



BRF-3080

Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council (Horizons)

c/- Jason Jones

Principal Consultant

Resource Management Group Ltd

s 9(2)(a)

Dear Jason Jones

COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-Track Consenting) Act 2020 – Notice of Decisions (Section 25) – Arawhata Wetland Project

Thank you for the application from Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council (Horizons) under section 20 of the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (FTCA) seeking referral of the Arawhata Wetland Project (project) to an expert consenting panel (panel) for consideration under the FTCA.

The project is to construct, operate and maintain a wetland complex in the Arawhata Stream catchment of Punahau/Lake Horowhenua in Manawatu-Whanganui Region to enhance water quality, ecology and cultural values of Punahau/Lake Horowhenua. 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 purpose of the FTCA is to promote employment to support New Zealand's recovery from the economic and social impacts of COVID-19 and to support the certainty of ongoing investment across New Zealand, while continuing to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

I can only refer the project to a panel for consideration under the FTCA if it meets the referral criteria in section 18 of the FTCA, which includes me being satisfied the project will help achieve the FTCA's purpose.

I have decided the project meets the referral criteria in section 18 of the FTCA and I consider it will help to achieve the FTCA's purpose as it has the potential to:

1. generate approximately 45 direct full time equivalent (FTE) jobs over a 3-year design and construction period

2. improve environmental outcomes for freshwater quality and indigenous biodiversity
3. progress faster than would otherwise be the case under standard Resource Management Act 1991 process.

Any actual and potential effects arising from the project, together with any measures to avoid, remedy, mitigate, offset or compensate for adverse effects, could be tested by a panel against Part 2 of the Resource Management Act 1991 and the purpose of the FTCA (section 4 and clause 31 Schedule 6).

Accordingly, I have decided to accept your application for referral under section 24(2) of the FTCA and refer all of the project to a panel.

Information required to be submitted with your resource consent applications

In accordance with section 24(2)(d) of the FTCA, I have also decided that you must provide the following information with any resource consent application for the project lodged with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) under clause 2 Schedule 6:

1. an explanation of how project design will provide for the safe and continued operation of the gas transmission line crossing the project site that is operated by First Gas Limited
2. details of consultation, and any agreements made, with First Gas Limited in relation to operation of, and access to, the gas transmission line crossing the project site.

I draw your attention to clause 14 Schedule 6 of the FTCA that details that the above information must be provided in sufficient detail to correspond to the scale and significance of effects. You should therefore provide what you believe is a reasonable level of information, and if a panel requires further information, they can seek it from you under clause 25 Schedule 6 of the FTCA.

This information will inform a panel's assessment of the proposal's effects and whether to invite comment from persons or groups in addition to those specified in clause 17 Schedule 6 of the FTCA. This does not preclude a panel from requiring you to provide any additional information on any application lodged with the EPA under the FTCA.

Persons or groups a panel must invite comments from

In accordance with section 24(2)(e) of the FTCA, I have also decided that a panel must invite comments on any resource consent application for the project lodged with the EPA from First Gas Limited in addition to those parties specified in clause 17 Schedule 6 of the FTCA.

This will allow First Gas Limited the opportunity to have input into the consideration of the application and enable a panel to better understand the potential effects of the proposal.

These directions do not preclude a panel from inviting any other parties to comment on any application lodged with the EPA under the FTCA.

I will progress an Order in Council through the Executive Council for the project. The wording of the referral order may vary slightly from the statements and directions included in this letter, due to legal drafting requirements.

Once this Order is made you will be able to lodge your applications for resource consent with the EPA for a decision by a panel. The decision to approve or decline the resource consents is a matter for the panel appointed by the Panel Convener Judge L J Newhook. You should

not take my decision to refer the project as an indication or direction that the determination of those approvals will be successful.

Please do not publicly release my decision or this notice until the Order in Council for this project has been approved by Cabinet and notified in the New Zealand Gazette.

The FTCA requires that:

1. I provide a copy of my decisions to the persons, entities and groups specified in section 25(1) and (2) of the FTCA
2. My decisions, the reasons for them, and the Section 17 Report will be published on the Ministry for the Environment's website in accordance with section 25(3) of the FTCA.

Please contact the Fast-track Consenting Team at the Ministry for the Environment (fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz) if you have any questions or wish to discuss this decision.

Yours sincerely



Hon David Parker
Minister for the Environment

cc Relevant Ministers of/for portfolios specified in section 21(6)(a)–(m) of the FTCA:

Arts, Culture, and Heritage; Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti; Housing; Infrastructure; Education; Transport; Land Information; Defence; Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations; Local Government; Conservation; and Climate Change

Local authorities:

Horowhenua District Council
Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council

Other parties:

First Gas Limited

Relevant iwi authorities and Treaty settlement entities:

Te Runanga o Toa Rangātira Incorporated
Toa Rangatira Trust
Muaūpoko Tribal Authority Incorporated
Te Runanga o Raukawa Incorporated

Environmental Protection Authority

The Panel Convener

Appendix A – Requirements specific to referral of the Arawhata Wetland project

Information required to be submitted with resource consent applications to a panel

In accordance with section 24(2)(d) of the FTCA, I have also decided that you must provide the following information with any application:

- an explanation of how project design will provide for the safe and continued operation of the gas transmission line crossing the project site that is operated by First Gas Limited
- details of consultation, and any agreements made, with First Gas Limited in relation to operation of, and access to, the gas transmission line crossing the project site.

Persons or groups a panel must invite comments from

In accordance with section 24(2)(e) of the FTCA, I have also decided that a panel must invite comments on any consent application for the project from the following additional persons or groups:

- First Gas Limited.