

30 March 2023

Melissa McGrath  
Ministry for the Environment

By e-mail: [fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz)

Dear Melissa,

**RE: RESPONSE TO COVID-19 RECOVERY (FAST-TRACK CONSENTING) ACT 2020 –  
REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION – WAIUKU WIND FARM PROJECT**

Thank you for your call on 28 March 2023 regarding the electricity transmission options proposed as part of the Waiuku Wind Farm Project (**Project**). You requested that we provide details of the specific route(s) for the proposed transmission line, including identifying all land or road reserve that the transmission lines would occupy.

As outlined in the referral application, the Project has proposed two main options: either an upgrade to the existing Counties Energy 33kV line; or the construction of a new 33kV line in the road reserve between the Project site and Waiuku. These options are described further below and shown on the plan provided as **Attachment A** to this letter. Details of the properties and roads associated with each option are provided in **Attachments B-D**. Enclosed along with this letter is a jpg (Options plan) and .kmz files for the proposed options.

As referenced in the APD Engineering Memo, provided as Attachment D of the request for information response dated 23 March 2023, a concept design study of the transmission route options will be completed to determine the most practical (location and economic) option and associated technical requirements. This concept design work will take between six and eight weeks following which engagement with Counties Energy will occur to determine which route will continue to be assessed through detailed design.

The upgrading of the existing Counties Energy 33kV line would require the construction of a new line between the Project site and the existing 33kV line, south of Otatau. The location of the new line is shown in brown on the options plan in Attachment A. Upgrades would then be made to the existing Counties Energy 33kV lines as required, including upsizing, replacing or constructing additional infrastructure. This would include upgrading one or both of the existing lines between the Waiuku substation and the Glenbrook substation. The location of the existing lines is shown as blue on the options plan in Attachment A. The upgrades would rely on Counties Energy undertaking the works under its existing landowner agreements or statutory powers. If the next stage of the transmission study identifies that additional landowner approvals would be required, the Applicant will instead pursue the new line options referred to below.

The options for constructing a new 33kV line are shown in red and orange on the options plan in Attachment A. The new lines will be constructed entirely in the road reserve between the Project site and the Waiuku substation. From the Waiuku substation to the Glenbrook substation provision has been made for a new line in the road corridor, or alternatively one or both of the existing lines will be upgraded. The works may involve upgrading of existing power poles to accommodate a new line, new power poles and lines and new underground lines. Two route options between the subject site and the Waiuku substation are proposed so as to provide a degree of flexibility. The preferred option will be determined through the next stage of the transmission study. The required approvals are the same for both options: asset owner approvals will be required from Waikato District Council and Auckland

Transport for works within the road reserve. The new lines will be constructed overhead in rural areas and underground in settlement and urban areas – under both options the new lines are permitted activities in both the Waikato District and Auckland region.

As outlined in our response to a request for further information dated 23 March 2023, a high-level assessment of the options has been undertaken by the Applicant's transmission consultant (APD Engineering) and discussed with Counties Energy. No fatal flaws have been identified.

You also requested in a call on 29 March 2023 that we confirm if there are any changes to the likely reasons for consent as a result of the bridge upgrades outside of the site no longer being required. We have reviewed the reasons listed in the referral application and advise that none of the reasons listed under the Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in part) are now relevant. This is because the only works in the Auckland area will be for the transmission line which will be undertaken as a permitted activity. All other consenting reasons including under the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020 and the Waikato Regional Plan are relevant however the reasons for consent would only apply to the works on the actual site. We also confirm that the scope of the project no longer includes the bridges in the road reserves of Glenbrook Road, Glenbrook-Waiuku Road or Waiuku Otatau Road that were identified in the Part II of the Application.

We trust that this response addresses your request for information on transmission options. If you required further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on s 9(2)(a) or s 9(2)(a)

Kind Regards,



**Jennifer Valentine**  
Technical Director, Planning  
**4Sight Consulting Ltd**

Encl

- Attachment A – Options Plan (jpg)
- Attachment B – Landowners and roads for upgrade of Counties Energy 33kV line
- Attachment C – Landowners and roads for new transmission line: Option 1
- Attachment D – Landowners and roads for new transmission line: Option 2
- .kmz files – Connection to Existing Counties Transmission
  - Existing Counties 33kV Transmission Line
  - Glenbrook Substation
  - New Transmission Line. Site - Waiuku - Glenbrook
  - New Transmission Option 2
  - Waiuku Substation