

From: Infrastructure Portfolio <Infrastructure.Portfolio@parliament.govt.nz>

Sent: Wednesday, 7 May 2025 1:04 PM

To: Nicola Willis (MIN) <N.Willis@ministers.govt.nz>; Shane Jones (MIN) <S.Jones@ministers.govt.nz>; Simon Watts (MIN) <S.Watts@ministers.govt.nz>; Penny Simmonds (MIN) <P.Simmonds@ministers.govt.nz>; Tama Potaka (MIN) <T.Potaka@ministers.govt.nz>

Cc: FTAreferalls <ftareferalls@mfe.govt.nz>

Subject: Invitation to comment on Fast-track referral application for the Twizel Solar Project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – FTAA-2504-1044

To:

Minister for Economic Growth

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Energy

Minister for Climate Change

Minister of Conservation

Minister for the Environment

Dear Ministers,

Hon Chris Bishop, the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister), has asked for me to write to you on his behalf.

The Minister has received an application from Nova Energy Ltd for referral of the Twizel Solar Project project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) to the fast-track process (application reference FTAA-2504-1044).

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits.

Invitation to comment on referral application

I write in accordance with section 17 of the Act to invite you to provide written comments on the referral application. I have provided summary details of the project below.

If you wish to provide written comments, these must be received by **return email** within **20 working days** of receipt of this email. The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame. Any comments submitted will contribute to the Minister's decision on whether to accept the referral application and to refer the project.

If you do not wish to provide comments, please let us know as soon as possible so we can proceed with processing the application without delay.

If a Conflict of Interest is identified through any stage of providing comments, please inform my office immediately so we can initiate a transfer of this responsibility.

If the Minister decides to accept the application and to refer the project, the Applicant will need to complete any preliminary steps required under the Act and then lodge their substantive application for the approvals needed for the project. An expert panel will be appointed to decide the substantive application.

Process

The application documents are accessible through the Fast-track portal. Please note that application documents may contain commercially sensitivity information and should not be shared widely. If you haven't used the portal before, you can request access by emailing ftareferrals@mfe.govt.nz. Once you are registered and have accepted the terms and conditions, you will receive a link to view the documents. Existing users will be able to see application documents via the request when logging into the portal. Should you need for your agency to provide any supplementary information, a nominated person can be provided access to the portal, access can be requested by emailing ftareferrals@mfe.govt.nz.

To submit your comments on the application, you can either provide a letter or complete the attached template for written comments and return it by replying to this email, infrastructure.portfolio@parliament.govt.nz.

Before the due date, if you have any queries about this email or need assistance with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz. Further information is available at <https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/>.

Project summary

Project name	Twizel Solar Project
Applicant	Nova Energy Limited
Project description	<p>The project involves the establishment and operation of a 300 megawatt solar farm over 500 hectares of an 868-hectare site to the east of Twizel Township. Once operational and connected to the National Grid, the project will generate enough renewable energy annually to power 75,000 homes.</p> <p>The project comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• general earthworks and site establishment including the construction of operational and management buildings, inverters, internal roads/tracks• solar panels situated on solar tables with a single axis tracking system covering 500 hectares of the 868-hectare site

- | | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 33 kilovolts overhead transmission lines to connect the project to the Transpower New Zealand Twizel Substation• establishment of exclusion areas and buffers to protect significant native vegetation, habitat and wetlands. |
|--|--|

Yours sincerely

Hon Chris Bishop
Minister for Infrastructure



Office of Hon Chris Bishop

Minister of Housing, Minister for Infrastructure, Minister Responsible for RMA Reform, Minister for Sport & Recreation, Leader of the House, Associate Minister of Finance

Email: christopher.bishop@parliament.govt.nz Website: www.beehive.govt.nz
Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

Fabia Fox
Regulatory Manager
Alpine Energy Limited

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Fabia

Invitation to provide written comments on application for referral of the Twizel Solar project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

An application has been received by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) from Nova Energy Limited for referral of the Twizel Solar project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) to the Fast-track approvals process. Project summary details are in Appendix A.

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits.

I write under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(5) of the Act. I invite you to provide written comments on the referral application.

The information you are receiving is being provided to you consistent with the statutory requirements for consultation under section 17 of the Act. The information is being provided in confidence and should not be forwarded or discussed anyone outside of your organisation.

If you wish to provide written comments, these must be received within **20 working days** of receipt of this letter and copy of the application. The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame. Comments received will help inform the Minister's consideration on whether to accept the referral application and to refer the project.

If the Minister decides to accept the application and to refer the project, the Applicant will be required to complete any preliminary steps required under the Act and then be able to lodge their substantive application for the approvals they require. An expert panel will be appointed to decide the substantive application.

To assist you with the process, project summary details are in Appendix A.

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Please upload comments directly via the portal by completing the template for written comments provided in Attachment 1.

Before the due date, if you have any queries about this letter or need assistance with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ilana Miller', with a stylized, flowing script.

Ilana Miller
General Manager, Delivery and Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

Appendix A – Project summary details

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Applicant name	Nova Energy Limited
Project summary details	<p>The project involves the establishment and operation of a 300-megawatt solar farm over 500 hectares of an 868-hectare site to the east of Twizel Township. Once operational and connected to the National Grid, the project will generate enough renewable energy annually to power 75,000 homes.</p> <p>The project comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• general earthworks and site establishment including the construction of operational and management buildings, inverters, internal roads/tracks• solar panels situated on solar tables with a single axis tracking system covering 500 hectares of the 868-hectare site• 33kv overhead transmission lines to connect the project to the Transpower New Zealand Twizel Substation• establishment of exclusion areas and buffers to protect significant native vegetation, habitat and wetlands.

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FTAA-2504-1044

Ross Wells
Board Chair
Aoraki Environmental Consultancy Limited

Email: info@aecltd.co.nz

Tēnā koe Ross

Invitation to provide written comments on application for referral of the Twizel Solar project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

An application has been received by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) from Nova Energy Limited for referral of the Twizel Solar project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) to the Fast-track approvals process. Project summary details are in Appendix A.

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits.

I write under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(d) of the Act (which requires consultation with relevant Māori groups identified under section 18(2)). I invite you to provide written comments on the referral application.

The information you are receiving is being provided to you consistent with the statutory requirements for consultation under section 17 of the Act. The information is being provided in-confidence and should not be forwarded or comments sought from, anyone outside of your organisation.

If you wish to provide written comments, these must be received within **20 working days** of receipt of this letter and copy of the application. The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame. Comments received will help inform the Minister's decisions on whether to accept the referral application and to refer the project.

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If you provide written comments as a **Māori consultation group**, you may be entitled to a financial contribution of \$2,000 (excluding GST) under Schedule 2 of the Fast-Track Approvals (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2025. For information about contribution fees and invoices refer to the Fasttrack webpage on [Cost recovery for agencies](#).

If the Minister decides to accept the application and to refer the project, the Applicant will need to complete any preliminary steps required under the Act and then lodge their substantive application for the approvals needed for the project. An expert panel will be appointed to decide the substantive application.

Please upload comments directly via the portal by completing the template for written comments provided in Attachment 1.

Before the due date, if you have any queries about this letter or need assistance with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

Nāku noa, nā



Ilana Miller
General Manager, Delivery and Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

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Appendix A – Project summary details

Project name	Twizel Solar Project
Applicant name	Nova Energy Limited
Project summary details	<p>The project involves the establishment and operation of a 300-megawatt solar farm over 500 hectares of an 868-hectare site to the east of Twizel Township. Once operational and connected to the National Grid, the project will generate enough renewable energy annually to power 75,000 homes.</p> <p>The project comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• general earthworks and site establishment including the construction of operational and management buildings, inverters, internal roads/tracks• solar panels situated on solar tables with a single axis tracking system covering 500 hectares of the 868-hectare site• 33kv overhead transmission lines to connect the project to the Transpower New Zealand Twizel Substation• establishment of exclusion areas and buffers to protect significant native vegetation, habitat and wetlands.

Trevor McGlinchey
Acting Board Chair
Aukaha (1997) Limited

Email: consents@aukaha.co.nz

Tēnā koe Trevor

Invitation to provide written comments on application for referral of the Twizel Solar project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

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I write under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(d) of the Act (which requires consultation with relevant Māori groups identified under section 18(2)). I invite you to provide written comments on the referral application.

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If you provide written comments as a **Māori consultation group**, you may be entitled to a financial contribution of \$2,000 (excluding GST) under Schedule 2 of the Fast-Track Approvals (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2025. For information about contribution fees and invoices refer to the Fasttrack webpage on [Cost recovery for agencies](#).

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Please upload comments directly via the portal by completing the template for written comments provided in Attachment 1.

Before the due date, if you have any queries about this letter or need assistance with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

Nāku noa, nā



Ilana Miller
General Manager, Delivery and Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

cc Pam Walker - s 9(2)(a)

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Appendix A – Project summary details

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Stefanie Rixecker
Chief Executive Officer
Canterbury Regional Council

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Stefanie

Invitation to provide written comments on application for referral of the Twizel Solar project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

An application has been received by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) from Nova Energy Limited for referral of the Twizel Solar project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) to the Fast-track approvals process. Project summary details are in Appendix A.

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits.

I write under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(1)(a) of the Act, I invite Canterbury Regional Council to provide written comments on the referral application. Under section 17(3) of the Act and without limiting any general comments under subsection (1)(a), Canterbury Regional Council must provide comments advising on the following matters:

1. Any applications that have been lodged with the Council that would be a competing application or applications if a substantive application for the project were lodged. If no such applications exist, please also confirm this in writing
2. In relation to projects seeking approval of a resource consent under section 42(4)(a) of the Act, whether there any existing resource consents issued where sections 124C(1)(c) or 165Z1 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) could apply, if the project were to be applied for as a resource consent under the RMA. If no such consents exist, please also confirm this in writing.

Under section 20(1) I also invite you to provide further information on the following matters:

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3. Whether the Council considers the project would have significant regional or national benefits, along with any comments on alignment with the relevant regional plans, policies, and/or strategies in that context.

The information you are receiving is being provided to you consistent with the statutory requirements for consultation under section 17 of the Act. The information is being provided in confidence and should not be forwarded or comments sought from anyone outside of your organisation.

If you wish to provide written comments, these must be received within **20 working days** of receipt of this letter and a copy of the application. The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame. Comments received will inform the Minister's considerations in making decisions on whether to accept the referral application and to refer the project.

If the Minister decides to accept the application and to refer the project, the Applicant will need to complete any preliminary steps required under the Act and then lodge their substantive application for the approvals needed for the project. An expert panel will be appointed to decide the substantive application.

Please upload comments directly via the portal by completing the template for written comments provided in Attachment 1.

Before the due date, if you have any queries about this letter or need assistance with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

Yours sincerely



Ilana Miller
General Manager, Delivery and Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

cc: Dani Devine - fasttrack@ecan.govt.nz

fasttrack.govt.nz | contact@fasttrack.govt.nz | 0800 FASTRK

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Appendix A – Project summary details

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Penny Nelson
Director-General of Conservation
Department of Conservation

Email: Fast-track@doc.govt.nz

Dear Penny

Invitation to provide written comments on application for referral of the Twizel Solar project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

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The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits.

I write under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(1)(c) of the Act (which requires the Minister to seek comments on a referral application from the relevant administering agencies). I invite the Department of Conservation to provide written comments on the referral application as the administering agency for the Wildlife Act 1953.

The information you are receiving is being provided to you consistent with the statutory requirements for consultation under section 17 of the Act. The information is being provided in confidence and should not be forwarded or comments sought from anyone outside of your organisation.

If you wish to provide written comments, these must be received within **20 working days** of receipt of this letter and copy of the application. The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame. Comments received will help inform the Minister's consideration in making decisions on whether to accept the referral application and to refer the project.

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If the Minister decides to accept the application and to refer the project, the Applicant will need to complete any preliminary steps required under the Act and then lodge their substantive application for the approvals needed for the project. An expert panel will be appointed to decide the substantive application.

Please upload comments directly via the portal by completing the template for written comments provided in Attachment 1.

Before the due date, if you have any queries about this letter or need assistance with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

Yours sincerely



Ilana Miller
General Manager, Delivery and Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

cc Jenni Fitzgerald, Fast-track Managers 9(2)(a)

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Angela Oosthuizen
Chief Executive Officer
Mackenzie District Council

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Angela

Invitation to provide written comments on application for referral of the Twizel Solar project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

An application has been received by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) from Nova Energy Limited for referral of the Twizel Solar project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) to the Fast-track approvals process. Project summary details are in Appendix A.

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits.

I write under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(1)(a) of the Act, I invite Mackenzie District Council to provide written comments on the referral application. Under section 17(3) of the Act and without limiting any general comments under subsection (1)(a), Mackenzie District Council must provide comments advising on the following matters:

1. Any applications that have been lodged with the Council that would be a competing application or applications if a substantive application for the project were lodged. If no such applications exist, please also confirm this in writing
2. In relation to projects seeking approval of a resource consent under section 42(4)(a) of the Act, whether there any existing resource consents issued where sections 124C(1)(c) or 165ZI of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) could apply, if the project were to be applied for as a resource consent under the RMA. If no such consents exist, please also confirm this in writing.

Under section 20(1) I also invite you to provide further information on the following matters:

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3. Whether the Council considers the project would have significant regional or national benefits, along with any comments on alignment with the relevant district plans, policies, and/or strategies in that context.

The information you are receiving is being provided to you consistent with the statutory requirements for consultation under section 17 of the Act. The information is being provided in confidence and should not be forwarded or comments sought from anyone outside of your organisation.

If you wish to provide written comments, these must be received within **20 working days** of receipt of this letter and a copy of the application. The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame. Comments received will inform the Minister's considerations in making decisions on whether to accept the referral application and to refer the project.

If the Minister decides to accept the application and to refer the project, the Applicant will need to complete any preliminary steps required under the Act and then lodge their substantive application for the approvals needed for the project. An expert panel will be appointed to decide the substantive application.

Please upload comments directly via the portal by completing the template for written comments provided in Attachment 1.

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Yours sincerely



Ilana Miller
General Manager, Delivery and Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

cc: Julie Shanks, Planning Manager - s 9(2)(a)

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Neal Barclay
Chief Executive
Meridian Energy Limited

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Neal

Invitation to provide written comments on application for referral of the Twizel Solar project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

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Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'I' followed by a horizontal line that curves upwards at the end.

Ilana Miller
General Manager, Delivery and Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

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James Palmer
Secretary for the Environment
Ministry for the Environment

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear James

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I write under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(1)(c) of the Act (which requires the Minister to seek comments on a referral application from the relevant administering agencies). I invite the Ministry for the Environment to provide written comments on the referral application as the administering agency for the Management Act 1991.

The information you are receiving is being provided to you consistent with the statutory requirements for consultation under section 17 of the Act. The information is being provided in confidence and should not be forwarded or comments sought from anyone outside of your organisation.

If you wish to provide written comments, these must be received within **20 working days** of receipt of this letter and copy of the application. The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame. Comments received will help inform the Minister's consideration in making decisions on whether to accept the referral application and to refer the project.

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Yours sincerely



Ilana Miller
General Manager, Delivery and Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

cc Macaela Flanagan, Manager - s 9(2)(a) 
adminagencyftaa@mfe.govt.nz

fasttrack.govt.nz | contact@fasttrack.govt.nz | 0800 FASTRK

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Appendix A – Project summary details

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Brett Gliddon
Chief Executive Officer
New Zealand Transport Agency

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Brett

Invitation to provide written comments on application for referral of the Twizel Solar project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

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I write under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(5) of the Act. I invite you to provide written comments on the referral application on the following matter:

1. The project site will require State Highway 8 access east of Twizel. The state highway is administered by the New Zealand Transport Agency. The applicant notes that upgrades to State Highway 8 may be required to facilitate increased vehicle movement during the construction phase. We invite your comment on this and any relevant requirements that could affect the applicants' ability to undertake the work.

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Yours sincerely



Ilana Miller
General Manager, Delivery and Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

cc FTC application/comments info - EnvironmentalPlanning@nzta.govt.nz
Nicola Foran – Team Leader – Environmental Planning – s 9(2)(a)

Appendix A – Project summary details

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Ally Crane
General Manager
Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe Ally

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Nāku noa, nā

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Ilana Miller
General Manager, Delivery and Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

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Justin Tipa
Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu representative
Te Rūnanga o Moeraki

Emails 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe Justin

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Ilana Miller
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Justin Tipa
Chair
Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Justin

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Ilana Miller
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Appendix A: Project summary details

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Jo McLean
Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu representative
Te Rūnanga o Waihao

Email: waihao.manager@ngaitahu.iwi.nz

Tēnā koe Jo

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General Manager, Delivery and Operations

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James Kilty
Chief Executive
Transpower New Zealand Limited

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear James

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Yours sincerely



Ilana Miller
General Manager, Delivery and Operations

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cc Joanne Mooar (Senior Corporate Counsel) - s 9(2)(a)

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