



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Arawhata Wetland) Amendment Order 2023

Portfolio Environment

On 26 June 2023, Cabinet:

- 1 **noted** that the Minister for the Environment has decided under section 24 of the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 to accept the application for referral of Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Council's Arawhata Wetland project to a panel;
- 2 **noted** that the Arawhata Wetland project meets the eligibility criteria in section 18(3) of the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020, and will help achieve the Act's purpose, as required by section 18(2) of the Act, as it has the potential to:
 - 2.1 generate approximately 45 direct full time equivalent jobs over a 3-year design and construction period;
 - 2.2 improve environmental outcomes for freshwater quality and indigenous biodiversity;
 - 2.3 progress faster using the Act's processes than would otherwise be the case under standard Resource Management Act 1991 processes;
- 3 **noted** that the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Arawhata Wetland) Amendment Order 2023 requires Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Council to provide to an expert consenting panel the following information, which the Minister for the Environment specified under section 24(2) of the FTCA and outlined in my notice of decision on the referral application for the project:
 - 3.1 the measures to be put in place to ensure that the project activities and the wetland do not interfere with the safe and continuing operation by First Gas Limited of the gas transmission line crossing the project site, and First Gas Limited's access to the transmission line;
 - 3.2 information on discussions held, and any agreements made, with First Gas Limited in relation to operation of, and access to, the gas transmission line crossing the project site;
- 4 **noted** that the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Arawhata Wetland) Amendment Order 2023 requires an expert consenting panel appointed to consider Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Council's Arawhata Wetland project to seek comments from First Gas Limited;

- 5 **authorised** submission to the Executive Council of the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Arawhata Wetland) Amendment Order 2023 [PCO 25629/10.0];
- 6 **noted** that on 27 July 2020, Cabinet agreed to waive the standard 28-day rule relating to Orders in Council made under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 [CAB-20-MIN-0353];
- 7 **noted** that the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Arawhata Wetland) Amendment Order 2023 comes into force on 30 June 2023.

Diana Hawker
Acting Secretary of the Cabinet