

BRF-2853

Joanne Mooar
Senior Corporate Counsel
Transpower New Zealand Limited
s 9(2)(a)

Dear Joanne Mooar

COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-Track Consenting) Act 2020 – comments sought on referral applications – Harmony Energy Solar Farm–Opunake Project, Harmony Energy Solar Farm–Marton Project and Masterton Solar Farm Project

The Minister for the Environment (the Minister) received applications to refer the following three projects to an expert consenting panel (a panel) for consideration under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (FTCA):

1. Harmony Energy Solar Farm–Opunake Project, from Harmony Energy NZ #4 Limited
2. Harmony Energy Solar Farm–Marton Project, from Harmony Energy NZ #3 Limited
3. Masterton Solar Farm Project, from Harmony Energy NZ #2 Limited

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 certainty of investment while continuing to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

The projects are described in Appendix A and the application documents are in Attachments 1 to 3.

Transpower New Zealand Limited may have an interest in the projects because the proposed solar farms will connect to the national electricity grid. Under delegated authority from the Minister and pursuant to section 21(3) of the FTCA, I invite Transpower New Zealand Limited’s written comments on the referral applications. A template is provided for this purpose in Attachment 4. 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 for all three projects

1. What additional approvals will the applicant(s) require from Transpower New Zealand Limited to connect to the national electricity grid?
2. Will obtaining the above approvals likely impact on project delivery or timing as outlined in the referral application(s)?

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 applications or request for comments to anyone outside your organisation.

If the Minister accepts the applications and the projects are referred to panels, the applicants will be able to lodge applications with the Environmental Protection Authority for the approvals needed under the Resource Management Act 1991. The applicants must provide a detailed assessment of environmental effects and cultural impact assessment(s) as part of this process.

Please provide comments via return email within 10 working days to ensure that the Minister takes them into consideration when deciding whether or not to accept the referral application. Note that the Minister is not required to consider any comments provided after this time.

If you would like more information about the fast-track consenting process, or 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



Rebecca Perrett
Acting Manager, Fast-track Consenting Team

Appendix:

- A. Details of proposed project

Attachments:

1. Application to refer the Harmony Energy Solar Farm–Opunake Project to an expert consenting panel, including supporting information (Databox link in covering email)
2. Application to refer the Harmony Energy Solar Farm–Marton Project to an expert consenting panel, including supporting information (Databox link in covering email)
3. Application to refer the Masterton Solar Farm Project to an expert consenting panel, including supporting information (Databox link in covering email)
4. Response template for written comments

cc: Daniel Hamilton
Environmental Regulatory Team Leader
s 9(2)(a)

Appendix A – Details of proposed projects

Project	Applicant	Details
Harmony Energy Solar Farm - Opunake Project	Harmony Energy NZ #4 Limited	<p>The project is to construct and operate a solar farm on a 151-hectare site comprising 2 properties at 915 Ihaia Road, Opunake, Taranaki, and to connect to and supply electricity to the national grid. The solar farm will have an approximate installed capacity of 94.149 peak Megawatts.</p> <p>The solar farm will comprise: approximately 142,650 solar panels occupying approximately 58 hectares, arrays and mounting structures, inverter cabinets, and associated infrastructure, 26 power stations, two substations, one transformer and transmission line to connect to the national grid, underground electricity cables, ancillary buildings, structures and infrastructure (including a storage building, roads, access, security fencing, CCTV poles and other infrastructure) restoration and planting of wetlands and riparian margins of the Otahi Stream.</p>
Harmony Energy Solar Farm – Marton Project	Harmony Energy NZ #3 Limited	<p>The project is to construct and operate a solar farm on an approximately 120-hectare site comprising 3 properties at 122 and 196 Whales Lane and 362 Pukepapa Road, Marton, and to connect to and supply electricity to the national grid via the Pukepapa Road legal road reserve. The solar farm will have an approximate installed capacity of 65 peak Megawatts.</p> <p>The solar farm will comprise: approximately 103,000 solar panels, occupying approximately 93 hectares arrays and mounting structures, inverter cabinets, underground cables and associated infrastructure, 28 power stations, two substations and one transformer, ancillary buildings, structures and infrastructure (including a storage building, roads, access, security fencing, CCTV poles and other infrastructure) underground electricity cables, including within road reserve to connect to the Transpower substation at 362 Pukepapa Road, Marton, restoration and planting of riparian margins of the Tuaenui Stream.</p>
Masterton Solar Farm Project	Harmony Energy NZ #2 Limited	<p>The project is to construct and operate a solar farm on an approximately 218-hectare site comprising 5 properties at 271 Perrys Road, 510 Hughes Line and 303 East Taratahi Road, Carterton, and to connect to and supply electricity to the national grid via the Hughes Line and Cornwall Road legal road reserves. The solar farm will have an approximate installed capacity of 133 peak Megawatts.</p>

		<p>The solar farm will comprise: approximately 201,500 solar panels, occupying approximately 148 hectares, arrays and mounting structures, inverter cabinets, and associated infrastructure, 32 medium voltage power stations, two substations, one transformer and transmission line to connect to the national grid, ancillary buildings, structures and infrastructure (including a storage building, roads, access, security fencing, CCTV poles and other infrastructure) underground electricity cables, including within road reserve to connect to the Transpower substation at 113 Cornwall Road, Carterton, restoration and planting of riparian areas of the Waikoukou Stream and an unnamed stream.</p>
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