



28 JAN 2026

The Expert Panel – Fast-track Approvals Act application
Environmental Protection Authority
Waterloo Quay
Wellington

Substantive Fast-track Approvals Act application – Kaimai Hydroelectric Power Scheme

To the Expert Panel

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the substantive application of Kaimai Hydroelectric Power Scheme under section 53(2)(J) of the Fast-track Approvals Act (FTAA). My comments focus on whether this substantive application is likely to have economic benefits, based on the information provided.

Kaimai Hydroelectric Power Scheme, FTAA-2502-1024

The applicant, Manawa Energy Limited, is seeking the renewal of Kaimai Hydroelectric Power Scheme's (HEPS) resource consents for its continued operations. Kaimai HEPS is in the Wairoa River Catchment near Tauranga. It generates an average of 169 gigawatts per hour of electricity annually, equivalent to powering approximately 24,600 households, around 32 per cent of Tauranga's electricity demand.

The economic assessment report provided by the applicant in this substantive application indicates that continuing to operate the Kaimai HEPS will maintain local employment and generate approximately \$2.4 million in annual operating expenditure and \$2 million in annual capital costs. Renewing the scheme's consents would also avoid an estimated \$205.5 million in infrastructure investment that would be required to replace the scheme with a similar electricity supply generation profile.

While this proposal may not directly generate additional economic impacts, its primary benefit is ensuring the availability of a reliable electricity supply and the continued provision of renewable energy. This has substantial benefits in continually supporting businesses in the region, which is essential in a growing economy.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicola Willis'.

Hon Nicola Willis
Minister for Economic Growth