



16 February 2026

PS-COR1829

The Expert Panel  
Fast-track Approvals Act 2024  
C/O Environmental Protection Authority  
Level 10, 215 Lambton Quay  
Wellington 6011

**RE: FTAA-2509-1100 – The Point Solar Farm invitation to the Minister for the Environment to comment**

To the Panel,

I am writing in response to your invitation under section 53 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTAA) to provide comments on The Point Solar Farm substantive application that is currently under consideration. As the Minister for the Environment, I have statutory functions and responsibilities under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act 2012 (EEZ), the Waste Minimisation Act 2008, the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 as well as the Environment Act 1986.

As part of its decision making, the Panel needs to consider how and to what extent the adverse impacts of the proposal can be managed. The potential adverse effects on biodiversity may be manageable through the setting of conditions. It will be up to you to determine how the environmental effects such as those arising because of the proposed activities will be managed.

While the indigenous biodiversity values of the site are degraded, I note that they are also rare and critically endangered in some instances. As such, the remaining remnants are significant. Given the scale of the development and remaining uncertainty about the effects of this type of development in this ecosystem and locality, I suggest that you consider strengthening some of the conditions to ensure that identified information gaps are addressed and provide for clearer management responses.

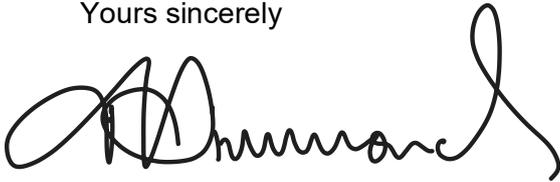
For example, I suggest that:

- a. pre-construction lizard and terrestrial invertebrate surveys are required to confirm species presence, distribution, and habitat use within the construction footprint, with findings used to inform and, where necessary, update relevant management plans
- b. invertebrate management requirements extend beyond a single species to ensure all notable invertebrates potentially affected by the proposal are adequately addressed

- c. avifauna management conditions clarify that breeding bird surveys be undertaken immediately prior to vegetation clearance where works occur during the breeding season
- d. a requirement applies for management plans to be updated if surveys identify higher value habitats or species than anticipated
- e. a requirement to ensure indigenous planting and the management approach is appropriate to the context and provides habitat for indigenous species (flora and fauna) that may be impacted by the proposal as well as screening.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comments on this application.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Penny Simmonds', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Penny Simmonds  
**Minister for the Environment**