

BRF-6573

4 August 2025

Contact Energy Limited  
C/- Claire Hunter  
Mitchell Daysh Limited

email: [claire.hunter@mitchelldaysh.co.nz](mailto:claire.hunter@mitchelldaysh.co.nz)

Dear Claire

**Notice of Decisions on application for referral of the Southland Wind Farm project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024**

This notice of decisions is for an application received from Contact Energy Limited for referral of the Southland Wind Farm 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 to establish and operate a wind farm with an approximate peak output of 350 megawatts (MW), located within approximately 58 square kilometres of privately owned land on Slopedown Hill in eastern Southland, approximately 30 kilometres southeast of Gore. The project area is partly in both the Southland and Gore districts, and entirely in the Southland Region.

The project includes:

- a. construction and operation of up to 55 wind turbines, each up to approximately 7MW in capacity and a maximum blade 'tip height' of up to 220 metres
- b. electrical reticulation providing electrical connection between the wind turbines and the wind farm substation
- c. a wind farm substation to collect the power generated by the wind turbines, located at Jedburgh Station
- d. a Grid Injection Point (GIP) located adjacent to the existing Transpower 220 kilovolt (kV) circuit between Invercargill and Dunedin
- e. an overhead single or double circuit 220kV transmission line between the wind farm substation and the GIP to provide connection to the Transpower National Grid
- f. up to two permanent meteorological masts each up to approximately 140 metres in height

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Fast-track referrals are administered on behalf of the Minister for Infrastructure by the Ministry for the Environment | PO Box 10362 | Wellington 6143, New Zealand | NZBN: 9429041908853

- g. an operations and maintenance facility
- h. construction of roading, turbine foundations and “hard stand” areas adjacent to each turbine.

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 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 (s 21(1)(c)) and to refer the project to the fast-track approvals process under section 26(2)(a).

### **Reasons for accepting referral application**

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. involves the development of a new wind farm
- b. will deliver new nationally significant infrastructure by providing new renewable electricity generation sufficient to power up to 150,000 homes
- c. will deliver significant economic benefits by providing up to \$280 million to the economy and creating 160-240 direct full-time equivalent jobs
- d. will support climate change mitigation through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by the creating of new renewable electricity generation
- e. will support recovery from events caused by natural hazards by improving resilience in the national electricity supply.

The Minister is satisfied that referring the project:

- a. would facilitate the project and enable it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective manner than understand process, by utilising a process which does not involve public notification and limits rights of appeal to matters of law
- b. is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process because the applicant is well-advanced towards preparation of a substantive application and an expert consenting panel was already able to consider an application for substantially the same project under a previous fast-track regime

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

**Specified matters for accepted referral application**

The following person who lodged the referral application is the person authorised to lodge a substantive application for the project (s27(2)): Contact Energy Limited.

In relation to a substantive application for the project:

- a. A deadline for lodging the application applies (s27(3)(b)(i). The application must be lodged by: two years from the date of this notice.
- b. The persons or groups from whom a panel must invite comments from in addition to any specified in section 53 (s27(3)(b)(iii):
  - i. The Chief Executive of Transpower New Zealand Limited

If you have any queries about this notice of decisions, please email [referral@fasttrack.govt.nz](mailto:referral@fasttrack.govt.nz) and include the name of the Application Lead – Max Gander-Cooper or 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 – Contact Energy Limited  
any person invited to comment (s17(1):  
– relevant local authorities: Southland District Council, Gore District Council, Southland Regional Council

- Minister for the Environment and relevant portfolio Ministers: Minister of Conservation, Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, Minister of Climate Change, Minister for Energy
- relevant administering agencies – Ministry for the Environment, Department of Conservation, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga
- Māori groups identified in the list provided to the Minister – Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, Hokonui Rūnanga, Waihōpai Rūnaka, Te Rūnanga o Awarua, Te Rūnanga o Ōraka Aparima, Te Ao Mārama Incorporated
- owners of Māori land in the project area – N/A
- any other person – Minister for Economic Growth, Minister for Regional Development, Chief Executive of Transpower New Zealand Limited, Chief Executive of Powernet Limited

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)

any iwi authorities or Treaty settlement entities (other than those that must be notified under subsection (1)(b)) that the Minister considers have an interest in the matter – N/A

the EPA (including all the related information received by the Minister)

the relevant administering agencies – Ministry for the Environment, Department of Conservation, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga