

2020-B-07359

Steve Ruru  
Chief Executive Officer  
Taranaki Regional Council  
s 9(2)(a)

Dear Steve

### **COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 – Kapuni Green Hydrogen Project – Comments sought**

In the week commencing 7 November 2020, the Minister for the Environment received an application from Hiringa Energy Limited ("Hiringa") and Ballance Agri-Nutrients Limited ("Ballance") to refer the above project to an expert consenting panel for consideration under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (the Act). The proposed project is located within the Taranaki Region.

A copy of the application is attached, and a brief project description follows.

#### **Kapuni Green Hydrogen Project**

The proposal is to develop a renewable hydrogen hub at Kapuni, Taranaki. It will involve generation of renewable electricity from wind to provide baseload power to the existing Ballance Kapuni ammonia-urea manufacturing plant, and to produce 'green' hydrogen from water via electrolysis. Excess power generated by the wind turbines during peak electricity production will be fed into the local distribution network.

Initially the resulting 'green' hydrogen will be used to produce ammonia and 'green' urea at the Ballance Kapuni Plant and is proposed to transition over a 10-year period to use as a fuel for the transport sector as the hydrogen fuel market develops.

The project works involve the following activities:

- Installation of four wind turbines with up to 24 MW of generation capacity on the land referred to as the PKW farm. The wind turbines will have a hub height of approximately 149 metres and a rotor diameter of 162 metres, resulting in an overall maximum height of approximately 230 metres.
- Construction and installation of electrolysis plant and hydrogen production infrastructure within the Ballance Kapuni Plant site.
- Construction and installation of hydrogen storage, loadout and refueling facilities within the Ballance Kapuni Plant site.
- Installation of underground power cables and associated buildings and structures to convey electricity from the PKW farm to the Ballance Kapuni Plant, and to connect to the local distribution network.

Under delegated authority from the Minister for the Environment, I invite you to provide written comments on the proposed project pursuant to section 21(2) of the Act (a template is attached for this purpose). Comment is sought on the specific matters outlined in the table below, and any further information you consider relevant to the Minister for the Environment's decision on whether to refer the project to an expert consenting panel (Panel). If it is more efficient to discuss this application, please contact me or my team at [fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz) and we will make a time to contact you.

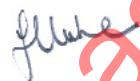
Specific questions on the application
1. Are there any reasons that you consider it more appropriate for the project, or part of the project, to proceed through existing Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) consenting processes rather than the processes in the Act?
2. Details of any relevant existing consents, and any variations/new consents that you consider may be required to undertake the project (that are not already addressed in the application).
3. A list of reports and assessments that are normally required by the Council for the project in this area.
4. Does the applicant, or a company owned by the applicant, have any environmental regulatory compliance history in your region?



If the Minister for the Environment decides to refer the project to a Panel, you 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 application. Applicants will provide a detailed assessment of environmental effects at this next stage and you will have the opportunity to provide further comments to the Panel. The Ministry for the Environment has prepared guidance on local authority involvement with fast-track consenting projects which you can access on the Ministry for the Environment website.

Please provide your comments via return email within 10 working days (13 January 2021, due to holiday period) so that the Minister for the Environment can take your comments into consideration when deciding on the application.

Yours sincerely



Sara Clarke  
Manager, Fast-Track Consenting Team

Enclosures:

- A. Application to refer the Kapuni Green Hydrogen Project to an expert consenting panel including supporting information
- B. Response template for written comments

cc: Colin McLellan, Consents Manager, Taranaki Regional Council,  
s 9(2)(a)