



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 (Rangiriri Solar Farm and Waerenga Solar Farm) Amendment Order 2023

Portfolio **Environment**

On 11 April 2023, Cabinet:

- 1 **noted** that the Minister for Environment has decided, under section 24 of the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020, to accept the applications for referral of the following projects to an expert consenting panel:
 - 1.1 Rangiriri Solar Farm Limited and Transpower New Zealand Limited's Rangiriri Solar Farm Project;
 - 1.2 Waerenga Solar Farm Limited and Transpower New Zealand Limited's Waerenga Solar Farm Project;
- 2 **noted** that the Rangiriri Solar Farm 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 employment by creating 100 to 120 direct full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs over a 15-to-18-month construction period and 7 to 9 ongoing FTE jobs;
 - 2.2 provide infrastructure that will contribute to improving economic and employment outcomes;
 - 2.3 contribute to New Zealand's efforts to mitigate climate change and transition more quickly to a low emissions economy by increasing New Zealand's renewable energy generation;
 - 2.4 progress faster than would otherwise be the case under standard Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) processes;
- 3 **noted** that the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Rangiriri Solar Farm and Waerenga Solar Farm) Amendment Order 2023 requires an expert consenting panel appointed to consider Rangiriri Solar Farm Limited and Transpower New Zealand Limited's Rangiriri Solar Farm Project to seek comments from the Minister of Energy and Resources, Minister of Agriculture, Te Kupenga o Ngāti Hako, Ngāti Koheriki Claims Committee, Ngāti Maru Rūnanga Trust, Marutūāhu Rōpu Limited Partnership, Taonga o Marutūāhu Trustee Limited and Ngaa Muka Development Trust, as listed in Appendix three of the paper under CAB-23-SUB-0121;

- 4 **noted** that the Waerenga Solar Farm 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:
- 4.1 generate employment by creating 130 to 160 direct FTE jobs over a 15 to 18 month construction period and 13 to 17 ongoing FTE jobs;
 - 4.2 provide infrastructure that will contribute to improving economic and employment outcomes;
 - 4.3 contribute to New Zealand's efforts to mitigate climate change and transition more quickly to a low emissions economy by increasing New Zealand's renewable energy generation;
 - 4.4 progress faster than would otherwise be the case under standard RMA processes;
- 5 **noted** that the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Rangiriri Solar Farm and Waerenga Solar Farm) Amendment Order 2023 requires an expert consenting panel appointed to consider Waerenga Solar Farm Limited and Transpower New Zealand Limited's Waerenga Solar Farm Project to seek comments from the Minister of Energy and Resources, Minister of Agriculture, Ngāti Koheriki Claims Committee, Hauraki Māori Trust Board and Ngāa Muka Development Trust, as listed in Appendix four of the paper under CAB-23-SUB-0121;
- 6 **authorised** submission to the Executive Council of the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Rangiriri Solar Farm and Waerenga Solar Farm) Amendment Order 2023 [PCO25463/6.0];
- 7 **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];
- 8 **noted** that the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Rangiriri Solar Farm and Waerenga Solar Farm) Amendment Order 2023 will come into force the day after publication in the New Zealand Gazette.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet