



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 (Waiuku and Southland Wind Farms) Amendment Order 2023

Portfolio Environment

On 3 July 2023, Cabinet:

- 1 **noted** that the Minister for the Environment (the Minister) 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 a panel:
 - 1.1 LET Capital Number 3 Limited Partnership's Waiuku Wind Farm;
 - 1.2 Contact Energy Limited's Southland Wind Farm;
- 2 **noted** that the Waiuku Wind 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 providing approximately 330 direct full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs over a 2-year construction period, and 31 ongoing direct FTE jobs once construction is complete;
 - 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 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 (Waiuku and Southland Wind Farms) Amendment Order 2023 requires LET Capital Number 3 Limited Partnership to provide to an expert consenting panel the additional ecological information described in Appendix three to the submission under CAB-23-SUB-0289, which the Minister specified under section 24(2) of the FTCA and outlined in the notice of decision on the referral application for the project;

- 4 **noted** that the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Waiuku and Southland Wind Farms) Amendment Order 2023 requires an expert consenting panel appointed to consider LET Capital Number 3 Limited Partnership's Waiuku Wind Farm project to seek comments from the seven additional parties listed in Appendix three to the submission under CAB-23-SUB-0289;
- 5 **noted** that the Southland Wind 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:
- 5.1 generate employment by providing 160–240 direct full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs over a 2-year construction period, and 10–14 ongoing direct FTE jobs once construction is complete;
 - 5.2 provide infrastructure that will contribute to improving economic and employment outcomes;
 - 5.3 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;
 - 5.4 progress faster using the Act's processes than would otherwise be the case under standard Resource Management Act 1991 processes;
- 6 **noted** that the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Waiuku and Southland Wind Farms) Amendment Order 2023 requires Contact Energy Limited to provide to an expert consenting panel the ecological information described in Appendix four to the submission under CAB-23-SUB-0289, which the Minister specified under section 24(2) of the FTCA and outlined in the notice of decision on the referral application for the project;
- 7 **noted** that the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Waiuku and Southland Wind Farms) Amendment Order 2023 requires an expert consenting panel appointed to consider Contact Energy Limited's Southland Wind Farm project to seek comments from the five additional parties listed in Appendix four;
- 8 **noted** that the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Waiuku and Southland Wind Farms) Amendment Order 2023 requires that an expert consenting panel appointed to consider Contact Energy Limited's Southland Wind Farm project must issue its final decision on any resource consent application and notice of requirement for the project no later than 50 working days after the date specified for receiving comment under clause 18 of Schedule 6 of the FTCA rather than 25 working days specified in clause 37(2)(b)(i) of Schedule 6 of the FTCA. The Amendment Order also allows that the panel may extend the period for issuing its final decision by up to a further 50 working days rather than the period specified in clause 37(3)(b)(i) of Schedule 6 of the FTCA;
- 9 **authorised** submission to the Executive Council of the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Waiuku and Southland Wind Farms) Amendment Order 2023 [PCO 25643/7.0];
- 10 **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];

- 11 **noted** that the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Referred Projects (Waiuku and Southland Wind Farms) Amendment Order 2023 will come into force on 6 July 2023.

Diana Hawker
Acting Secretary of the Cabinet