

BRF-6373

Nova Energy Limited
C/- Cam Twigley
BTW Company Limited

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Cam,

Notice of Decisions on application for referral of the Twizel Solar project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

This notice of decisions is for an application received from Nova Energy Limited for referral of the Twizel Solar Project (project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) that has been accepted by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) under section 21 and referred under section 26.

The project is described as the establishment and operation of a 300-megawatt solar farm over 565 hectares of an 868-hectare site to the east of Twizel Township, Mackenzie District, within the Canterbury region. Once operational and connected to the National Grid, the project will generate enough renewable energy annually to power 75,000 homes. The project comprises:

- a. general earthworks and site establishment including the construction of operational and management buildings, inverters, internal roads/tracks
- b. solar panels situated on solar tables with a single axis tracking system covering 565 hectares of site
- c. 33kv overhead transmission lines to connect the project to the Transpower New Zealand Twizel Substation
- d. establishment of exclusion areas and buffers to protect significant native vegetation, habitat and wetlands.

The project will require the proposed approvals:

- a. Resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991.
- b. Permits under the Wildlife Act 1953.

The project can only be accepted if the Minister is satisfied the criteria in section 22 is met, which includes being satisfied the project is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional or national benefits and referring the project to the fast-track approvals process

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would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes and is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process.

Decision on referral application

The Minister has decided to accept the referral application for the whole project as he is satisfied it meets the criteria in section 22(s21(1)(c)) and to refer the project to the fast-track approvals process under section 26(2)(a).

The Minister is satisfied the project:

- a. is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional or national benefits; and
- b. referring the project to the fast-track approvals process –
 - i. would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes; and
 - ii. is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process.

The Minister is satisfied the project is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional or national benefits as it:

- a. will deliver new regionally or nationally significant infrastructure which could power approximately 75,000 households annually (s22(2)(a)(ii))
- b. will deliver significant economic benefits by (s22(2)(a)(iv)):
 - i. increasing the supply of electricity, which could reduce wholesale electricity prices
 - ii. creating 315 jobs during peak construction
- c. will support climate change mitigation, including the reduction or removal of greenhouse gas emissions by establishing a new renewable energy source (s22(2)(a)(vii))

The Minister is satisfied that there is no reason he must decline the project under section 21(3) of the FTAA.

Specified matters for accepted referral application

The following person: Nova Energy Limited who lodged the referral application is the person authorised to lodge a substantive application for the project section under section 27(2).

The following information must be submitted with the substantive application lodged for the project (s27(3)(b)(ii)):

- (i) A summary of consultation with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, relevant papatipu rūnanga and their representatives since referral, outlining concerns raised regarding Ngāi Tahu settlement principles, statutory acknowledgements, nohanga, and taonga species, and explaining how this has informed the substantive application.

A panel must invite comments from the following persons or groups in addition to any specified in section 53 (s27(3)(b)(iii)):

- a. Transpower New Zealand Limited
- b. Meridian Energy Limited
- c. New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi

If you have any queries about this notice of decisions, please email referral@fasttrack.govt.nz including the name of the Application Lead – Max Gander-Cooper or alternatively, phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 225 537).

Yours sincerely



Ilana Miller

General Manager, Delivery and Operations

cc: Written notice (s28(1)) for accept and decline projects:
The applicant – Nova Energy Limited

any person invited to comment (s17(1):

- the relevant local authorities: Mackenzie District Council and Canterbury Regional Council
- the Minister for the Environment, the Minister of Conservation, the Minister of Energy and Climate Change, the Minister for Economic Growth, the Minister for Regional Development.
- the relevant administering agencies – Ministry for the Environment, Department of Conservation
- the Māori groups identified in the list provided to the Minister – Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua, Te Rūnanga o Waihao, Te Rūnanga o Moeraki Aoraki Environmental Consultancy Limited and Aukaha

- any other person – Transpower Limited, Meridian Energy Limited, Alpine Energy Limited, and New Zealand transport Agency Waka Kotahi.

cc: Written notice where the Minister accepts the application and refers the project (s28(2)):

- the Panel Convener (including all the related information received by the Minister)
- the Environmental Protection Agency, including all the related information received by the Minister
- the relevant administering agencies: Ministry for the Environment and Department of Conservation