

Foxton Solar Farm – Genesis Energy Limited

Fast Track Approvals Act – Section 53

Comments on substantive application by Horowhenua District Council (HDC)

1. The application

In general, HDC considers that Genesis have provided a very comprehensive application that covers all the appropriate issues that need to be addressed. HDC considers that no additional information or reports are required.

2. Proposed Conditions

Condition A16

- Condition A16 relates to the certification of management plans provided under Condition A15.
- HDC gave initial feedback asking what would happen in the event of disagreement between the Council and Genesis during the certification of management plans process. HDC suggested that in the unlikely event of disagreement, should there be an independent person appointed by Council's Planning Manager and the consent holder to make a decision that is binding on both parties?
- In response to this, Genesis responded that activities can't commence until the management plan(s) are certified by Council so there would have to be agreement reached. This is the process set out in Conditions A16, A17 and A18. Genesis said they are happy to think about wording for appointment of an independent reviewer in the event of a stalemate, which can certainly be useful.
- This issue has not been resolved. HDC has had experience with differences of opinion and unresolved issues on other projects and without certainty of process this can be problematic. HDC considers that either an independent person could be appointed or more certainty in the wording provided. This could be an addition to the conditions that the Councils are the final certifier and no work in relation to a management plan listed in Condition A15 can commence without final Council certification, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the certifying Council.

Condition B15 (I)

- B15 (I) has been amended and now adequately covers the replacement of dead or diseased plants beyond the initial 5 year maintenance period as requested by HDC.

Conditions B1, B5, B6 and B7

- This relates to Traffic, Roding and Access.

Condition B1 requires a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) for technical certification to manage property access, construction traffic and safety for all road users associated with the construction of the project.

The condition then lists a number of issues that must be included in the CTMP.

HDC's Land Transport Manager has a key concern about the solar farm construction process, which is that it may impact on the condition of Council's roads and create unbudgeted repair costs for Council.

HDC acknowledges that this issue about impacts on Council's roads is covered by conditions B5, B6 and B7.

Other comments

3. With respect to the different potential issues that the consent may cause, HDC comments as follows:

- Noise/Acoustic

The application includes an acoustic assessment. This shows that the application will comply with the District Plan noise limits and associated conditions of consent require this unless a BESS is constructed. In relation to the BESS, there are additional measures in place for noise mitigation should a BESS be constructed and associated conditions of consent. Noise is typically measured at the notional site around a dwelling. There are no dwellings close to where the BESS is proposed. In general, I would note that the RMA is not a zero effects piece of legislation and in relation to noise, there is likely to be some noise, but within the acceptable threshold set in the District Plan. I would also note that solar generation will be during the day when people are out working or farm machinery is typically operating. HDC does not consider that an acoustic review of the applicant's acoustic assessment is necessary.

- Glare

I note from the glare assessment that there are limited times when glare could be a factor, and that is at the same time when sun could be in your eyes while driving. However, once the landscaping reaches 4 metres, any glare from the solar farm will be eliminated. In many areas, the height of the perimeter vegetation will be higher.

- Earthworks

This is also covered by Horizons. A standard earthworks and sediment control plan is proposed. The application was forwarded to Council's technical teams and their response was that they are comfortable with the application and proposed conditions to deal with any potential effects.

- Geotechnical

The application was forwarded to Council's technical teams and their response was that they are comfortable with the application and proposed conditions to deal with any potential effects.

- Stormwater and Flood risk

The application was forwarded to Council's technical teams. In relation to this matter Council's team was part of the joint site visit and their response was that they are comfortable with the application and proposed conditions to deal with any potential effects.

- Landscape

The application proposes significant perimeter planting that will provide suitable visual mitigation of the solar farm. Whilst this will take several years to reach its desired height, in my experience this is common for landscaping associated with a resource consent or even for District Plan permitted activity compliance. When a development is first built it looks bare and stark, but the landscaping eventually matures and achieves its intended purpose.

- Consultation

In relation to Iwi consultation, Council sought comments from its in-house iwi advisor.

She has said the following:

It looks as though the correct parties have been included. There is no mention of Te Tumatakahuki, however, Ngati Rakau, Ngati Turanga and Ngati Te Au were included, and these hapu are all members of Te Tumatakahuki. With the names of the hapu representatives having been redacted, I can't say whether these details are correct. Our approach here at Council, when engaging Te Tumatakahuki is to contact Shayne Royal (Chair of Te Tumatakahuki) and copy in Neville Heihei (Te Tumatakahuki Navigator).

I understand that as part of the Fast Track process, our iwi/hapu partners will be engaged with directly by the EPA, however as part of being a good partner, we should also reach out to them purely to advise them that this has come in and answer any questions they may have.

During the pre application panel convenor's conference, Debbie Te Puni was involved in providing comments on behalf of Iwi and Hapu.

During the panel convenor's session, Debbie said that she is part of Te Tumatakahuki and was there representing them. HDC have since confirmed with Te Tumatakahuki representatives that they are aware of the application and are working with Debbie.

Therefore, HDC are comfortable that iwi consultation has been undertaken with the appropriate parties.

- Transport/Traffic

The application was forwarded to Council's technical teams. The issue discussed in conditions above was raised in relation to impacts on Council's roads from construction traffic. Council's transportation team are comfortable with the application and proposed conditions to deal with any potential effects.

- Economic

HDC is comfortable with the conclusions reached in the economic assessment.

- Contaminated Land

Several HAIL sites have been identified on the site and the NESCS applies to the land. However no consent is required under the NESCS.

- Archaeological

No archaeological sites are shown in the District Plan in this location and the archaeological report says no sites are known to be present and it is unlikely any will be exposed during development works. A standard condition covers the eventuality of any being discovered.

4. Overall HDC agrees with the applicant in that the proposal is suitable for the proposed location and any potential adverse effects are at an appropriate level and/or can be mitigated for the following reasons:

- Any potential adverse effects can be appropriately mitigated;
- The Rural Zone is a working environment with machinery that makes noise on a daily basis;
- The solar farm operation is busiest when the sun is shining, which is also when people in the rural area are working;
- The noise from the solar farm will meet appropriate District Plan standards. If the BESS is constructed additional mitigation measures are proposed. There are no notional areas surrounding dwellings near the substation or BESS;
- The landscaping will take time to reach it's desired height for visual mitigation purposes, however this is a common RMA approach with landscaping;
- Council's technical experts are comfortable with the proposal and conditions;
- Glare will be minimal when the sun would be in your eyes while driving anyway and once the landscaping reaches 4 metres high it will be eliminated;
- Consultation has been undertaken with iwi and neighbours.

5. There are no objectives or policies in particular to focus on from the District Plan, however the relevant ones have been listed below. I would note the following District Plan provisions that may not have been addressed in the application.

- Under Appendices and Maps;
 - 4.1 APP – Rural Environment Landscape Assessment;
 - 4.5 APP – Assessment Criteria for land use consents in the Rural Zone, S7 General, Assessment Criteria for consents in all zones, S38 Noise, S45 Vehicle Access, S49 Network Utilities and Wind Monitoring Masts, S51 Natural Hazards;
 - 4.7 APP – General Provisions.

I note that while these may not have been addressed in the application, I do not think that they raise any issues that have not already been addressed.

Horowhenua District Plan relevant Objectives and Policies

RURAL ENVIRONMENT WIDE POLICIES

RURZ-GRZ-P5

Retention of an open and spacious character to the rural areas of the District, with a dominance of open space and plantings over buildings, and within which the potential for conflict between rural and residential activities is minimised.

RURZ-GRZ-P6

Minimise obtrusive built elements in the rural environment by integrating building location and design with the surrounding landform and landscape qualities and recognise that farm building location is influenced by their function.

RURZ-GRZ-P10

Having regard to the [Principal Reasons](#) in respect of the elements of rural character ensure that new activities locating in the rural area are of a nature, scale, intensity and location consistent with maintaining the character of the rural area and to be undertaken in a manner which avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects on rural character, including rural productive values.

Principal Reasons

RURZ-GRZ-Principal Reason 1 Rural environment

The District Plan seeks to protect the character and amenity values in the District's rural environment, as they contribute towards the identity and well-being of the district. The District's rural character and amenity values are represented by a diverse range of primary production activities resulting in an open and working landscape; predominance of vegetation (including indigenous and exotic vegetation), and a low level of built development with a few large utilitarian buildings.

Rural character in the Horowhenua may include any one or more of the following key elements:

- The dominance in the landscape of natural features and vegetation and dynamic primary production regimes, including pasture, crops and forestry;
- The presence of manmade structures where those structures are related to rural production activities or industry and infrastructure for which a rural location is either required or is most appropriate;
- High ratio of open space relative to built environment;
- Significant areas of land in pasture, crops, forestry and/or indigenous vegetation;
- A rural working production environment, consisting of a wide range of activities and including components such as animals, farm buildings, farm machinery and shelterbelts;
- The use of rural land for a wide range of agricultural, horticultural and forestry purposes including such effects as noise, smells, dust, and agrichemical spraying associated with such activities;
- Low population densities relative to urban areas;
- General lack of urban infrastructure such as streetlighting, footpaths and reticulated water and wastewater systems.

The District Plan recognises there are differences in the rural character that exists throughout various parts of (landscape precincts) the Horowhenua. It is therefore appropriate and important that the District Plan recognises the differences between these landscapes, particularly in the management of the effects of subdivision, land development and the resulting land use change. Different techniques and thresholds are applied to the land precincts in response to the particular characteristics and qualities of each land precinct.

The policies seek to maintain or enhance the features and values that contribute to the landscape character of each precinct through the management of subdivision. Controls over the scale, intensity, size and dimensions of new allotments is an effective way of addressing the effects on character and amenity values where intensification through subdivision could compromise and degrade the character and amenity values of the respective landscape precincts. Additional controls are applied in individual landscape precincts where the characteristics and qualities are sensitive to modification associated with subdivision, such as new roads, earthworks and vegetation clearance.

Creating an integrated network of open spaces and connections provides opportunities for improved accessibility and movements, improving and strengthening ecological corridors, health and well being of local residents and creating tourism potential. The Council has prepared an Open Space Strategy which provides overall direction on where, what and how an integrated network of open spaces and connections can be created. This Strategy

identifies connections along river corridors, along the coast, between the ranges and the coast, connections to the ranges, and along the railway corridor. One method of implementation is creating connections when land is subdivided. Council will encourage and support landowners/subdividers in making these connections, recognising that due to the scale and complexity of some of the wider networks, it may take many years for these complete integrated networks to be realised and appreciated.

RURZ-GRZ-Principal Reason 3 Reverse sensitivity and hazards

The rural environment contains a wide range of hazards that can place limitations on the extent to which the land can be further modified and developed. While [Chapter 2.5 - Natural Hazards](#) deals with the risks throughout the District, this objective and policies ensures that more intense subdivision of land in the rural environment addresses any hazard limitations. Subdivision usually leads to some form of further land development, and the size of allotments can influence future use of the land, particularly where hazards are present.

In using measures to avoid, remedy or mitigate the risks of natural hazards it is also necessary to consider the effects of the mitigation measures themselves, which can also have significant adverse environmental effects. An example of this is carrying out earthworks to create access or building platforms which may interfere with the functioning of natural flood plains and ponding areas.

Primary production activities and large-scale processing and infrastructure facilities contribute significantly to the district's economic and social well-being. Although these sorts of activities together with more typical rural activities are required to operate within a regime of District Plan rules or consent conditions to control the effects of the activity beyond the boundary, conflicts can occur when subdivision and land development, principally residential activities, are sensitive to the effects of these activities and facilities, particularly, when it occurs within close proximity (a phenomenon called 'reverse sensitivity'). As a result of these conflicts, there can be demands to restrict legitimate rural activities such as primary productive activities or the existing large scale processing and infrastructure facilities in order to reduce what in the circumstances, are normally regarded as acceptable effects. For this reason, it is important to limit potential future conflicts by preventing the intensification of residential activities within close proximity of these activities and facilities.

RURZ-GRZ-Principal Reason 4 Nature, Character, Amenity Values and Servicing

Primary production activities rely on a rural location due to the existence and availability of natural and physical resources. Providing for primary production and other associated activities enables these resources to be utilised in a sustainable manner, without unduly hindering or controlling these activities. Minimum standards are applied to ensure any significant adverse effects of these activities are avoided, remedied or mitigated (e.g. building setbacks, maximum noise levels, planting standards).

Many other activities (e.g. vegetable and fruit packing, rural contractors yard) are appropriate in a rural setting and can establish and operate without compromising the core primary production activities in the rural areas. In addition, other activities can rely on a rural location as this is where the resource is located (e.g. infrastructure, electricity generation, quarries and gravel extraction), and/or due to its linear nature and the need to traverse districts and regions (e.g. transmission lines, roads and rail). Minimum standards are also applied to these other activities to ensure their adverse effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Conversely, some other activities (e.g. commercial, retail, industrial) are inappropriate in the rural area where they may be incompatible with the rural character and amenity values, or create conflict with other existing lawfully established activities. In addition, these other activities may introduce urban characteristics or features, and they lend themselves to be more appropriately located in an urban location, where the servicing, infrastructure and facilities can assist in avoiding, remedying or mitigating their adverse effects.

There are various pressures on the character and amenity values of the rural environment from the wide range of activities. Buildings and structures are associated with most activities, and the location, scale and density of buildings can adversely affect rural character and amenity values. As part of this it is recognised that additional dwellings for farm worker accommodation may be required on larger rural properties. Typically, rural character and amenity values are where buildings and structures are at a relatively low non-urban density with generous setbacks from external property boundaries and where the height, scale, density and number of buildings do not dominate the landscape and spacious and open space qualities of the rural environment are maintained.

Existing areas of smaller rural-residential properties need to be recognised, where the level of spaciousness and privacy is different compared to the typical rural lot sizes. Appropriate levels of development and amenity protection for these denser areas of the rural environment require consideration of context, compared to the areas of the rural environment which display all the attributes listed in Issue [RURZ-GRZ-13](#).

Activities can also have external effects which are out of character and unacceptable in the rural environment. These external effects can degrade the characteristics and values of people in the rural environment, including privacy, rural outlook, spaciousness, ease of access, clean air and, at times, quietness. Inappropriate level of vehicle movements and parking, excessive out-of-character noise, and obtrusive or excessive signage can also degrade these values.

With the absence of reticulated services in rural areas, an on-site water supply is required as well as managing and disposing of all wastes. The nature, location and scale of the activities can influence the on-site servicing requirements. The individual water supplies and on-site management of waste can have adverse effects in addition to the activity itself. The Regional Council is responsible for all waste discharges to land, water and air, which are

managed under the One Plan. The District Council is responsible for managing the use of land, including waste where it causes a nuisance or adversely effects amenity values.

Signs are erected for a range of purposes, such as specific identification of any site or building, providing directions or information, or for promoting forthcoming events. Therefore, signs have a role in providing for the needs of the community. However, signs can have adverse environmental effects, particularly on visual amenity, and may conflict with traffic and safety in the District. In particular, rural environment and visual amenity can be compromised by a clutter of signs or signs of an inappropriate character. These effects are especially relevant for remote advertising signs along major transport routes in the District which can create adverse visual amenity effects as well as a hazard to motorists in terms of being a distraction.

Provision is made for signs which are generally accepted as essential for the provision of information with some restrictions on size and location. Forms of signage which are considered to be undesirable because of their potential adverse effects on visual amenity and traffic safety require resource consent. This approach enables Council to consider their suitability with respect to matters of traffic safety and visual amenity.

Habitable buildings within an 800 metre buffer of the Levin Wastewater Treatment Plant, as shown on the Planning Maps, are controlled activities. This provision is necessary to protect the plant from the effects of reverse sensitivity. Reverse sensitivity is a term used that is the effect that new development may have on activities already occurring in an areas and usually results from people in a new activity, complaining about the effects of existing activities, in this case the wastewater treatment plant. The concept recognises that it can be appropriate to restrain new activities to existing activities, particularly key infrastructure. The restraint is limited to the control Council can exercise requiring, where appropriate, that resource consents be granted on the condition that the activity be subject to the restraint of a covenant being registered against the title of the land to be used for the controlled activity, to the effect that owners, lessees or successors entitled, acknowledge the presence of the wastewater treatment plant in the vicinity and will not seek to constrain its continued lawful operation. Reverse sensitivity can also exist where sensitive activities locate in close proximity to existing primary production activities, leading to complaints about the existing lawfully established activity.

RURZ-GRZ-P11

Ensure that new activities locating in the rural area are of a nature, scale, intensity and location consistent with maintaining the character of the rural area and to be undertaken in a manner which avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects on rural character, including rural productive values and potential reverse sensitivity effects.

RURAL PRECINCT POLICIES - FOXTON DUNEFIELDS PRECINCT POLICIES

RURZ-GRZ-Prec2-P52

Manage the scale, intensity, size and design of subdivision and land development to ensure that it reflects and retains the distinctive dune landform pattern, natural habitats and landscape character and qualities of the Foxton Dunefields Precinct.

RURZ-GRZ-Prec2-P56

Minimise obtrusive built elements in the dune country landscape by integrating building location and design with the surrounding landform and landscape qualities, including by avoiding buildings on dune ridgelines and elevated sites.

RURZ-GRZ-Prec2-P57

Ensure that the natural habitats of the parabolic dunefields and inter-dunal areas, particularly remnant indigenous forest areas and wetland areas, are identified and protected from inappropriate subdivision and development.

Part 4: Appendices and Maps

APP - Appendices

4.1 - APP - Rural Environment Landscape Assessment

4.1.2 Foxton Dunefields

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The Foxton Dunefields landscape Precinct is located between the Coastal Environment Precinct and the Moutoa-Opiki Plains Precinct. The landscape is characterised by the dissected parabolic dunefields, large areas of pastoral grazing and pine forestry, resulting in an active topography with diverse vegetation cover.

Landform

The linear dunes stretch some 20km plus in a northwest-southeast orientation. The age of the inland dunes (which began accumulating 6500 years before present (BP)) means the dunes are stable, and the planting of forestry has further settled the elevated areas and contributed to the developed soil surface. Some modification to the dunes has occurred to allow for the use of irrigation devices, but in general the dunes remain intact and are a distinctive landscape element of this Precinct.

Nearer the coast, the dunes are younger but are also stable with large areas covered in exotic forest plantations.

The inter-dunal areas still contain some important remnant wetland areas, including Lake Koputara, however most swamp areas have been drained and are used for grazing. High class soils (LUC 1 and 2) are found in the south-western part of the Precinct where it extends to the fertile river terraces.

Despite the significant modification through pastoral and forestry activities, the area contains some remnant areas of indigenous vegetation, including Himatangi Scenic Reserve and Roundbush Reserves.

Landcover

Due to their age, the dunes themselves would have been forested prior to human occupation of the area. Species within the plant communities would have included tawa, matai, hinau, miro, totara, pukatea and kahikatea. At the time of European settlement, however, clearance by the first people meant the vegetation on the younger dunes was largely bracken fern, scrub, and natural grasses.

Now the dominant cover is pastoral together with forestry plantations. The inter-dunal swamp areas and peaty backswamps would have originally contained swamp forest and wetland species. Where these landforms remain intact, the wetland shrub and reed species still exist.

Landuse

Due to the peaty wet soils, flax production was integral to the initial economic growth of the area. At one time 50 mills were operating within a 16 km radius of Foxton. Later reliance on pastoral use meant that the soils became dryer through drainage and flood management, and much of the flax and kahikatea has now gone.

Dairy and sheep farming are now the dominant productive activities in the rural area, along with some horticulture, poultry and pig farming.

Rural living associated with production activities occurs throughout the Precinct. Recent rural lifestyle development is typically located closer to the township of Foxton.

Flood protection measures including the spillway associated with the Manawatu River mean that parts of this Precinct are only used on a temporary basis.

VISUAL QUALITY

Natural science factors

The dune field system in this area is unique to the country and contributes strongly to the character of this area. The dunes in this area are the oldest occurring along the coast of the Kapiti and Horowhenua districts and have a high level of value for their rarity and distinctiveness.

The scale and linear form of the dunefield is quite distinct from other local elevated topographical features in the district (such as the terraces and foothills) and is a product of

the processes of winds, wave action and hydrology. The linear movement of the dunes inland is a particular characteristic of this Precinct, and has influenced the location and direction of roads, siting of houses and provided view shafts through to both the Tasman Sea and the Tararua Ranges.

Aesthetic values

Deforestation and re-forestation have added other aspects to the quality of the dunes, both in terms of the natural processes and also the aesthetic qualities.

While the forestry emphasises the difference in elevation between the dunes and inter-dunal depressions, it also has the effect of standardising the differences between dunes. The height and dense nature of the vegetation also blocks views within and through the dunes including the extended visual combinations of dunes, wetlands and coastal features that would have been previously available.

The drainage of the wetlands and conversion to pasture has removed the changeable, delicate textures provided by reed species and grasses. However, the usually lush bright green pasture grasses contribute strongly to the perceptions of rural character, providing a sense of openness and expanse.

SENSITIVITY

The dunes are of high value and are sensitive to modification through earthworks. The rarity of the dune formation, and its importance in contributing to the landscape character of this Precinct requires continued protection to be afforded to the dunes, in particular.

Visual absorption capability

This landscape has relatively simple topography. Its particular character comes from the two visually distinct topographical elements - the inter-dunal flats/hollows, and the extensive, linear elevated forms of the dunes themselves.

This simplicity results in the landscape's ability to absorb change as being low. Structures, landform modification and even alteration in vegetation will impact at a level higher than that in a more complex and varied landscape.

Despite the elevated sites the dunes offer, built structures on the tops of dunes are relatively few and where this has occurred, buildings have been reasonably well integrated through planting and other measures.

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

This is one of the few Precincts that is not characterised by high class soils. This in itself creates more flexibility for development location, however the distinctive landform and land patterning requires any development, or change in land use, to acknowledge the Precinct's particular characteristics.

The Foxton township is situated on SH1, however the locations of the main arterial routes within the majority of the Precinct area are strongly influenced by the dune ridges extending inland. This results in long straight roads running east-west, with few secondary roads intersecting these. This has generally meant that the dune formations have been protected from major modification, and their linear form is somewhat emphasised. It also results in the roads forming permanent view shafts from the mountains to the coast and vice versa.

The existing parcels also reflect the road and dune patterning. The parcels tend to be large, with frontages on the roads and boundaries across the dune ridges indeterminately defined by shelterbelts and/or forestry plantations.

The insertion of additional intersecting roads or significant driveways running perpendicular to the existing roads and cutting through the dunes would be ecologically and visually at odds with the character of this Precinct.

Settlement types need to acknowledge the integrity of the dune formation. Measures to ensure this include the considered design and location of the development in relation to the strong linear patterning, and the avoidance of the dune ridges when locating fencelines, building sites and structures.

The opportunity exists, to use development as a means to enhance biodiversity through the rehabilitation of wetlands and the dune vegetation cover. The change in land use from forestry to residential development can enhance the ecological and environmental values of the Precinct, but the process involved in the physical change needs to be carefully staged and managed so as to avoid disturbance of the dune structures and related wetlands, while utilising remaining vegetation for screening and absorption purposes.

The Foxton Dunefields are renowned and unique to the country. Their presence is a dominant characteristic of the area and their form and role in the landscape requires protection from visual degradation or damage from modification.

Part 4: Appendices and Maps

APP - Appendices

4.5 - APP - Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria for land use consents in the Rural Zone

APP-AC-S7 General

- (a) The extent of the non-compliance(s) and/or any worsening of existing non-compliance(s).
- (b) The physical features of the site and surrounds and any unique characteristics that makes compliance with permitted activity standards unachievable.
- (c) The location, bulk and dominance of the building or structure and the actual and potential adverse affects on the character and amenity of the surrounding area.

(d)The likelihood of the proposed activity to generate reverse sensitivity effects on the primary production, intensive farming activities and other lawfully established activities, and the potential impact these may have on the continuing effective and efficient operation of the primary production, intensive farming activities and other lawfully established activities.

(e)The extent to which the design of the building and activity is compatible with the activities, character and amenity of the area.

(f)The level, duration and frequency of any noise likely to be generated and the degree to which this will contrast with the existing noise environment and the impact of any cumulative increase, taking into account the nature of any measures to mitigate excessive noise levels and the degree to which they are likely to be successful.

(g)Whether the development would have an adverse effect on the safety and efficiency of the road network, including consideration of the volume and type of traffic which may be generated to the site and the ability of the site to accommodate loading, manoeuvring and access requirements, including the extent to which the frequency and timing of vehicle movements and the impact these may have on the surrounding environment in terms of noise, vibration, and glare from headlights.

(h)Whether establishment of the activity would adversely affect the efficient functioning of the Rural Zone or other zones, or result in significant social or economic impacts.

(i)The extent to which the activity promotes the optimum and efficient use of the rural land resource.

(j)The proposed methods for avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse effects including the design of the building or structure, the use of materials, design, screening, landscaping.

(k)The extent to which alternative sites, designs and layout have been considered.

(l)The proposed methods for avoiding, remedying or mitigating reverse sensitivity effects on transport networks, including railway corridors from new or altered buildings accommodating new noise sensitive activities.

(m)The positive local, regional and national benefits of undertaking the activity.

(n)Whether the development or activity would have an adverse effect on the operation, maintenance, upgrading or development of the National Grid.

(o)The extent to which a proposed activity will affect the efficient and effective operation of district significant infrastructure. Consideration will be given to advice provided by the manager of the potentially affected infrastructure.

APP-AC-S8 Buildings

(a)The extent of any adverse effects on the environment from exceeding maximum height and in particular the effect of any increased building height on the visual character of the area and its compatibility with the scale of adjoining buildings.

(b)The degree to which the building has an adverse effect on the rural character of the site and the surrounding area.

(c)The design and appearance of the building and its compatibility with the surrounding environment in terms of design, height, and scale.

(d)The need for two or more residential dwelling units on a site to provide for farm worker accommodation.

(e)The extent to which encroachment of a building setback or separation distance to enable more efficient, practical and/or pleasant use of the remainder of the site.

(f)The extent to which alternative practical locations or designs are available for the building.

(g)Any adverse effects of the proximity or bulk of the building, in terms of visual dominance by buildings on the outlook from adjoining sites and buildings, which is out of character with the local environment.

(h)Any adverse effects on adjoining sites of the proximity of the building, in terms of reduced privacy through being overlooked from or being in close proximity to neighbouring buildings, to an extent which is inconsistent with the surrounding environment.

(i)The extent to which the use of the proposed building will detract from the pleasantness or amenity of adjoining sites, in terms of such matters as noise, smell, dust, glare or vibration.

(j)The ability to mitigate any adverse effects of the proposal on adjoining sites, including through the provision of landscape plantings.

(k)Whether development within the National Grid Corridor would have an adverse effect on the operation, maintenance, upgrading or development of the electricity transmission network.

(l)The proposed methods for avoiding, remedying or mitigating reverse sensitivity effects on transport networks, including railway corridors from new or altered buildings accommodating new noise sensitive activities.

Assessment criteria for consents in all zones

APP-AC-S38 Noise

(a)The nature of any measures to reduce noise generation or mitigate excessive noise levels and the degree to which they are likely to be successful, including:

(i)Reduction of noise at source.

(ii)Alternative techniques or machinery which may be available.

(iii)Insulation of machinery or cladding used in the building.

(iv)Mounding or screen fencing/walls.

(v)Hours of operation.

(b)The level, duration, timing, and frequency of noise to be generated and the degree to which this will contrast with the characteristics of the existing noise environment and the impact of any cumulative increase.

(c)Any special characteristics of the noise and subsequent effects on health and safety, and on the amenity values of the surrounding environment.

(d)The effects on the environment from the maximum noise levels of the proposed activity, particularly at night.

(e)The nature of the zone within which the noise generating activity is located and its compatibility with the expected environmental results for that zone.

(f)The nature of any adjoining zone (where applicable) and, the compatibility of the noise-generating activity with the expected environmental results for that zone.

(g)The location of any nearby residential dwelling units, and the degree to which the amenities of residents may be adversely affected.

(h)Use of protocols, codes of practice and industry guidelines and any relevant New Zealand Standards for the assessment of noise.

(i)The use of noise management plans to manage noise sources, monitor and respond efficiently to public complaints.

APP-AC-S49 Network Utilities and Wind Monitoring Masts

(a)The size and scale of proposed structures and whether they are in keeping with the size and scale of any existing development.

(b)The protection of the environment while recognising technical and operational necessity which may result in adverse effects.

(c)The potential for the network utility operator to locate new network infrastructure within road corridors or underground and the provisions made for co-siting or sharing facilities where technically and economically practicable.

(d)The extent to which the design and appearance or location of new or additional network utilities, including associated structures, adversely affect:

(i)the safety and efficiency of the road network;

(ii)the character, amenity values, including streetscapes, of the surrounding area; and

(iii)the values and attributes of any site or areas of natural and/or cultural heritage.

(e)Whether there are any significant demonstrable adverse effects on people's health and safety.

(f)With respect to network utilities, whether alternative locations, routes or other options are economically, operationally, physically or technically practicable.

