

BRF-3038

Counties Energy Limited
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Kia ora

COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-Track Consenting) Act 2020 – comments sought on referral application – Waiuku Wind Farm Project

The Minister for the Environment (Minister) has received an application from LET Capital Number 3 Limited Partnership to refer the Waiuku Wind Farm Project (project) to an expert consenting panel (panel) for consideration under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (FTCA).

The purpose of the FTCA is to promote employment to support New Zealand's recovery from the economic and social impacts of COVID-19 and to support certainty of investment while continuing to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

The project is described in Appendix A and the application documents are in Attachment 1.

Counties Energy Limited may have an interest in the project because the proposed wind farm will connect to the national grid utilising Counties Energy Limited assets. Under delegated authority from the Minister and pursuant to section 21(3) of the FTCA, I invite Counties Energy Limited's written comments on the referral application. A template is provided for this purpose in Attachment 2. Comment is sought on the specific matters outlined in the table below, and on any other matter you consider relevant to the Minister's decision on whether or not to accept the application.

Specific questions for the project
1. What additional approvals will the applicant require from Counties Energy Limited to connect to Counties Energy Limited assets?
2. Will obtaining the above approvals likely impact on project delivery or timing as outlined in the referral application(s)?

The above information is provided to you in confidence and as part of the statutory process set out in the FTCA. Please do not forward the application or request for comments to anyone outside your organisation.

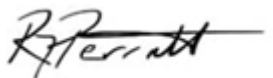
If the Minister accepts the application and the project is referred to a panel, the applicant will be able to lodge applications with the Environmental Protection Authority for the approvals needed under the Resource Management Act 1991. The applicant must provide a detailed

assessment of environmental effects and cultural impact assessment(s) as part of this process.

Please provide comments via return email within 10 working days to ensure that the Minister takes them into consideration when deciding whether or not to accept the referral application. Note that the Minister is not required to consider any comments provided after this time.

If you would like more information about the fast-track consenting process, or to discuss the application, please contact the Ministry for the Environment's Fast-track Consenting Team at fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Perrett', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Rebecca Perrett
Acting Manager, Fast-track Consenting Team

Appendix:

- A. Details of proposed project

Attachments:

1. Application to refer Waiuku Wind Farm Project to an expert consenting panel, including supporting information (Databox link in covering email)
2. Response template for written comments

Appendix A - Proposed project

Project	Applicant	Details
Waiuku Wind Farm Project	LET Capital Number 3 Limited Partnership	<p>The project is to construct and operate a wind farm on an approximately 560-hectare site, comprising multiple properties at 66 Huarau Way, 44 and 76 Robertson Road, 136, 191 and 260 Thomson Road, and 612 Forestry Road, Otatau, Waikato, and to connect to and supply electricity to the national grid. The wind farm will have an approximate installed capacity of 80 peak Megawatts and will comprise up to 18 wind turbines with blade tip heights up to 190 metres high. The project includes the construction of infrastructure and supporting structures including internal roads, turbine platforms, foundation and crane pads, underground electrical and fibre optic cables, two wind monitoring masts up to 100 metres high, a central collector station building and ancillary buildings.</p> <p>The project includes two options to connect to and supply electricity to the national grid, with the transmission lines extending north into the Auckland Region:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Option A involves the construction of a new 33kV transmission line extending from the proposed wind farm to an existing 33kV Counties Energy Limited (Counties Energy) transmission line south of Otatau. Upgrades would also be required to the existing 33kV transmission line along the route to the Waiuku substation and then on to the Glenbrook substation. b. Option B involves the construction of a new 33kV transmission line, with two route options, extending from the proposed wind farm to the Waiuku substation and either a new 33kV transmission line, or upgrading to the existing 33kV Counties Energy transmission line, between Waiuku and Glenbrook substations. <p>Both connection options involve works on private land and within road reserve.</p> <p>The project will require land use consents under the operative Waikato District Plan (OWDP) and the proposed Waikato District Plan (PWDP), water and discharge permits under the Waikato Regional Plan, and resource consents under the Resource Management (National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health) Regulations 2011 (NES-CS) and the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020 (NES-F). The applicant has not identified any resource consent requirements under the Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP).</p>