

Application for a project to be referred to an expert consenting panel

* = compulsory (enter N/A if not applicable)

(Pursuant to Section 20 of the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020)

This form must be used by applicants making a request to the responsible Minister(s) for a project to be referred to an expert consenting panel under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020.

All legislative references relate to the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (the Act), unless stated otherwise.

The information requirements for making an application are described in Section 20(3) of the Act. Your application must be made in this approved form and contain all of the required information. If these requirements are not met, the Minister(s) may decline your application due to insufficient information.

Section 20(2)(b) of the Act specifies that the application needs only to provide a general level of detail, sufficient to inform the Minister's decision on the application, as opposed to the level of detail provided to an expert consenting panel deciding applications for resource consents or notices of requirement for designations.

We recommend you discuss your application and the information requirements with the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) before the request is lodged. Please contact the Ministry via email: fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz

The Ministry has also prepared Fast-track consenting guidance to help applicants prepare applications for projects to be referred.

PART 1: APPLICANTS

Applicant details

Waikato Solar Farms Limited (WSFL)

Contact person: Joss Ryall

Job title: Development Manager

Phone: s 9(2)(a)

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Postal address: C/- Joss Ryall, Island Green Power UK Limited, Unit 20.2, Coda Studios, 189 Munster Road, London, SW6 6AW.

Transpower NZ Limited (*Transpower*) is also a joint applicant for the request.

Contact person: Sarah Shand

Job title: Environmental planner

Phone: 04 590 7434

Postal address: Transpower New Zealand Ltd, Waikoukou, 22 Boulcott Street, Wellington 6011 or PO Box 1021, Wellington 6140.

Relationship between entities for purposes of Application

WSFL and Transpower have agreed to submit a joint fast-track referral application for the purposes of the Project. If the Project is referred, both entities anticipate lodging separate but related consent applications, as relevant to their respective activities. This Application has been prepared to cover activities required for both WSFL and Transpower’s consent applications.

Address for service (if different from above)

Organisation: Chapman Tripp

Contact person: Alana Lampitt | Nicola de Wit

Job title: Partner | Senior Associate

Phone: (W) 09 357 9891 s 9(2)(a) | (W) 09 357 9286 s 9(2)(a)

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Email for service: s 9(2)(a)

Postal address: C/- Alana Lampitt, Chapman Tripp, Level 34, PWC Tower, 15 Customs Street West, Auckland 1010, New Zealand.

PART 2: PROJECT LOCATION

If the application relates to the coastal marine area wholly or in part, references to the Minister in this form should be read as the Minister for the Environment and Minister of Conservation.

Coastal Marine Area: does not relate to the coastal marine area

Site Address / Location

Uploading a cadastral map and/or aerial imagery to clearly show the project location will help.

Please see *Appendix 1* for cadastral and aerial maps of the Project location.

Line 1: 345 Waiterimu Road (primary address)

Line 2:

Suburb/City: Waiterimu

Region: Waikato

Postcode: 3784

Country: New Zealand

If you have multiple sites or your site is geographically diverse, please enter your Site/Location below.

Site/Location: Various sites located on Waiterimu Road and Waiu Road, Waiterimu, Waikato 3784, New Zealand contained in the following Records of Title: SA890/11, SA56/270, SA637/7 (including Parcel ID: 4467668), SA2016/24, SA46A/703, SA50D/850, SA2D/1355, SA25C/830, SA25D/895 and SA24C/989 (Site).

There will also be some works undertaken in the following road reserves to establish new vehicle entrances: Parcel ID: 4570031, Parcel ID: 4581962, Parcel ID: 4589799, Parcel ID: 4580896.

Legal description

Uploading a current copy of the relevant Record(s) of Title will help.

Please see *Appendix 2* for the Records of Title.

- Allotment 9A, Allotment 11, Allotment 13, Allotment 557, Part Allotment 12 and Part Allotment 12A Parish of Whangamarino
- Lot 1 and Lot 3 Deposited Plan 16714 Part Allotment 29-31 Whangamarino Parish and Allotment 527 Whangamarino Parish
- Lot 1 Deposited Plan South Auckland 27310 and Lot 2 Deposited Plan 16714
- Lot 1 and Lot 3 Deposited Plan South Auckland 40730
- Part Lot 2 Deposited Plan 37383
- Allotment 9 Parish of Whangamarino
- Part Lot 2 Deposited Plan 13701
- Part Allotment 27 Parish of Whangamarino
- Part Lot 2 Deposited Plan South Auckland 27310
- Lot 3 Deposited Plan 13701
- Parcel ID: 4467668
- Parcel ID: 4570031
- Parcel ID: 4581962
- Parcel ID: 4589799
- Parcel ID: 4580896

Registered legal land owner(s)

- Wynberg Farms Limited (for Records of Title: SA890/11, SA56/270, SA637/7, SA2016/24, SA46A/703, SA50D/850, SA2D/1355, and SA25C/830); and
- Wright Trading Limited (for Records of Title: SA25D/895 and SA24C/989).

Applicants' legal interest in site

Detail the nature of the applicant's legal interest (if any) in the land on which the project will occur, including a statement of how that affects the applicant's ability to undertake the work that is required for the project.

WSFL has an agreement with Wynberg Farms Limited providing for its interest in part of the land relating to the Project. This agreement provides WSFL with the right to develop and operate the Project, as per the caveats on Records of Title: SA890/11, SA56/270, SA637/7, SA2016/24, SA46A/703, SA50D/850, SA2D/1355, and SA25C/830.

WSFL will enter into an agreement with Transpower to provide the necessary property rights in relation to the future 220kV substation (Record of Title SA25C/830).

Parcel ID: 4467668 is intended to be within the scope of that agreement as it is meant to be comprised in RT: SA637/7. However, it was discovered that it is a separate parcel, as a result of a clerical error in 1932. WSFL is working with Wynberg Farms Limited to remedy this technical issue. We anticipate this error will be resolved in the next few weeks prior to application for resource consent.

WSFL has an agreement with Wright Trading Limited providing for its interest in the remainder of the land relating to the Project. This agreement provides WSFL with the right to develop and operate the Project on Records of Title: SA25D/895 and SA24C/989.

PART 3: PROJECT DETAILS

Project name

Waiterimu Solar Farm

Project summary

Please provide a brief summary (no more than 2-3 lines) of the proposed project.

The Project relates to the construction, operation and maintenance of an approximately 140MW photovoltaic solar farm. It will consist of approximately 225,000 solar panels, associated infrastructure and a National Grid substation set across a 380 ha site.

The solar farm is anticipated to be constructed of bifacial monocrystalline panels mounted on a metal tracking system aligned in North-South rows and panels will rotate East-West (+/- 60°). Solar panels coverage is expected to be approximately 16.6% (c.63 Ha) of the site. The solar farm will also include: cabinets housing the inverters, transformer and associated equipment, as well as ancillary buildings, access roads, cabling, a perimeter fence, CCTV poles and other infrastructure.

A new 220kV substation will be constructed adjacent to the National Grid transmission line (tower HLY-DEV-A0631) which runs across the Site. The solar farm will be connected to this National Grid substation by a new section of transmission line, including two supporting poles within the Site. The substation, which is to be approximately 6,000m² in area, will be accessed via nearby Waiu Road. The componentry within the new substation will generally be between 5-10m in height, with limited vertical infrastructure (gantries and telecommunications poles) being up to c.25m in height.

The Project will also contain an energy storage facility on an area adjacent to the substation, comprised of battery storage systems within storage cabinets.

The Project will also include environmental enhancement areas for the planting of native species and screening planting, along with retaining existing mature vegetation and enhancement of existing wetland habitats and waterways.

Project details

Please provide details of the proposed project, its purpose, objectives and the activities it involves, noting that Section 20(2)(b) of the Act specifies that the application needs only to provide a general level of detail.

The Project seeks to increase renewable energy generation in New Zealand by providing new solar power infrastructure. Solar photovoltaic generation is currently underrepresented in New Zealand by world standards, making up less than 1% of New Zealand's energy supply. The predicted energy output from the Project is approximately 230 GWh/year, which will be supplied into the National Grid.

The Project also seeks to increase energy storage infrastructure in New Zealand by providing new battery storage.

The Project may involve the following activities:

- installation of solar panel arrays, mounting structures, inverter cabinets, an energy storage facility and associated infrastructure:
- construction of a substation and transmission line to connect to the national grid:
- landscaping that includes planting and environmental enhancement areas and boundary screening:
- ecological mitigation and enhancement works associated with streams and waterways:
- clearing vegetation:
- carrying out earthworks, including disturbing potentially contaminated soil:
- taking, using, and diverting groundwater:
- discharging groundwater, stormwater run-off, and contaminants into water and on to land:
- constructing buildings and other structures:
- installing underground electricity cables (including directional drilling to pass under public roads):
- constructing or upgrading roads, culverts, vehicle access areas, temporary construction compound and parking areas:
- developing and restoring wetland areas:
- landscaping and planting:
- operating and maintaining a solar farm to supply electricity to the national grid:
- continuing agricultural activities on the Site:

- carrying out activities that are described in the Project summary and associated with the activities described above.

Where applicable, describe the staging of the project, including the nature and timing of the staging

Project staging

No staging of the Project is proposed at this stage, however detailed construction programming will occur after consents are obtained.

Consents / approvals required

Relevant local authorities*: Waikato District Council (WDC) and Waikato Regional Council (WRC)

Resource consent(s) / designation required*:

- Land-use consent
- Water permit
- Subdivision consent Nil
- Discharge permit
- Coastal permit Nil
- Designation Nil
- Alteration to designation Nil

Relevant zoning, overlays and other features

Please provide details of the zoning, overlays and other features identified in the relevant plan(s) that relate to the project location

The following zoning, overlays and other features apply to the Site:

Zoning/Overlay/Other Feature	Extent
Operative Waikato District Plan	
Rural Zone	The entire Site.
Transmission Corridor	The HLY-DEV A 220kV transmission line transects the Site and connects to the Ohinewai substation directly east of the Site boundary.
Proposed Waikato District Plan Decisions Version	
Rural Zone	The entire Site.
Transmission Corridor	The HLY-DEV-A 220kV transmission line transects the Site and connects to the Ohinewai substation directly east of the Site boundary.

Significant Natural Area (SNA)	A very small portion of the Site is identified as a SNA. The SNA areas are located at the eastern edge of the Site, just south of Waiterimu Road, and also on the eastern boundary where it adjoins the Matahuru Stream. As noted below, the Project avoids disturbance in these areas which will be retained and enhanced.
Waikato Regional Plan	
Drainage Scheme: Franklin Waikato (Mangawara West)	The southern and western parts of the Site are located within the Franklin Waikato (Mangawara West) Drainage Scheme. Within the Site boundary, only the Matahuru Stream is managed by WRC for drainage and/or catchment management purposes.

Rule(s) consent is required under and activity status

*Please provide details of all rules consent is required under. Please note that Section 18(3)(a) of the Act details that the project **must not include** an activity that is described as a prohibited activity in the Resource Management Act 1991, regulations made under that Act (including a national environmental standard), or a plan or proposed plan.*

The Project will require resource consent under rules in the Operative Waikato District Plan, Proposed Waikato District Plan (Decisions Version), the Waikato Regional Plan, National Environmental Standards for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health, and National Environmental Standards for Freshwater. Where there is any uncertainty as to resource consent requirements, the relevant rules have been included below on a conservative basis. The final consent requirements will be confirmed as part of the application preparation following additional design work.

Operative Waikato District Plan

Rule	Activity status
Rule 25.10.2 - Type of activity	Discretionary activity.
Rule 25.15.2 - Access, vehicle entrance, parking, loading and manoeuvring space	Restricted discretionary activity.
25.17.2 - Noise	Discretionary activity.
25.18.2 - Construction Noise	Discretionary activity.
25.21.2 - Vibration	Discretionary activity.
Rule 25.25.2 - Earthworks	Discretionary activity.
Rule 25.31 - Hazardous substances	Discretionary activity.
Rule 25.43A - Indigenous vegetation clearance	Restricted discretionary activity.
Rule 25.51 - Building coverage	Discretionary activity.
Rule 25.54.1 - Building setbacks - allotments 1.6ha or more	Discretionary activity.
Rule 25.58A - Setbacks - high voltage electricity transmission lines	Restricted discretionary activity.
Rule 25.59 - Building near a lake or river	Discretionary activity.

Proposed Waikato District Plan

The decisions version of the Proposed Waikato District Plan (*PDP*) was notified on 17 January 2022, with the appeal period closing on 2 March 2022. WDC has not yet released an appeals version of the PDP. A number of the following rules are subject to appeal, based on our current knowledge.

Rule	Activity status
All Infrastructure	
NOISE-R8(2) Noise	Discretionary activity.
AINF-R2(2) Construction noise	Restricted discretionary activity.
AINF-R8(2) Earthworks activities associated with infrastructure	Restricted discretionary activity.
AINF-R18 Any infrastructure not specifically provided for as a permitted, restricted discretionary or non-complying activity within the EIT – Energy, infrastructure and transport section, including associated earthworks, not located within an Identified Area	Discretionary activity.
National Grid	
GRID-R4 Transformers, substations and switching stations associated with the National Grid not located within Identified Areas	Restricted discretionary activity.
GRID-R7 New above-ground transmission lines associated within the National Grid not located within Identified Areas	Discretionary activity.
Transportation	
TRPT-R1(2) Vehicle access for all activities	Restricted discretionary activity.
TRPT-R4(2) Traffic generation	Restricted discretionary activity.
Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity	
ECO-R16 Indigenous vegetation clearance outside a Significant Natural Area for any reason not specified in Standards ECO-R11 to ECO-R15.	Restricted discretionary activity.

Waikato Regional Plan

The following table outlines the relevant rules under the WRP.

Rule	Activity status
Stormwater	
3.5.11.8 Discretionary Activity Rule – Discharge of stormwater into water, and/or into or onto land	Discretionary activity.
Structures	
4.2.4.4 Discretionary Activity Rule – Structures In, On, Under or Over the Beds of Rivers and Lakes	Discretionary activity.
Bed disturbance	
4.3.4.4 Discretionary Activity Rule – Bed Disturbance Activities	Discretionary activity.
Earthworks	
5.1.4.13 Discretionary Activity Rule – Soil Disturbance, Rooding and Tracking and Vegetation Clearance	Discretionary activity.
5.1.4.15 Discretionary Activity Rule – Soil Disturbance, Rooding, Tracking, Vegetation Clearance, Riparian Vegetation Clearance in High Risk Erosion Areas	Discretionary activity.
5.2.5.8 Controlled Activity Rule – Discharge of Large Volumes of Sediment and Vegetation From Within or Surrounding Lawfully Established Structures or Artificial Watercourses	Controlled activity.

National Environmental Standards for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health

The following table outlines the relevant rules under the NES-CS.

Rule	Activity status
Regulation 11 – Discretionary activities	Discretionary activity.

National Environmental Standards for Freshwater

The following table outlines the relevant rules under the NES-F.

Rule	Activity status
Construction of specified infrastructure Regulation 45 Discretionary activities	Discretionary activity.
Maintenance and operation of specified infrastructure and other infrastructure	Restricted discretionary activity.

Rule	Activity status
Regulation 47 Restricted discretionary activities	

Previous resource consent or notice of requirement applications

Please provide details of the applications and notices, and any decisions made on them. Schedule 6 clause 28(3) of the Act details that a person who has lodged an application for a resource consent or a notice of requirement under the Resource Management Act 1991, in relation to a listed project or a referred project, must withdraw that application or notice of requirement before lodging a consent application or notice of requirement with an expert consenting panel under this Act for the same, or substantially the same, activity.

Resource consent applications already made, or notices of requirement already lodged, on the same or a similar project.

No resource consent applications or notices of requirement have been lodged for the same or a similar project on the Site.

Consents / designations by other parties

Resource consent(s) / Designation required for the projects by someone other than the applicant, including details on whether these have been obtained

As noted earlier, Transpower NZ Limited will be a joint applicant for the referral application and may lodge separate but adjoining consent applications. Decisions about the specific approach to consenting the separate but related works, including their timing, are to be confirmed.

Other legal authorisations

Provide details of other legal authorisations (other than contractual) required to begin the project (e.g. authorities under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 or concessions under the Conservation Act 1987), including details on whether these have been obtained.

The following additional legal authorisations may be required (subject to further investigations):

- Archaeological authority for earthworks under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.
- Authorisation to hold, catch, handle or release wildlife (possibly including native lizards and bats) under the Wildlife Act 1953.
- Approval to close unformed legal roads on Site under the Public Works Act 1981.
- Corridor access approval to upgrade/establish vehicle entranceways under the Local Government Act 1974.

Construction readiness

Please provide a high level timeline outlining key milestones, e.g., detailed design, procurement, funding, site works commencement and completion.

If the resource consents(s) are granted, and/or notice of requirement is confirmed, detail when you anticipate construction activities will begin, and be completed.

Construction readiness*: Detailed design is of the solar farm part of the Project is largely complete and will be fully complete well before resource consent approval.

Following resource consent approval, the remaining funding and procurement requirements of the Project will be worked through over a period of approximately 9 months.

WSFL has a proven track record of delivering solar projects through its parent entity Island Green Power, which is 50% owned by Macquarie Asset Management. Island Green Power has consented and developed 20 solar projects that are successfully operating, with more under construction including. Of those, Island Green Power successfully funded 9 projects totalling 660MW in Australia between 2016 - 2020 working with 6 different funding partners.

Table: Illustrative Solar Projects by Island Green Power

Yatpool, Australia	Built 2020 (106MW)
Wemen, Australia	Built 2018 (109MW)
Hughenden, Australia	Built 2018 (22MW)
Karadoc, Australia	Built 2018 (112MW)
Katherine, Australia	Built 2020 (32MW)
Middlemount, Australia	Built 2020 (33MW)
Clermont, Australia	Built 2018 (93MW)
Nevertire, Australia	Built 2020 (125MW)
Shuttleworth, England	Built 2016 (5MW)
Trowse, England	Built 2016 (5MW)
Trethosa, England	Built 2016 (5MW)
Mill Farm, England	Built 2016 (5MW)
Salehouse, England	Built 2016 (5MW)
Outwood, England	Built 2016 (5MW)
Exning, England	Built 2015 (30MW)
Lisburn, Northern Ireland	Built 2017 (20MW)
Carrowdore, Northern Ireland	Built 2017 (7mw)

For a full list of Island Green Power’s solar projects including other projects currently under development, please refer to the Island Green Power projects page: <https://islandgp.com/our-projects/>.

The total construction period will take approximately 15 - 18 months, including shipping, site preparation, installation and commissioning.

In relation to the National Grid part of the Project, Transpower anticipates construction will take approximately 12-14 months.

WSFL does not require OIO approval or expect to seek OIO approval, but also does not rule out the possibility of an option to seek OIO approval if it were more efficient to do so.

PART 4: CONSULTATION

Government ministries and departments

Detail all consultation undertaken with relevant government ministries and departments

The primary driver for the Project is the establishment of the solar farm. Accordingly, the consultation to date has been led by and undertaken by WSFL. Transpower would be more heavily involved in consultation at the consenting stage, including engagement with the community, and iwi/hapū etc.

Consultation with government ministries and departments*:

WSFL has engaged with Transpower since December 2018 and has had regular fortnightly meetings since September 2021. These meetings have canvassed all Project related matters that Transpower has an interest in, including Site design and consenting.

Local authorities

Detail all consultation undertaken with relevant local authorities

WSFL has undertaken early engagement with WDC and WRC as follows:

- 22 November 2021 - online meeting with WDC resource consent and development engineering team to provide an introduction to the Project and discuss ongoing engagement with WDC during the RMA consenting processes.
- 7 December 2021 – online meeting with WDC councillors, executive team, and staff to provide an introduction to the Project.
- 16 March 2022 – online meeting with WRC councillors and regulatory staff to provide an introduction to the Project and discuss ongoing engagement with WRC during the RMA consenting process.
- 24 January 2022 – a public information evening was held and was attended by the WDC Deputy Mayor and councillors, as well as WRC councillors.
- 4 May 2022 – online meeting with WRC (Tracey May, Science, Policy and Information Director) to discuss potential for the Project to use the potential fast-track pathway.
- 9 May 2022 – online meeting with WDC resource consent and development engineering team to discuss potential for the Project to use the potential fast-track pathway.
- 17 May 2022 – online meeting with WRC consenting staff (Amy Robinson, Manager Regional Consents and Lisette Balsom, Senior Planner) to discuss potential for the Project to use the fast-track pathway.
- 31 May 2022 – online meeting with WDC councillors, executive team, and staff to provide an update on the Project and discuss potential for the Project to use the fast-track pathway.

The consultation undertaken with the relevant local authorities has been collegial and constructive. As outlined above, engagement has occurred with executive staff, regulatory staff and elected representatives in a series of on-line meetings. Presentations and discussions have been centred on sharing information about WSFL (IGP), strategic considerations for renewable energy generation, the proposal and regulatory processes. This engagement has generated positive discussion about the importance of renewable energy in the context of New Zealand's strategic policy settings and the Council's climate action plans.¹ At the same time, the engagement has clearly acknowledged the Council's statutory and regulatory functions and in that context there has been constructive discussion about the Fast-track Consenting Act process, and the importance of further pre-application communication in terms of final design/layout, specific consenting requirements, and procedural/administrative matters. It is WSFL's objective to continue to work closely with the relevant Council regulatory staff prior to any consent application being lodged should this referral be successful.

Other persons/parties

Detail all other persons or parties you consider are likely to be affected by the project

Consultation with other persons or parties*:

WSFL has undertaken early and broad engagement with the following persons or parties:

- Landowners/residents;
- Potential stakeholders; and
- General public.

WSFL does not consider all of the persons involved in the engagement to date are likely to be affected by the Project, however the following sections provide details of all engagement undertaken.

Detail all consultation undertaken with the above parties*:

A summary of engagement with the above persons or parties is as follows:

- 7 December 2021 – Information letter circulated to landowners/residents and stakeholders. This letter provided an introduction to Island Green Power and the Project and advised that an information evening would be scheduled in the new year.
- 24 January 2022 – Letter sent to landowners/residents and stakeholders advising of details for public information evening.
- 10 February 2022 – Public information evening held at Matahuru Waiterimu Hall. The evening was an informal question and answer format, with four information stations. The evening was attended by approximately 80 people.
- 23 February 2022 – In person meeting with the landowners/residents set out below. The meetings included visits to all of the sites listed below.

¹ Waikato District Council's Climate Action Plan (<https://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/your-council/plans-policies-and-bylaws/plans/climate-action-plan>) and Waikato Regional Council's Climate Action Roadmap (<https://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/assets/WRC/WRC-2019/Climate-Roadmap.pdf>).

- Mark and Cheryl Maskell, s 9(2)(a)
- Ivan and Maxine Sutton, s 9(2)(a)
- Cliff and Gillian Head, s 9(2)(a)
- Peter and Anne Mickell (Hillway Farm Limited), s 9(2)(a); and
- Stuart Mickell, s 9(2)(a).

Doug and Carol Dobbs (of s 9(2)(a)) declined the invitation to meet.

- 3 May 2022 – Online meeting with Mark and Cheryl Maskell.
- 4 May 2022 – Online meeting with Ivan and Maxine Sutton.
- 6 May 2022 – Online meeting with Peter, Anne and Stuart Mickell.
- 9 and 10 May 2022 – Attempts to arrange meetings with Douglas and Carol Dobbs (s 9(2)(a)), Cliff and Gillian Head and Luc and Kirsty Kerster (s 9(2)(a)) were unsuccessful.
- 24 May 2022 – Online meeting with Colin and Nicola Hickey/Edith Farms Limited (s 9(2)(a)).

As outlined above, there has been reasonably extensive consultation undertaken with landowners/residents, potential stakeholders, and the general public. This has been in the form of letter drops, a public information evening, and a series of in person and on-line meetings with the most affected residents. There has been a range of feedback on the proposal from the wider community both negative and positive. In general, there is an understanding of the strategic imperative to increase renewable energy generation and acknowledgement of the environmental enhancement opportunities being explored as part of the project, however there are some concerns about the localised impact of the project, primarily in the context of change in character and the associated landscape visual effects. WSFL have taken these localised impacts into consideration as part of the design process and as outlined elsewhere in this application will be implementing a range of mitigation measures to ensure that there will be no significant adverse effects. WSFL continues to consult with the most affected landowners/residents in the interests of informing the final design and mitigation options and simply to maintain lines of communication around process and timing.

PART 5: IWI AUTHORITIES AND TREATY SETTLEMENTS

For help with identifying relevant iwi authorities, you may wish to refer to [Te Kāhui Māngai – Directory of Iwi and Māori Organisations](#).

Iwi authorities

Detail all consultation undertaken with Iwi authorities whose area of interest includes the area in which the project will occur

Iwi authority	Consultation undertaken
Te Whakakitenga o Waikato Incorporated (Iwi authority for the	The Matahuru Marae (within the Waikato-Tainui rohe) is located 2.2km from the western boundary of the Site. The Project team requested a hui with Matahuru Marae representatives and was subsequently provided the opportunity to

<p>Waikato-Tainui Rohe)</p>	<p>present (via Microsoft Teams) to the Matahuru Marae Committee and beneficiaries at their meeting held on 27 February 2022.</p> <p>WSFL was represented by Hamish Fraser (Director), Dave Moule and Andrew Cumberpatch of Boffa Miskell and Norm Hill of Te Hira Consultant Ltd. WSFL’s representatives provided an overview of the following: WSFL’s parent company, Island Green Power, solar power and the strategic considerations for renewable energy, the Project site, what investigations/engagement has been undertaken to date, potential Project and partnership opportunities for WSFL and mana whenua, and next steps.</p> <p>The attendees raised a number of points/questions that were recorded for consideration by WSFL’s team.</p> <p>WSFL has also engaged with Tukoroirangi “Tuku” Morgan, as Chairman of Ngaati Makirangi Marae. The discussions in relation to the Project have been positive, and potential cultural initiatives have been and will continue to be discussed in the lead up to lodgement of the consent application (such as opportunities for employment of Marae members during construction and operation and opportunities relating to improvement of the nearby school site owned by Te Whakakitenga o Waikato Incorporated) as part of its planned transformation into Ngaati Makirangi Marae.</p> <p>An invitation for a hui (via Microsoft Teams) was also extended by WSFL to the identified representatives for the following entities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Te Whakakitenga o Waikato (Waikato-Tainui); • Te Riu o Waikato Ltd (Waikato-Tainui); • Ngā Muka Development Trust (Waikato-Tainui); • Taniwha Marae (Waikato-Tainui); • Ngāti Pāoa Iwi Trust (Ngāti Pāoa); • Ngāti Pāoa Trust Board (Ngāti Pāoa); • Hauraki Māori Trust Board (Ngāti Pāoa, Ngāti Tamaterā, Ngāti Maru); and • Waiti (Raungaunu) Marae (Ngāti Pāoa). <p>Colm Killeen and Joss Ryall of Island Green Power, Hamish Fraser (Director of Waikato Solar Farms Ltd), Dave Moule and Andrew Cumberpatch of Boffa Miskell and Norm Hill of Te Hira Consultant Ltd met with the following attendees on 28 April 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kahurimu Flavell, Project Advisor, Waikato-Tainui Environmental team;
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sam Toka, Chairman of Taniwha Marae Committee; • Willie Tipene, Kaitiaki, Taniwha Marae; • Haydn Solomon, Ngāti Naho; and • Kay Davies, Administrator of Nga Muka Development Trust. <p>The presentation addressed the same topics as the 27 February 2022 hui.</p> <p>The attendees raised a number of points/questions that were recorded for consideration by WSFL’s team and which were addressed at the hui.</p> <p>On 23 June 2022, WSFL’s representatives Andrew Cumberpatch of Boffa Miskell and Norm Hill of Te Hira Consultant Ltd presented on the project at a Nga Muka Development Trust committee member hui held in Te Kauwhata.</p> <p>As with the previous hui held with mana whenua, the presentation provided outlined the following information to the attendees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview of Island Green Power as a company; • An overview of solar power and the strategic considerations for renewable energy; • An overview of the project site; • What investigations/engagement has been undertaken to date; • An overview of identified project and partnership opportunities for the applicant and mana whenua, including an update on the preparation of the Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) for the project; and • Consenting process and next steps.
Hauraki Māori Trust Board (Iwi authority for Ngāti Tamaterā, Ngāti Pāoa and Ngāti Maru Rohe)	<p>The key concerns raised by Nga Muka Development Trust committee member were how the grass and weeds within the site were to be managed once the solar farm was operational; with the usage of herbicides (in particular glyphosate) within the Lake Waikare catchment strongly opposed. Andrew and Norm were able to confirm that IGP’s intended approach is that the grazing of sheep on site will address this, and that a commitment to that approach can be agreed if that alleviates mana whenua’s concerns.</p>
Ngāti Pāoa Trust Board (Iwi authority for the Ngāti Pāoa Rohe)	
Ngāti Maru Ruunanga Trust (Iwi authority for Ngāti Maru Rohe)	WSFL has contacted the representative for Ngāti Maru Ruunanga Trust who has advised that Ngāti Maru does not require consultation on the Project.

Treaty settlement entities

Detail all consultation undertaken with Treaty settlement entities whose area of interest includes the area in which the project will occur

Treaty settlement entity	Consultation undertaken
Te Whakakitenga o Waikato Incorporated (Treaty settlement entity for the Waikato-Tainui Rohe)	As above.
Ngāti Pāoa Iwi Trust (Treaty Settlement entity for the Ngāti Pāoa Rohe)	As above.
Ngāti Tamaterā Treaty Settlement Trust (Treaty settlement entity for Ngāti Tamaterā)	As above.

Treaty settlements

Treaty settlements that apply to the geographical location of the project, and a summary of the relevant principles and provisions in those settlements, including any statutory acknowledgement areas

*Section 18(3)(b) of the Act details that the project **must not include** an activity that will occur on land returned under a Treaty settlement where that activity has not been agreed to in writing by the relevant land owner.*

There are three Treaty settlements relevant to the geographical location of the Project:

- Waikato - Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act 1995;
- Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010; and
- Ngāti Paoa Rohe – Deed of Settlement 20 March 2021.

The following table provides a summary of the relevant principles and provisions in those settlements.

Waikato Tainui	<p><u>Waikato - Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act 1995:</u> The settlement applies to the Waikato rohe, which extends from Auckland central in the north to the south of Cambridge and Te Awamutu.</p> <p>The settlement was made in the spirit of co-operation, compromise and good faith whereby the Crown agreed to atone for the wrong done to Waikato-Tainui by the raupatu, in recognition of the mana of the Kiingitanga and to discharge the Crown’s obligations to Waikato-Tainui.</p> <p>There are no principles or provisions of the settlement that are particularly relevant to the location of the Project.</p> <p>We note however that the Project Site surrounds two sites (Records of Title: SA638/200 and SA884/183) owned by Te Whakakitenga o Waikato Incorporated, which is the incorporated society that represents statutory rights and interests of Waikato-Tainui. This property was a former school owned by the Education Board of the South Auckland District.</p> <p>The property was subject to s11 of the Waikato Raupatu Settlement Act 1995, which provides for residual Crown land to be offered for purchase to a land holding trust for Waikato in certain</p>
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	<p>circumstances (as per certificates B361933 and B334035). It was transferred to Te Whakakitenga o Waikato Incorporated on 13 March 2018. This property forms part of the redress provided to Waikato-Tainui as part of its Deed of Settlement (clause 4).</p> <p>As the Project is not located on this property, the Project is not on land returned under a Treaty settlement.</p> <p>Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010: The overarching purpose of the settlement is to “restore and protect the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River for future generations.”</p> <p>The geographic location of the Project falls within the Waikato River catchment, and therefore the Act applies to the Matahuru Stream within the site.</p> <p>The vision for the Waikato River is “a future where a healthy Waikato River sustains abundant life and prosperous communities who, in turn, are all responsible for restoring and protecting the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River, and all it embraces, for generations to come.”</p>
<p>Ngāti Paoa Rohe – Deed of Settlement 20 March 2021</p>	<p>The settlement applies along the western shores of the Hauraki Gulf and the eastern suburbs of Auckland, from Te Aroha to Warkworth.</p> <p>The settlement includes an apology acknowledging the Crown’s failure to protect the iwi from the rapid alienation of land in the decades following the signing of te Tiriti o Waitangi / the Treaty of Waitangi, the loss of life and the devastation caused by hostilities, and the enactment of laws and policies that have led to the loss of whenua and Te Reo Māori.</p> <p>The settlement is intended to enhance the ongoing relationship between Ngati Paoa and the Crown (in terms of Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi, its principles, and otherwise).</p> <p>There are no principles or provisions of the settlement that are particularly relevant to the location of the Project.</p>

PART 6: MARINE AND COASTAL AREA (TAKUTAI MOANA) ACT 2011

Customary marine title areas

Section 18(3)(c) of the Act details that the project must not include an activity that will occur in a customary marine title area where that activity has not been agreed to in writing by the holder of the relevant customary marine title order.

Customary marine title areas under the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011 that apply to the location of the project

Customary marine title areas*: None.

Protected customary rights areas

Section 18(3)(d) of the Act details that the project must not include an activity that will occur in a protected customary rights area and have a more than minor adverse effect on the exercise of the protected customary right, where that activity has not been agreed to in writing by the holder of the relevant protected customary rights recognition order.

Protected customary rights areas under the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011 that apply to the location of the project

The Project does not include any protected customary rights areas.

PART 7: ADVERSE EFFECTS

In considering whether a project will help to achieve the purpose of the Act, the Minister may have regard to, under Section 19(e) of the Act, whether there is potential for the project to have significant adverse environmental effects. Please provide details on both the nature and scale of the anticipated and known adverse effects, noting that Section 20(2)(b) of the Act specifies that the application need only provide a general level of detail.

Description of the anticipated and known adverse effects of the project on the environment, including greenhouse gas emissions

Landscape and Visual

The Site lies within a valley formed by the Matahuru Stream. The valley is contained by hills to the northwest, east and south, and is characterised by pastoral rural activities. Other land use in the surrounding area includes around 200m north of the site, an area of plantation forestry, the Ohinewai Switching Station 1.7km to the east, and a transmission line which traverses the site. Dwellings, mostly single level are sparsely distributed throughout the valley and are frequently surrounded by shelterbelts, hedgerows, and amenity planting to provide wind protection and enclosure.

The Site has a limited viewshed. It is not visible from any areas of settlement. Primary views towards the Site are from four rural roads with low traffic volumes which pass through and adjacent to the site.

There are no Outstanding Natural Features or Landscapes or Special Amenity Landscapes within the Site boundary.

The Initial Landscape and Visual Memorandum attached as *Appendix 3* provides additional detail on the landscape and visual effects and concludes that the Project will not have any significant adverse landscape, visual or natural character effects.

Landscape and visual effects will also be mitigated through the retention of vegetation, minimising earthworks to the existing landform, implementation of screen planting and setback of panels from the carriageway of all roads.

Ecology

The ecological values of the existing vegetation, wetlands (as defined under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management), avifauna and freshwater environments on the Site have been assessed overall as low. Two separate bush areas, identified as Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) within the Proposed Waikato District Plan (Decisions Version), are located within/partially within the Site; but no earthworks or vegetation

removal is proposed within these SNAs. Monitoring has indicated the presence of the 'Threatened – Nationally Critical' long-tailed bat (*Chalinolobus tuberculatus*) in the wider area, so large trees on the Site may be used as habitat by this species. Ecological effects will be minimised through the general retention of vegetation, avoiding development within identified wetland areas and the application of appropriate tree removal protocols with the scale of effects anticipated to be minor. Any erosion and sediment related effects will be minimised through adherence to the Waikato Regional Council Erosion and Sediment Control: Guidelines for Soil Disturbing Activities (TR 2009/02) and appropriate environmental management plans. Appropriately designed and sized stormwater wetlands will be constructed to manage run off from the substation and battery storage platform areas.

Under the Proposal, solar panels will only cover a proportion of the land and the remainder (between and around the panels) is planned to be farmed with livestock on a low-density basis. Transition of the Site from its current usage, being primarily for dairy and beef farming, to a solar farm with lower density residual agricultural activities, will result in water quality benefits to the local environment. These benefits will arise from reduced effects on the environment with respect to fertiliser usage and reduced water quality impacts from diffuse agricultural runoff discharges.

Noise

The existing ambient noise levels within the Site and surrounding rural area are low.

The construction noise effects will be managed to comply with the provisions of NZS 6803:1999 "Acoustics – Construction Noise".

Operational noise from the Project will be minimal and primarily be generated by the cooling fans within the inverter units and the 220kV/33kV transformer within the substation. Operational noise effects on receivers (neighbouring dwellings) will be managed through the design and location of noise generating plant (including the substation and connections), so that noise levels are very low and reasonable.

Traffic

The Site is served by a local road network with low traffic volumes and is well connected to the nearby Tahuna Road arterial route and the state highway to the east and west.

The construction traffic effects of the Project will be managed through temporary traffic management measures. The Site access points will be constructed to a 'Heavy Commercial' standard to allow for two-way vehicle movements and ensure the ongoing safe operation of the surrounding road network.

Once operational, the Project will generate very low traffic volumes and will not impact the surrounding road network.

Archaeology

Desktop investigations and a Site walkover have determined that there are no known archaeological sites within the Project footprint. Any risks associated with unanticipated archaeological sites will be managed through an accidental discovery protocol. If required, an archaeological authority will be obtained.

Three Waters/Civil Servicing

There are no public water, wastewater or stormwater reticulation networks that serve the Site.

Four existing bores located on the Site will provide water for dust suppression during construction and the annual cleaning of the solar panels.

The pole mounts supporting the solar panels have a small footprint so the majority of the ground underneath the materials will remain grassed. Accordingly, no stormwater disposal infrastructure is required for the majority of the Site.

The substation platform will be an impervious surface. The stormwater runoff from the platform will be collected and discharged to a constructed wetland for treatment and attenuation to pre-development flow rates, before being discharged to a natural wetland in the centre of the Site.

The office unit within the substation will require water supply and wastewater disposal. Given the small demands, on-site collection and disposal systems will be suitable.

Cultural and Community

There are no identified sites or features of cultural significance identified on the Site within the District Plan, nor have any been identified in consultation to date. A cultural impact assessment is currently being drafted with input from mana whenua and will identify specific values of the site, and the potential effects of the Project on these values.

As outlined in the consultation discussed in Part 4 and 5 above, WSFL has had extensive engagement with the local community and iwi representatives and is committed to supporting specific community and iwi projects in conjunction with the development of the Project.

Transpower would be more heavily involved in consultation at the consenting stage, including engagement with the community, and iwi/hapū etc.

Contaminated Land

There are historic farm dumps present within the Site, which are an activity on the Hazardous Activity or Industry List (*HAIL*). Any human health risks will be managed in accordance with the Resource Management (National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health) Regulations 2011, including through appropriate remediation and site management protocols.

Natural Hazards

The Site has been assessed as having a low liquefaction risk and there are some areas of historic land instability and shallow soil creep on the Site. These matters can be appropriately addressed as part of detailed design for the Project and the proposed solar farm design has already taken into account these matters and any low-lying areas of the Site (including those in proximity to the existing watercourses) so as to minimise the impacts potential flooding.

Rural/Productive Land Uses

The subject Site contains high class soil (Land Use Capability Classes I, II and IIIe5). There is minimal if any impact from the Project on high class soils.

The Project generally involves minimal earthworks, and the configuration of the solar panels will enable the continued agricultural use of the Site in the form of sheep grazing, which will also reduce the need for grass mowing and weed management. The Project's solar panel structures can be relatively easily decommissioned without any material permanent impact on the productive capacity on the underlying soils.

The only proposed paved area on the Site will be the substation and the energy storage facility (approximately 15,000m² in area or 0.4% of the Site). These aspects of the Project are not located in an area of high-class soil.

Hazardous Substances

The substation will include the storage/use of approximately 38,000 litres of transformer oil. In order to effectively mitigate any risks associated with the storage/use of this substance, the proposed design will include appropriate impervious bunding.

PART 8: NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS AND NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS

General assessment of the project in relation to any relevant national policy statement (including the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement) and national environmental standard

The following National Direction is relevant to the Project:

- National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy 2011 (*NPSREG*);
- National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission 2008 (*NPSET*) / Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activities) Regulations 2009 (*NESTA*);
- Resource Management (National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health) Regulations 2011 (*NESCS*); and
- National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 / Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020 (*NESFM*).

The purpose of the NPSET is to recognise the national significance of the electricity transmission network by facilitating the operation, maintenance and upgrade of the existing transmission network and the establishment of new transmission resources to meet the needs of present and future generations, while managing the adverse environmental effects of the network, and managing the adverse effects of other activities on the network. The Project will help to achieve the purpose of the NPSET.

The purpose of the NESETA is to set out which transmission activities are permitted subject to conditions to control environmental effects near high voltage electricity transmission lines and give effect to the NPSET. As per investigations to date, the parts of the Project regulated by NESETA are anticipated to be permitted activities.

The purpose of the NPSREG is to recognise the national significance of renewable electricity generation activities by providing for the development, operation, maintenance and upgrading of new and existing renewable electricity generation activities, such that the proportion of New Zealand's electricity generated from renewable energy sources increases to a level that meets or exceeds the New Zealand Government's national target for

renewable electricity generation. The Project will help to achieve the purpose of the NPSREG.

The purpose of the NESCS is to provide national environmental standards for activities on pieces of land whose soil may be contaminated in such a way as to be a risk to human health including removing or replacing a fuel storage system, sampling the soil, disturbing the soil, subdividing land, and changing the use of the piece of land. The Project requires consent under the NESCS but, as described above, any human health risks can be managed through appropriate remediation and site management protocols.

The purpose of the NPSFM is to ensure that natural and physical resources are managed in a way that prioritises: (a) first, the health and well-being of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems (b) second, the health needs of people (such as drinking water) (c) third, the ability of people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being, now and in the future. The Project is consistent with the purpose of the NPSFM.

Under the NPSFM, “specified infrastructure” means any of the following:

- (a) infrastructure that delivers a service operated by a lifeline utility (as defined in the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002);*
- (b) regionally significant infrastructure identified as such in a regional policy statement or regional plan;*
- (c) any public flood control, flood protection, or drainage works carried out:*
 - i. by or on behalf of a local authority, including works carried out for the purposes set out in section 133 of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941; or*
 - ii. for the purpose of drainage by drainage districts under the Land Drainage Act 1908.*

The Project is considered a lifeline utility² under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 and also meets the definition of regionally significant infrastructure³ as identified in the Waikato Regional Policy Statement.

The purpose of the NESFM is to provide national environmental standards to regulate activities that pose risks to the health of freshwater and freshwater ecosystems, and give effect the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management. The Project requires consent under the NESFM but as described above any adverse effects on freshwater environments can be appropriately managed and mitigated.

PART 9: PURPOSE OF THE ACT

Your application must be supported by an explanation of how the project will help achieve the purpose of the Act, that is to “urgently promote employment to support New Zealand’s recovery from the economic and social impacts of COVID-19 and to support the certainty of ongoing investment across New Zealand, while continuing to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources”.

² Schedule 1, Part B(2) of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act: “An entity that generates electricity for distribution through a network or distributes electricity through a network.

³ Definition of regionally significant infrastructure: “(f) infrastructure for the generation and/or conveyance of electricity that is fed into the national grid or a network.”

In considering whether the project will help to achieve the purpose of the Act, the Minister may have regard to the specific matters referred to below, and any other matter that the Minister considers relevant.

Project's economic benefits and costs for people or industries affected by COVID-19

Economic benefits and costs*: The Proposal will result in direct and indirect economic benefits for people and industries (including those affected by COVID-19) within the Waiterimu area, Waikato District and wider Waikato Region. The construction of the Project will create economic benefits and jobs for local contractors, tradespeople and suppliers through the spending of more than § 9(2)(b)(ii) during the construction phase. When the Project is built, there will be additional economic benefits from the roles necessary to ensure ongoing operation and maintenance of the solar farm. These economic benefits and jobs will help stimulate the local and regional economy.

While the Project will result in the cessation of dairy and beef farming on the Project site, employment associated with these activities is expected to be more than offset by increased employment associated with the construction and operation of the Project, including the on-going (non-dairy/beef) agricultural operations.

Project's effects on the social and cultural wellbeing of current and future generations

Social and cultural wellbeing*: The employment opportunities throughout the construction and operation of the Proposal will help stimulate the local economy and further contribute to social wellbeing through the flow on effects from increased economic activity.

Consultation with relevant iwi authorities and preparation of a cultural impact assessment will inform how the Project can contribute to cultural wellbeing. Positive discussions are continuing with the Chairman of Ngaati Makirangi Marae in relation to the Project and potential cultural initiatives, and discussions are ongoing with other relevant iwi authorities.

Whether the project would be likely to progress faster by using the processes provided by the Act than would otherwise be the case

Speed of progression*: The fast-track process under the FTCA will enable resource consents for this Project to be obtained quicker than under the standard RMA consenting process. We have estimated the overall timeframe from lodgement of applications to securing consents using the standard consenting pathway will likely be at least one year depending on the extent of opposition, council capacity and complexity, while the fast-track pathway enables a decision less than 6 months after seeking referral to a Panel. At present, infrastructure of the scale proposed here is likely to take over a year to obtain resource consents through the standard process. The possibility of merits appeals in that process creates a further risk of extended timeframes that would critically delay the development of infrastructure. The fast-track process will therefore enable construction to occur quicker helping to realise the benefits of the Project earlier.

Public Benefit

Whether the project may result in a 'public benefit'

Examples of a public benefit as included in Section 19(d) of the Act are included below as prompts only.

Employment / job creation

Employment / job creation*: As discussed above, the construction of the Proposal will create jobs for local contractors, tradespeople and suppliers. The Project is anticipated to directly employ approximately 100 FTE people for the duration of the construction period

(with a higher number (potentially up to 200 FTE) during 'peak' of mechanical installation), as well as indirectly supporting employment in the District and Region. The Project will also provide ongoing employment for approximately 5 – 10 FTE relating to maintenance of the Site and solar farm (including stock management, vegetation management, annual panel cleaning, etc). For the construction and operation phases, WSFL will look for opportunities to utilise the local workforce, including Marae members, where practicable.

Designing and building the substation will also employ engineering consultants, service providers, local civil contractors – both local and wider spread across the country – during the investigation, design and build stages.

When the Proposal is built, there will be additional roles necessary to ensure ongoing operation and maintenance of the solar farm and substation.

Housing supply

Housing supply*: It is expected that housing availability for employees will be well serviced. Workers are expected to be primarily local. The Site is within readily commutable distance to Hamilton (30 minutes' drive) and Auckland (1-hour drive) should additional workers be required. The Lakeside development at Te Kauwhata where over 1,600 homes are planned is within 15 minutes' drive.

Contributing to well-functioning urban environments

Contributing to well-functioning urban environments*: N/A

Providing infrastructure to improve economic, employment, and environmental outcomes, and increase productivity

Infrastructure and productivity*: The Project will provide additional large-scale electricity generation infrastructure within the Waikato region, and contribute to encouraging further uptake of renewable energy within New Zealand. The Government is setting a target of 50 per cent of total final energy consumption (TFEC) coming from renewable sources by 2035.⁴ This builds on the Government's target of 100% renewable *electricity* by 2030.⁵ More renewable electricity/energy will be needed to meet these targets and can only be achieved through increasing renewable generation infrastructure, including this Project.

Improving environmental outcomes for coastal or freshwater quality, air quality, or indigenous biodiversity

Improving environmental outcomes*: The Proposal will improve environmental outcomes for air quality and climate change by reducing reliance on fossil fuels for energy generation. The burning of fossil fuels is a major pollutant, generating emissions upon combustion. Transitioning to electrical power sources will help lower emissions by enabling greater uptake of renewable energy generation.

One major contributor to poor air quality is the transportation sector, identified as some of New Zealand's major carbon dioxide emitters. At present, the Government is seeking to reduce emissions within the transportation sector by supporting transition to electric vehicles. Another significant contributor to emissions is the industrial sector, through emissions generated during industrial processes.

⁴ In 2020, Aotearoa New Zealand's renewable energy share of TFEC was 28 per cent.

⁵ Emissions Reduction Plan, at Action 11.5.1, p. 220.

As the Government seeks to transition individuals, businesses and industry from fossil fuel energy sources to electricity, additional renewable electricity generation will be needed to meet increased demands on the electricity sector. At present, it is estimated Aotearoa New Zealand will need 70% more renewable generation to electrify process heat and transport, and decarbonise the economy.⁶ By increasing renewable energy capacity through the consenting of solar projects, more vehicles will be able to move away from fossil-fuel powered modes of transportation. Participants in the industrial sector will also be able to transition without increasing electricity generation from non-renewable sources.

Electrification, particularly in these industries, will enable reduced emissions and improved air quality outcomes.

By enabling development of solar projects, there will be a reduced reliance on the fossil fuel electricity generation; helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and making a meaningful contribution towards achieving the Government's climate change policy goals.

The Project will generate approximately 230 GWh of renewable electricity per annum which could potentially displace about 100 million kilograms or more of New Zealand's CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel electricity generation, or power additional transport from electric vehicles by over 1 billion vehicle-kilometres travelled.⁷

Regarding local ecology, WSFL is planning ecological and landscape enhancements that will be undertaken as part of the Project (e.g. through on-site riparian planting contributing to freshwater and terrestrial ecological outcomes). These measures are currently being assessed and designed and will be included in the Project application.

Regarding water quality in particular, there will be a continuation of farming operations on the Site. However, it will be at a lower intensity than that which occurs at present. Further, the livestock farming which will occur is expected to have lesser reliance on nitrogen fertilisers. As a result of both the lower livestock level and the reduced or eliminated nitrogen fertilisers, there will be improvements in diffused discharges to ground and surface water systems, including the Matahuru Stream which runs into Lake Waikare.

Minimising waste

Minimising waste*: N/A

Contributing to NZ's efforts to mitigate climate change and transition more quickly to a low emissions economy (in terms of reducing NZ's net emissions of greenhouse gases)

Climate change and emissions*: This Proposal will help contribute to New Zealand's efforts to mitigate climate change and transition to a low emissions economy by creating a new supply of renewable energy generation that will supply New Zealand's National Grid. The Government has identified that although NZ is well-positioned to tackle emissions in the energy and industrial sectors due to high levels of renewable energy, more must be done.⁸ As the Government seeks to decarbonise business and industry by encouraging further electrification, it is important that a steady source of electricity from renewable energy sources is developed and maintained to meet additional demands placed on the sector. By enabling development of solar projects, there will be a reduced reliance on the fossil fuel

⁶ Emissions Reduction Plan, p. 211.

⁷ For energy consumption of electric vehicles refer to: <https://ev-database.uk/cheatsheet/energy-consumption-electric-car>

⁸ Emissions Reduction Plan Discussion Document at 81.

sector and other non-renewable energy sources, helping to reduce emissions associated with energy generation.

Promoting the protection of historic heritage

Promoting the protection of historic heritage*: N/A

Strengthening environmental, economic, and social resilience, in terms of managing the risks from natural hazards and the effects of climate change

Strengthening environmental, economic and social resilience*: The Project will help contribute to environmental, economic and social resilience by further diversifying renewable energy sources. At present, other types of renewable energy experience gaps in generation. For example, when the levels of hydro-dams are low due to dry seasons impacting inflows.⁹

By increasing capacity for solar power generation, the Project will further diversify New Zealand's renewable energy sources, reducing the need for use of non-renewable energy sources (e.g. coal).

Other public benefit

Other public benefit*: As outlined in the consultation discussed in Part 4 and 5 above, WSFL has had extensive engagement with the local community and iwi representatives and is committed to supporting specific community and iwi projects in conjunction with the development of the Project. Such projects are currently under discussion with stakeholders and will be included in the application as lodged.

Whether there is potential for the project to have significant adverse environmental effects

Significant adverse environmental effects*: The activities required for the Proposal as part of this application are not anticipated to result in any significant adverse effects. All adverse effects will be avoided, remedied or mitigated to the extent appropriate and practicable.

PART 10: CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURAL HAZARDS

Description of whether and how the project would be affected by climate change and natural hazards

Climate change and natural hazards*: The Proposal has been designed to mitigate the risk of natural hazards and climate change effects.

- Natural hazards: See part 7 above.
- Flooding risk: Potential flooding effects have been assessed with reference to anticipated climate change effects in accordance with relevant guidelines. See part 7 above.

⁹ Emissions Reduction Plan, Action 11.2.2, p. 214.

PART 11: TRACK RECORD

Track record

A summary of all compliance and/or enforcement actions taken against the applicant by a local authority under the Resource Management Act 1991, and the outcome of those actions*

Local authority	Compliance/Enforcement Action and Outcome
None.	None.

PART 12: DECLARATION

Important notes:

- Please note that this application form, including your name and contact details and all supporting documents, submitted to the Minister for the Environment and/or Minister of Conservation and the Ministry for the Environment, will be publicly released. Please clearly highlight any content on this application form and in supporting documents that is commercially or otherwise sensitive in nature, and to which you specifically object to the release.
- Please ensure all sections, where relevant, of the application form are completed as failure to provide the required details may result in your application being declined.
- Further information may be requested at any time before a decision is made on the application.
- Please note that if the Minister for the Environment and/or Minister of Conservation accepts your application for referral to an expert consenting panel, you will then need to lodge a consent application and/or notice of requirement for a designation (or to alter a designation) in the approved form with the Environmental Protection Authority. The application will need to contain the information set out in Schedule 6, clauses 9-13 of the Act.
- Information presented to the Minister for the Environment and/or Minister of Conservation and shared with other Ministers, local authorities and the Environmental Protection Authority under the Act (including officials at government departments and agencies) is subject to disclosure under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) or the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA). Certain information may be withheld in accordance with the grounds for withholding information under the OIA and LGOIMA although the grounds for withholding must always be balanced against considerations of public interest that may justify release. Although the Ministry for the Environment does not give any guarantees as to whether information can be withheld under the OIA, it may be helpful to discuss OIA issues with the Ministry for the Environment in advance if information provided with an application is commercially sensitive or release would, for instance, disclose a trade secret or other confidential information. Further information on the OIA and LGOIMA is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

I acknowledge that a summary of this application will be made publicly available on the Ministry for the Environment website and that the full application will be released if requested. *

By typing your name in the space provided, you are electronically signing this application form and certifying the information given in this application is true and correct.

Signature*:

Date*:

Checklist

Where relevant to your application, please provide a copy of the following information.

- Correspondence from the registered legal land owner(s)
- Correspondence from persons or parties you consider are likely to be affected by the Project
- Written agreement from the relevant landowner where the Project includes an activity that will occur on land returned under a Treaty settlement
- Written agreement from the holder of the relevant customary marine title order where the Project includes an activity that will occur in a customary marine title area
- Written agreement from the holder of the relevant protected customary marine rights recognition order where the Project includes an activity that will occur in a protected customary marine rights area
- Other documents:
 - Shape file of Project (including road reserve information)
- Appendices:
 - Appendix 1: Cadastral and aerial map of the Site
 - Appendix 2: Relevant Records of Title
 - Appendix 3: Initial Landscape and Visual Memorandum
 - Appendix 4: Referral Layout Graphic Supplement
 - Appendix 5: Initial Ecological Effects Memorandum