

From: s 9(2)(a)
To: [Fast Track Consenting](#)
Subject: [COMMERCIAL]FW: Tauhei Solar Farm project
Date: Wednesday, 3 November 2021 1:48:28 pm
Attachments: [image010.png](#)
[image011.png](#)
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[image013.png](#)
[image014.png](#)
[image016.png](#)

From: Christina Walker s 9(2)(a)
Sent: Wednesday, 3 November 2021 8:22 am
To: Rachel Ducker s 9(2)(a)
Subject: RE: Tauhei Solar Farm project

Hi Rachel,

That all looks really good, thank you for that.

With thanks,
Christina

Christina Walker

Hamilton Manager, Senior Planning and Policy Consultant

Mobile: 021 367 143

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4SIGHT COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

From: Rachel Ducker s 9(2)(a)
Sent: Tuesday, 2 November 2021 6:05 pm
To: Christina Walker s 9(2)(a)
Cc: Fast Track Consenting <fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz>
Subject: Tauhei Solar Farm project

Hi Christina,

Thanks for sending this information through.

As mentioned over the phone it has been a complex application to describe accurately in a way that is consistent with other drafting terms we have used and we like to be as accurate as we can at the early stages.

Could you please let me know if the following description contains any errors/omissions? It is likely to be amended slightly through the process if it proceeds but it's good to have as much

clarity as we can at the beginning.

“The Project is to construct, install and operate a solar farm with capacity to generate approximately 185 Megawatt peak (MWp) electricity for supply to the national electricity grid.

The solar farm will comprise:

- a. solar panels, arrays, mounting structures and poles
- b. two sub-stations
- c. a power station
- d. underground electricity cables
- e. ancillary buildings, structures and infrastructure.

The Project will involve activities such as:

- a. clearing vegetation
- b. carrying out earthworks (including disturbing potentially contaminated soils)
- c. taking, using and diverting groundwater
- d. discharging groundwater, stormwater run-off and contaminants to land and water
- e. constructing buildings and structures for renewable energy generation covering approximately 182 hectares of the Project site
- f. installing underground electricity cables and ancillary infrastructure
- g. constructing and/or upgrading roads, culverts, vehicle access and parking areas
- h. restoring wetland and riparian areas, including constructing wetland utility structures
- i. planting for biodiversity corridors and boundary screening
- j. operating a solar farm
- k. hosting educational visits
- l. any other activities that are:
 - i. associated with activities described in paragraph a to k
 - ii. within the project scope”

I also thought that it might be more straight forward to describe the site as: “262.5 hectares of private land, which extends from Mikkelson Road to Stanley Road, and the Mikkelson Road and O’Donoghue Road reserves, in Te Aroha West, Waikato” given that it is not neatly bounded by roads in all directions.

In terms of jobs I have used the following numbers.

- approximately 568 direct full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs over a 2 year construction period
- approximately 3 indirect full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs over a 2 year construction period

- approximately 7.2 direct full-time equivalent (FTE) ongoing jobs.

The first number seems a bit high and I wonder if it includes manufacturing jobs that are indirect rather than jobs associated with on-site construction and installation? I can ask that as a formal question through the process so there is no need to rush an answer now.

In terms of timeframes I have said approximately 15 months faster than under standard Resource Management Act (RMA) processes, due to the likelihood of notification and a hearing, and potential for appeals under the standard process. We generally say the FTCA process is 6-7 months end to end.

If you could get back to me tomorrow morning with any errors or omissions via email that would be much appreciated.

Thanks

Rachel Ducker
Senior Analyst | Kaitātari Matua
Fast Track Consenting

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Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao



From: Christina Walker s 9(2)(a)
Sent: Monday, 1 November 2021 11:29 am
To: Rachel Ducker s 9(2)(a)
Cc: Mark Ashby s 9(2)(a) | Pete Grogan s 9(2)(a)
Subject: RE: Tauhei Solar Farm project

MFE CYBER SECURITY WARNING

This email originated from outside our organisation. Please take extra care when clicking on any links or opening any attachments.

Good Morning Rachel.

Please see our responses below.

1. Council Databases do not assign any road numbers for the site(s) and none are available on google maps
2. Yes, please alter the name to Tauhei Solar Farm Project
3. a) The name of the applicant is Harmony Energy NZ Limited
b) At this stage the Applicant intends to operate the farm but may also negotiate a joint venture with a third party if appropriate. In that event they would retain a large minority equity position.
4. Harmony Energy NZ Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary of Harmony Energy Limited, which is a listed UK company. The project will be funded by Harmony Energy Limited through a combination of debt and equity. Harmony Energy Limited is a well established renewable energy company, which has been operating in the UK for the last 10 years, you can view their website here: [Wind, Solar and Battery Energy Storage | Harmony Energy](#).
5. a) The legal descriptions and site areas are included in the table below:

Legal Description	Area	Record of Title
Section 15 Blk XI AROHA SD, Matamata-Piako District	87.6397 ha	RT SA41D/367
Lot 1 DP 30983, Matamata-Piako District	23.6943 ha	RT SA 802/157
Lot 2 DP 30983, Matamata-Piako District	20.0597ha	RT SA797/217
Part Lot 2 DP 12478, Matamata-Piako District	30.0263 ha	RT SA723/228
Part Lot 1 DP 10272 Matamata-Piako District	49.8501 ha	RT 192929
Lot 2 DP 346931	51.2462 ha	RT 192929
Total:	262.5163	

b) In the table below I have provided some preliminary calculations of building sizes, please note these will be finalised in the detailed design:

Building Type	Number	Size (m ²)	Total Area (m ²)
Substation	2	50	100
Spare Parts Container	1	15	15
MV Power Station	1	15	15
Container like structures	49	14.4	705.6
Existing buildings		4600	4600

(Approximate)			
Total			5435.6

6. The buildings in your image are the existing dairy shed and calf raising sheds relating to the farming operation on site.
7. There is binding agreement in place with the landowners. The agreements allows for either a lease or easement options for the solar farm. The benefit of the easement, over the lease, is that it will allow the landowner to retain full access to continue farming. The details of this will be confirmed between the applicant and the landowner.
8. The Transpower connection will be at 33KV, meaning within the farm all equipment will have a lower voltage. However, the detailed electrical design has yet to be completed and as such, we are not able to specify voltage at each piece of equipment yet.
9.
 - a) As noted in the rule assessment underground cabling is permitted under rule 8.2.1.1 of the Matamata Piako District Plan within the site. It is anticipated that works outside of the site (i.e. within the road reserve) will be subject to a road opening permit from Matamata-Piako District Council but there are no consent triggers. The connection forms part of the scope of the project as outlined in the project description.
 - b) The farm will have a transmission connection to Transpower, rather than a distribution connection. i.e. the agreement will be with Transpower and the local line company will interface with Transpower.
 - c) No overhead cabling is required. The connection will be via an underground 33KV cable to Transpowers 33KV assets located within the Waihou Substation.
10. The table below indicates the direct jobs generated as a result of the project (utilising the labour hours provided in the application). We do not have any accurate indirect job calculations at this time.

Activity	Approximate Timeframe	Approx. FTE over specified
Consent preparation (Planning, Ecology, Landscape Architects, Contaminated Land)	12 Months (2021-2022)	FTE: 1.5
Engineering, procurement, and construction	10 months (2022)	Total Labour Hours: 920,400 FTE: 531
Planting	3 Months (2022)	FTE: 26
Operation, maintenance an asset management (excluding sheep farming)	34 years (2022- 2056)	FTE: 6.8
Planting Maintenance	3 years (2022 – 2026)	FTE: 0.5
Pest Control	34 years (2022 – 2056)	FTE: 0.4
Ancillary local employment – including food supply for workers and accommodation for any out of town personal during	10 months (2022)	FTE: 3

11. a) The District Plan does not include any rules specific to earthworks that would trigger a consent. The Regional Plan permits the earthworks proposed (Rule 5.1.4.11). Earthworks will not occur within 10m of any lake or wetland and therefore consent is not required due to a location with a 'high risk erosion area'.
- b) The site has been a dairy farm for in excess of 50 year and soil contamination is considered highly unlikely, however, a full PSI will be completed for the application to the EPA.
12. All likely consent triggers have been identified (see not below regarding NESFW) and no water takes or discharges are proposed.
13. Assessment below:
 Activities (including vegetation removal and earthworks within and within 10m of a wetland) are permitted if they are for the purpose of wetland restoration. (Clause 38), it is anticipated that the project will comply with the conditions outlined in Regulations 38 and 55
 The construction of boardwalks within the wetland, is considered to meet the definition of a 'wetland utility structure' and will trigger a Restricted Discretionary Activity status under Section 42 (2).
 Earthworks within 100m of the wetland will be limited to pole driving and cable trenching, it will not result in any drainage of the wetland and therefore does not require consent under 52(1).
 There are no activities in relation to the wetland on site that would trigger consent for a prohibited activity.
14. The trees identified are not protected and will not require consent for removal. The 'notable' trees are those that are being retained on the advice of the ecologist, due to them providing bat habitat.
15. a) There is space for car/bus parking next to the existing dairy shed, along with manoeuvring available around the tanker track. These areas can be identified in the detailed plan for the EPA.
 b) The current internal roading layout will be retained
 c) No additional consents will be required in relation to traffic. The existing vehicle entrances will be utilised (outlined in the rule assessment) and traffic generation will not increase to a level where any ITA is required under Rule 9.1.6 of the MP District Plan

You also asked about timeframes. Under a traditional consenting route, the application would like be subject to the doubling of timeframes due to the scale of the project, unfamiliarity with large scale solar within the Waikato and the current constraints posed by COVID (site visits and resourcing.. Further, as noted in the application, there is a risk the application would be publically notified due to 'special circumstance' again due to a lack of familiarity with solar and the large scale of the project. As such, the consenting timeframe (assuming no requirements for s.92 stoppages) could take 200 working days. If appealed this could easily extend timeframes by another 12 months. As such, this process is considered much more likely to deliver an outcome in a shorter timeframe.

With thanks,
 Christina

Christina Walker

Hamilton Manager, Senior Planning and Policy Consultant

s 9(2)(a)

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4SIGHT COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

From: Rachel Ducker s 9(2)(a)

Sent: Thursday, 28 October 2021 3:17 pm

To: Christina Walker s 9(2)(a)

Cc: Fast Track Consenting <fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz>

Subject: Tauhei Solar Farm project

Hi Christina,

As mentioned via email I have a few questions for you regarding the above application.

1. **Address.** Are you aware of any specific addresses for the properties (i.e. rapid numbers or street addresses)? If not we can try source that information separately.
2. **Project name.** A colleague has suggested that the project name may read better as the Tauhei Solar Farm project. Would you like to change the project name on this basis?
3. **Applicant.** The application form says the applicant is Harmony Energy NZ whereas the companies register appears to call the company Harmony Energy NZ Limited.
 - a. Can you please confirm the name of the applicant?
 - b. Does the applicant intend to operate the solar farm or develop it and on-sell to another company?
4. **Project funding.** How is the project proposed to be funded (i.e. borrowed or from existing company funds or a mix)?
5. **Area of solar farm occupation.** The plans refer to an area of occupation of structures and buildings in acres. Can you please confirm:
 - a. The total site area in hectares.
 - b. The total site area proposed to be occupied by buildings and structures.
6. **Purpose of buildings.** These buildings are shown on several plans but I cannot see any legend saying what they are for. Can you confirm whether this is the sub-station complex?



7. **Lease.** Is the lease agreement with the landowner currently in place?

- a. If so, what is the lease period?
 - b. If not, when is the lease proposed to be signed (i.e. after consent issue) and are there any potential barriers to the lease agreement being signed?
8. **Voltage.** The consent triggers and activity status relates to voltage expressed in kV. Please clarify what the voltage is for equipment in various buildings/structures? (i.e. substations etc)
9. **Connections to national grid.** The application refers to connections to the national grid and cabling within road reserves:
 - a. Are any additional works related to the national grid connection within the project scope?
 - b. Which distribution companies will the electricity be supplied? (this is required so we can identify parties who may need to be invited for comment)
 - c. You refer to underground cabling. Is there any overhead cabling required either in the national grid connections or otherwise within the project scope?
10. **Jobs.** We require job numbers to be expressed in full time equivalents per year for reporting purposes and consistency across all projects:
 - a. Please provide year-wise direct job numbers in Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) and differentiate among various types of jobs such as project design jobs (i.e. planning, design, engineering, environmental consultancy), construction jobs, and ongoing operational jobs. For example, in 2021 X new direct FTE jobs will be created directly in the planning/design/engineering sector and X new direct FTE jobs will be created in the construction sector; in 2022, X new direct FTE jobs will be created in the construction sector; from 2024, X new direct FTE ongoing/operational/permanent jobs will be created. In addition, and if available, please provide the indirect new jobs in FTEs that the Project is likely to create.
11. **Earthworks.**
 - a. Are consents required under either the district plan or the regional plan for earthworks? If yes, we do not necessarily need the volume just which rules are likely to be triggered.
 - b. Is any soil likely to be contaminated? If so are any consents required under the Resource Management (National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health) Regulations 2011?
12. **Other regional type consents.** Our preference is for project to include all consents required rather than rely on a mix of RMA and FTCA consents. Are any other consents required for the project and anticipated to be included in the project scope including the following:
 - a. Water takes
 - b. Discharges to land and water
13. **Wetlands.**
 - a. Are any consents required for works in wetlands under the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020 (NES-F)?
 - b. We are particularly interested in a statement from you about whether the project

includes any activity which may potentially be prohibited under clause 53 of the NES-F.

14. **Notable trees. The site plan shows notable trees.**

- a. Are these trees listed in a district plan and do they have consent requirements for removal?

15. **Traffic, access and bus parking.**

- a. Is any on-site car or bus parking proposed?
- b. Is any internal roading proposed?
- c. Are any additional consents required under the Matamata-Piako District Plan?

If you can get back to me tomorrow or by Monday at the latest I can finalise the briefing note and make the next weekly meeting cycle.

If the Minister decides to that the project meets the section 18 eligibility criteria, and there is no other reason to decline to accept the project for referral at this stage, the application will proceed to inviting comments on the referral from various Ministers and other relevant parties. At this stage the applicant may be asked for more detailed information about company track record, funding and whether approvals are required under the Overseas Investment Act 2005.

Many thanks

Rachel Ducker

Senior Analyst | Kaitātari Matua
Fast Track Consenting

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