can have volatile pricing, and carry the threat of broken supply chains.

Will the project support primary industries, including aquaculture?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

The project will be compatible with, and to this extent, supports, ongoing farming land use including stock grazing (sheep & calves).

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:

The development will enable further displacement of thermal (fossil fuel powered) generation providing positive outcomes in terms of decarbonisation such as reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and in doing so, contributing to the country's effort to mitigate climate change.

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

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

To the extent that solar energy from the project improves security of supply through fuel diversification, the project will add to local and national resilience and recovery in the event of a major natural hazard event

Will the project address significant environmental issues?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

To the extent that climate change is a significant environmental issue, the project will help address this issue by contributing to New Zealand's renewable energy targets and its decarbonisation journey.

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

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

The proposal is highly consistent with Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato (The Vision & Strategy for the Waikato River), the Waikato Regional Policy Statement, the Waikato Regional Plan and the Taupō District Plan and overall achieves relevant objectives and policies contained within these planning documents.

Anything else?

Please write your answer here:

The applicant has also prepared a suite of consent conditions it is happy to be included in any land use consent granted.

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 site is located on flat land outside of any flood-prone area. The site is also set back from hot-ground and known geothermal faults.

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 has an exemplary RMA compliance record with no historical enforcement action taken against it.

Load your file here:

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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:

s 9(2)(a) as the applicant's duly authorised agent Mitchell Daysh Limited

Important notes