

Ngā Hapū o Himatangi
Ngāti Te Au, Ngāti Rakau, Ngāti Turanga

16 June 2026

Foxton Solar Farm Expert Panel
Environmental Protection Authority

Email: substantive@fasttrack.govt.nz

Subject: Foxton Solar Farm Fast-track Application – Comments from Ngā Hapū o Himatangi

Tēnā koutou,

This submission is made on behalf of Ngā Hapū o Himatangi in response to the invitation to comment on the Foxton Solar Farm application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024.

Ngā Hapū o Himatangi maintains longstanding whakapapa, cultural, historical and customary connections to the Himatangi, Foxton and wider coastal landscape. The whenua, waterways, wetlands and associated natural resources within and surrounding the project area form part of a cultural landscape that remains significant to our whānau and hapū and continues to be actively valued and exercised through our responsibilities as kaitiaki.

Ngā Hapū o Himatangi acknowledges the importance of renewable energy generation and supports initiatives that contribute to New Zealand's transition to a lower-emissions economy. We recognise the potential regional and national benefits associated with renewable energy infrastructure and appreciate the efforts undertaken by Genesis Energy Limited to engage with tangata whenua during the development of this proposal.

Ngā Hapū o Himatangi is not opposed to the Foxton Solar Farm. Rather, our interest is to ensure that the project proceeds in a manner that appropriately recognises and protects tangata whenua values, cultural heritage, environmental wellbeing and our ongoing relationship with the affected landscape. The matters raised in this submission are intended to strengthen the proposed consent conditions and support a positive and enduring relationship between the applicant and tangata whenua throughout the life of the project.

Having reviewed the application and proposed draft consent conditions, Ngā Hapū o Himatangi generally supports the inclusion of provisions relating to pre-construction engagement, site blessing opportunities, accidental discovery procedures and environmental monitoring. We support the proposed requirements for pre-construction hui, opportunities for karakia, notification requirements relating to cultural discoveries and the provision of environmental monitoring information. These provisions provide an important foundation for recognising tangata whenua interests within the project.

Ngā Hapū o Himatangi respectfully requests that these provisions remain in the final consent and are strengthened where appropriate to ensure meaningful tangata whenua participation throughout the construction, operation and eventual decommissioning of the solar farm.

Accordingly, Ngā Hapū o Himatangi requests that the Expert Panel consider the following matters:

1. Recognition of Ngā Hapū o Himatangi as an affected tangata whenua party for the purposes of ongoing engagement throughout the life of the project.

Ngā Hapū o Himatangi Ngāti Te Au, Ngāti Rakau, Ngāti Turanga

2. Retention and strengthening of the proposed requirements for pre-construction hui and site blessing opportunities to ensure Ngā Hapū o Himatangi has a meaningful role in these processes.
3. Retention and strengthening of the Accidental Discovery Protocol provisions, including direct notification of Ngā Hapū o Himatangi in the event that kōiwi tangata, wāhi tapu, archaeological material or taonga are discovered during earthworks.
4. Provision for tangata whenua cultural monitoring during significant earthworks and ground disturbance activities where appropriate.
5. A requirement for Genesis Energy Limited to meet with Ngā Hapū o Himatangi at least annually during construction and operation of the solar farm to discuss environmental performance, cultural matters, monitoring outcomes and any emerging issues.
6. Provision of environmental and ecological monitoring reports to Ngā Hapū o Himatangi, including reports relating to avifauna, biodiversity, wetlands, drainage management and environmental restoration. We note and support the proposed requirement for ecological monitoring information to be available to Ngā Hapū o Himatangi and request that this provision remain in the final consent conditions.
7. Opportunities for whānau and uri associated with Ngā Hapū o Himatangi to participate in environmental enhancement initiatives, biodiversity restoration projects, planting programmes and employment opportunities associated with the development where appropriate.
8. Inclusion of cultural awareness and cultural induction requirements for all contractors and project personnel working on the site to ensure an understanding of local cultural values and responsibilities.
9. Provision of relevant management plans prepared under the consent conditions, including the Construction Environmental Management Plan, Landscape Management Plan, Emergency Response Plan and Decommissioning Plan, to Ngā Hapū o Himatangi for information and engagement where cultural values may be affected.

Ngā Hapū o Himatangi notes that the Expert Panel has appointed an independent acoustic advisor to review the applicant's noise assessment and proposed conditions. We support this approach and request that the review carefully consider both construction and operational noise effects on neighbouring residents, marae communities and customary activities within the wider Himatangi area. Should the independent review identify a need for additional mitigation measures, Ngā Hapū o Himatangi supports the inclusion of such measures within the final consent conditions.

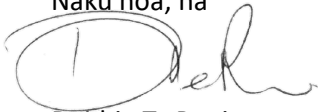
Ngā Hapū o Himatangi considers that these measures will assist in maintaining a constructive relationship between Genesis Energy Limited and tangata whenua while supporting the protection of cultural values, environmental wellbeing and kaitiakitanga responsibilities.

Subject to the matters outlined in this submission and the retention and strengthening of the proposed tangata whenua engagement provisions, Ngā Hapū o Himatangi generally supports the Foxton Solar Farm proposal and looks forward to continuing constructive engagement with Genesis Energy Limited and the Expert Panel.

Ngā Hapū o Himatangi
Ngāti Te Au, Ngāti Rakau, Ngāti Turanga

Ngā Hapū o Himatangi reserves the right to provide further comment on draft consent conditions and any subsequent amendments to the proposal.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Debbie Te Puni', written over a large, loopy initial 'D'.

Debbie Te Puni

For and on behalf of Ngā Hapū o Himatangi