

BRF-2995

Michael McCartney
Chief Executive Officer
Horizons Regional Council
s 9(2)(a)

Dear Michael McCartney

COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 – comments sought on referral application – Arawhata Wetland Project

The Minister for the Environment (Minister) has received an application from Manawātū-Whanganui Regional Council (Horizons) to refer the Arawhata Wetland Project (project) to an expert consenting panel (panel) for consideration under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (FTCA).

The project is described in Appendix A and the application documents are in Attachment 1.

Under delegated authority from the Minister and pursuant to section 21(2) of the FTCA, I invite Horizons Regional Council to provide written comments on the referral application. A template is provided for this purpose in Attachment 2. Comment is sought on the specific matters outlined in the table below, and on any other matter you consider relevant to the Minister's decision on whether or not to accept the application.

Specific questions on the application
Arawhata Wetland Project: 1. Are there any reasons that you consider it more appropriate for the project, or part of the project, to proceed through existing Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) consenting processes rather than the processes in the FTCA? 2. Does the applicant, or a company owned by the applicant, have any environmental regulatory compliance history in your region?

The above information is provided to you in confidence and as part of the statutory process set out in the FTCA. Please do not forward the application or request for comments to anyone outside your organisation.

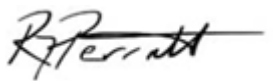
If the Minister accepts the application and the project is referred to a panel, Horizons Regional Council will have the opportunity to nominate a local authority representative (who could be a councillor or independent hearings commissioner) to sit on the panel and determine the RMA

approvals for the project. The applicant will provide a detailed assessment of environmental effects and cultural impact assessments at this stage and the council will have the opportunity to provide further comments to the panel.

Please provide comments via return email within 10 working days to ensure that the Minister takes them into consideration when making his decision. Note that the Minister is not required to consider any comments provided after this time.

If it is more efficient for you to discuss the application, please contact the Ministry for the Environment's Fast-track Consenting Team at fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Perrett', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Rebecca Perrett
Acting Manager, Fast-track Consenting Team

Appendix:

A. Details of proposed project

Attachments:

1. Application to refer the Arawhata Wetland Project to an expert consenting panel, including supporting information (Databox link)
2. Response template for written comments

cc: Greg Bevin, Regulatory Manager
s 9(2)(a) [REDACTED]

Appendix A – Details of proposed project

Project	Applicant	Details
Arawhata Wetland	Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Council (Horizons)	The project is to construct engineered treatment wetlands and restore previously drained natural wetlands in the Arawhata Stream catchment of Punahau/Lake Horowhenua in Manawatū-Whanganui. The project site covers an area of approximately 119 hectares, located at 269 and 308 Hokio Beach Road, 217 Arawhata Road, Levin and adjacent land (legally described as Section 4 Survey Office Plan 465440). The project will include works within the Hokio Beach Road and Arawhata Road reserves. The project involves activities such as carrying out earthworks (including disturbing contaminated soils), constructing weir in the river, upgrading existing culverts, constructing bund/stopbank, discharging of water (which may contain contaminants) into water and onto land, taking and using of groundwater, planting and landscaping.