

**Hon David Parker** BCom, LLB

Attorney-General

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Oceans and Fisheries

Minister of Revenue

Associate Minister of Finance



BRF-3063

Ministers of/for:

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

Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

Dear Ministers

**COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 – comments sought on referral application – Southland Wind Farm Project**

Contact Energy Limited has applied to refer the Southland Wind Farm Project (project) to an expert consenting panel (panel) for consideration under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (FTCA). This letter is sent to you pursuant to section 21(2) of the FTCA.

The purpose of the FTCA is to urgently 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 project is described in Appendix A, and the application documents are in Attachment 1.

I invite you to provide written comments on the referral application. If I accept the application and the project is referred, the applicant will be able to lodge application with the Environmental Protection Authority for the approvals needed under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) for the project, and panel will be appointed to consider and decide them. The applicant must provide a more detailed environmental assessment and cultural impact assessments as part of their RMA application. You will have an opportunity at that stage to provide comments to the panel.

Please provide your comments via return email within 10 working days if you wish me to take them into consideration when deciding whether or not to accept the referral application.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Parker', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon David Parker  
**Minister for the Environment**

Appendix:

- A. Description of proposed project

Attachments:

1. Application to refer the Southland Wind Farm Project to an expert consenting panel, including supporting information (Databox link in covering email)

## Attachment A - Proposed project

Project	Applicant	Details
Southland Wind Farm Project	Contact Energy Limited	<p>The project is to construct and operate a wind farm on approximately 5,500 hectares of land at 248 and 794 Venlaw Road, and 232 Campbell Road, Oware, Southland, and to connect to and supply electricity to the national grid. The wind farm will comprise up to 55 wind turbines with blade tip heights up to 200 metres high and will have an approximate installed capacity of 230–300 Megawatt peak. The project includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. construction of infrastructure and associated structures including internal roads, turbine foundations and hard stand areas, underground electrical cables, wind turbine transformers, two meteorological masts, a substation, a switching station and ancillary buildings</li> <li>b. construction of a 220 kV transmission line, approximately 15–17 kilometres long with up to 50 pylons, extending north along one of three possible routes from the proposed wind farm to the existing 220kV Transpower New Zealand Limited (Transpower) North Makarewa-Three Mile Hill A Circuit</li> <li>c. minor improvement works within the State Highway 1, 93 and 98, and Kaiwera Road and Kaiwera Downs Road road reserves to enable transportation of the wind turbines.</li> </ol> <p>The three route options for the 220kV transmission line cross various private and public land parcels within the Southland and Gore Districts (Southland Region) or Clutha District (Otago Region).</p> <p>The project will require land use consents under the Southland District Plan (SDP) and potentially under the Gore District Plan (GDP) or Clutha District Plan (CDP) depending on the confirmed transmission route. The project will also require water and discharge permits under the Environment Southland Regional Air Plan and Regional Water Plan, water and discharge permits under the Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan, and consents under the Resource Management (National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health) Regulations 2011 (NES-CS) and the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020 (NES-F). The project will have overall discretionary activity status.</p> <p>The applicant may also lodge notices of requirement to designate a 400-metre transmission corridor for the new transmission line for consideration under the FTCA process if the project is referred.</p>