
Invitation to comment on Fast-track referral application for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – FTAA-2607-1261

From Infrastructure Portfolio <Infrastructure.Portfolio@parliament.govt.nz>

Date Tue 11/08/2026 8:25 AM

To Nicola Willis (MIN) <N.Willis@ministers.govt.nz>; Shane Jones (MIN) <S.Jones@ministers.govt.nz>; Nicola Grigg (MIN) <N.Grigg@ministers.govt.nz>; Tama Potaka (MIN) <T.Potaka@ministers.govt.nz>; Simeon Brown (MIN) <S.Brown@ministers.govt.nz>; Simon Watts (MIN) <S.Watts@ministers.govt.nz>

Cc FTAreferalls <FTAreferalls@mfe.govt.nz>

 1 attachment (56 KB)

Comments Form for Invited Ministers.docx;

To:

- Minister for Economic Growth
- Minister for Regional Development
- Minister for the Environment
- Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti
- Minister for Māori Development
- Minister for Energy
- Minister of Climate Change
- Minister of Conservation

Dear Ministers,

Hon Chris Bishop, the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister), has asked for me to write to you on his behalf.

The Minister has received an application from Harmony Energy NZ Limited for referral of the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) to the fast-track process (application reference FTAA- 2607-1261).

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits.

Invitation to comment on referral application

I write in accordance with section 17 of the Act to invite you to provide written comments on the referral application. I have provided summary details of the project below.

If you wish to provide written comments, these must be received by **return email** within **15 working days** of receipt of this email, being **1 September 2026**. The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame. Any comments submitted will contribute to the Minister's decision on whether to accept the referral application and to refer the project.

If you do not wish to provide comments, please let us know as soon as possible so we can proceed with processing the application without delay.

If the Minister decides to accept the application and to refer the project, the Applicant will need to complete any preliminary steps required under the Act and then lodge their substantive application for the approvals needed for the project. An expert panel will be appointed to decide the substantive application.

Process

The application documents are accessible through the Fast-track portal. Please note that application documents may contain commercially sensitivity information and should not be shared widely. If you haven't used the portal before, you can request access by emailing ftareferrals@mfe.govt.nz. Once you are registered and have accepted the terms and conditions, you will receive a link to view the documents. Existing users will be able to see application documents via the request when logging into the portal. Should you need for your agency to provide any supplementary information, a nominated person can be provided access to the portal, access can be requested by emailing ftareferrals@mfe.govt.nz.

To submit your comments on the application, you can either provide a letter or complete the attached template for written comments and return it by replying to this email, infrastructure.portfolio@parliament.govt.nz.

Before the due date, if you have any queries about this email or need assistance with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz. Further information is available at <https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/>.

Important Information

Please note that all comments received from Ministers invited to comment will be subject to the Official Information Act 1982. Comments received will be proactively released at the time the Minister for Infrastructure makes a referral decision, unless the Minister providing comments advises the Minister for Infrastructure's office they are to be withheld, at the time they are submitted.

If a Conflict of Interest is identified by the Minister providing comments at any stage of providing comments, please inform my office and the Cabinet Office immediately. The Cabinet Office will provide advice and, if appropriate, initiate a request to the Prime Minister to agree to a transfer of the project/portfolio invite to another Minister (a request to transfer a COI from one Minister to another can take 1-7 days).

Project summary

Project name	Tauhei Solar Farm Extension
Applicant	Harmony Energy NZ Limited
Location	Te Aroha, Waikato
Project description	The project involves the construction, operation, and maintenance of an extension to the existing Tauhei Solar Farm in the Matamata-Piako District, Waikato. The extension would generate up to 50 megawatts of alternating current (MW AC) renewable electricity, which the applicant states is sufficient to meet the annual electricity requirements of approximately 15,500 households.

The project area comprises approximately 95.6 hectares of rural land at Te Aroha West. The project area is located immediately south of the existing Tauhei Solar Farm and spans three land parcels across two titles. The project area is bounded by Mikkelsen Road to the west, Waiheka Road to the south, and is bisected by O'Donoghue Road. The project comprises:

- approximately 115,000 solar panels and associated electricity infrastructure with an installed capacity of approximately 50 MW AC
- underground cabling and associated electricity infrastructure to connect the project to the existing Tauhei Solar Farm substation and the national grid via Transpower's Waihou Substation
- internal access roads, vehicle crossings, earthworks, and stream crossing works primarily for the installation of culverts
- security fencing, lighting, monitoring equipment and other operational infrastructure
- temporary construction facilities and associated construction activities
- landscaping, ecological restoration and planting, including riparian and wetland restoration works
- ongoing agricultural activities, including sheep grazing
- other ancillary works required to support the construction, operation and maintenance of the solar farm
- minor consequential changes to the existing Tauhei Solar Farm consent as required.

11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

Peter Chrisp
Director-General of Conservation
Department of Conservation (DOC)

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Peter

Invitation to provide written comments on the referral application for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

Note: Comments must be received by **Tuesday 1 September 2026, 11.59 pm.**

A referral application has been received by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) from Harmony Energy NZ Limited (the applicant) for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act). Project summary details are in Appendix A.

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits. *Section 22* of the Act sets out the criteria that inform the Minister's decision-making process on referral applications.

I write under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(1)(c) of the Act (which requires the Minister to invite written comments on a referral application from the relevant administering agencies). I invite DOC as the administering agency for approvals under the Wildlife Act 1953 to provide written comments on the referral application, a copy of which is available to you via the portal.

If you wish to provide written comments, these must be received within **15 working days** of receipt of this letter and copy of the application (refer to due date above). The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of the specified time frame.

Under section 17(3A) of the Act, any comments made by an administering agency must be **relevant** to the application and the decision on the application that the Minister is required to make under section 21.

Please note that consideration of a referral application is limited to the referral criteria and does not involve the level of detail required at the substantive application stage. Comments should therefore be confined to matters relevant to the referral criteria. Please avoid providing detailed comments on matters that would more appropriately be considered during the substantive application process.

You may have a later opportunity to provide further detail in comments on a substantive application (for example, site specific constraints or conditions), if the project is referred to an independent expert panel.

To this end, please ensure any comments you choose to provide are specific to this particular referral application, and linked to the Minister's decision-making criteria as set out in sections 21 and 22 of the Act. In this regard, we are particularly interested in comments you might have on the following matters:

- 1. Whether you consider the project may involve an ineligible activity, and if so, why (as defined in section 5 of the Act)*
- 2. Whether you consider any of the reasons to decline a referral application may be applicable to this application, and if so why (under section 21(5) of Act).*

The information you are receiving is being provided to you consistent with the statutory requirements for inviting written comments under section 17 of the Act. The information is being provided in-confidence and may be commercially sensitive. It should not be disclosed to, and comments should not be sought from, anyone outside of your organisation.

If the Minister decides to accept the application and refer the project to the fast-track approvals process, the applicant will be required to complete any preliminary steps under the Act before lodging a substantive application. If the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) deems the substantive application complete and within scope, an independent expert panel will be appointed to make a final decision on the required approvals.

Before the due date, please upload any comments to the application portal feedback page using the template for written comments (attached) or similar format/document.

Alternatively, if you wish to email your feedback or have any queries about this letter, please email to referral@fasttrack.govt.nz and include the name of the lead contact – Ashiley Sycamore.

For assistance with the application portal or to update your account details, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S Frame', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

CC: s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
fast-track@doc.govt.nz

Appendix A: Project summary details

Appendix A – Project summary details

Application number	FTAA-2607-1261
Project name	Tauhei Solar Farm Extension
Applicant name	Harmony Energy NZ Limited
Project summary details	The project involves the construction, operation, and maintenance of an extension to the existing Tauhei Solar Farm in the Matamata-Piako District, Waikato. The extension would generate up to 50 megawatts of alternating current (MW AC) renewable electricity, which the applicant states is sufficient to meet the annual electricity requirements of approximately 15,500 households. The project area is described as approximately 95.6 hectares of rural land at Te Aroha West in the Matamata-Piako District, Waikato. The project area is located immediately south of the existing Tauhei Solar Farm and spans three land parcels across two titles. The project area is bounded by Mikkelsen Road to the west, Waiheka Road to the south, and is bisected by O'Donoghue Road. The applicant seeks the following approvals via the fast-track approvals process to authorise the project, including wildlife approvals sought at this stage on a precautionary basis, subject to further investigations prior to any substantive application: a. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), including standard freshwater fisheries activities (culverts) b. a change or cancellation of a resource consent condition that would otherwise be applied for under the RMA c. wildlife approvals under the Wildlife Act 1953.

11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

John Linstead
Hako Tūpuna Trust

Email: hako@xtra.co.nz

Tēnā koe John

Invitation to provide written comments on the referral application for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

Note: Comments must be received by **Tuesday 1 September 2026, 11.59 pm.**

A referral application has been received by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) from Harmony Energy NZ Limited (the applicant) for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act). Project summary details are in Appendix A.

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits. *Section 22* of the Act sets out the criteria that inform the Minister's decision-making process on referral applications.

I write under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(d) of the Act (which requires consultation with relevant Māori groups identified under section 18(2)). I invite you to provide written comments on the referral application, a copy of which is available to you via the portal.

The information you are receiving is being provided to you consistent with the statutory requirements for inviting written comments under section 17 of the Act. The information is being provided in-confidence and may be commercially sensitive. It should not be forwarded to, and comments should not be sought from, anyone outside of your organisation.

If you wish to provide written comments, these must be received within **15 working days** of receipt of this letter and copy of the application (refer to the due date above). The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame. Comments received will inform the Minister's considerations in making decisions on whether to accept the referral application. If a decision is made to refer the project, any comments received may assist in determining the information that must be submitted with the substantive application.

If you provide written comments as a **Māori consultation group**, you may be entitled to a financial contribution of \$2,000 (excluding GST) under Schedule 2 of the Fast-Track Approvals (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2025. For general information about contribution fees and invoices refer to the Fast-track webpage on *Cost recovery for agencies*. The process for applying for a contribution fee payment as a Māori consultation group is outlined here: *Applying for a contribution fee payment*.

If the Minister decides to accept the application and refer the project to the fast-track approvals process, the applicant will be required to complete any preliminary steps under the Act before lodging a substantive application. If the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) deems the substantive application complete, an expert panel will be appointed to make a final decision on the required approvals.

Before the due date, please upload any comments to the application portal feedback page using the template for written comments (attached) or similar format/document.

Alternatively, if you wish to email your feedback or have any queries about this letter, please email to referral@fasttrack.govt.nz and include the name of the lead contact – Ashiley Sycamore.

For assistance with the application portal or to update your account details, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

Nāku noa, nā

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Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

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11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

Manaia Te Wiata
Chief Executive
Matamata-Piako District Council (MPDC)

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Manaia

Invitation to provide written comments on the referral application for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

Note: Comments must be received by **Tuesday 1 September 2026, 11.59 pm.**

A referral application has been received by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) from Harmony Energy NZ Limited (the applicant) for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act). Project summary details are in Appendix A of this letter.

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits. *Section 22* of the Act sets out the criteria that inform the Minister's decision-making process on referral applications.

Under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(1)(a) of the Act, I invite MPDC to provide written comments on the referral application, a copy of which is available to you via the portal.

Written comments must be received within **15 working days** of receipt of this letter and a copy of the application (refer to the due date above). The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame.

Under section 17(3) of the Act, a relevant local authority **must** provide comments advising on the following matters:

- 1. Any applications that have been lodged with the Council that would be a competing application or applications if a substantive application for the project were lodged. If no such applications exist, please provide written confirmation.*

In addition, under section 17(3)(b), a relevant local authority **may** also provide other comments, but only if those comments are **relevant** to the application and the decision on the application that the Minister is required to make under section 21.

Please note that consideration of a referral application is limited to the referral criteria and does not involve the level of detail required at the substantive application stage. Comments should therefore be confined to matters relevant to the referral criteria. Please avoid providing detailed comments on matters that would more appropriately be considered during the substantive application process.

You may have a later opportunity to provide further detail in comments on a substantive application (for example, site specific constraints or conditions), if the project is referred to an independent expert panel.

To this end, please ensure any comments you choose to provide are specific to this particular referral application, and linked to the Minister's decision-making criteria as set out in sections 21 and 22 of the Act. In this regard, we are particularly interested in comments you might have on the following matters:

- 2. Whether you consider the project may involve an ineligible activity, and if so, why (as defined in section 5 of the Act)*
- 3. Whether you consider any of the reasons to decline a referral application may be applicable to this application, and if so why (under section 21(5) of Act).*

The information you are receiving is being provided to you consistent with the statutory requirements for inviting written comments under section 17 of the Act. The information is being provided in-confidence and may be commercially sensitive. It should not be disclosed to, and comments should not be sought from, anyone outside of your organisation.

If the Minister decides to accept the application and refer the project to the fast-track approvals process, the applicant will be required to complete any preliminary steps under the Act before lodging a substantive application. If the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) deems the substantive application complete and within scope, an independent expert panel will be appointed to make a final decision on the required approvals.

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For assistance with the application portal or to update your account details, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

Yours sincerely

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Stephanie Frame

Manager – Fast-track Operations

CC: s 9(2)(a) [REDACTED]
s 9(2)(a) [REDACTED]
s 9(2)(a) [REDACTED]
MPDCfasttrackapp@mpdc.govt.nz

Appendix A: Project summary details

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11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

Boni Renata
General Manager
Ngaati Whanaunga Incorporated Society

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe Boni

Invitation to provide written comments on the referral application for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

Note: Comments must be received by **Tuesday 1 September 2026, 11.59 pm.**

A referral application has been received by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) from Harmony Energy NZ Limited (the applicant) for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act). Project summary details are in Appendix A.

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits. *Section 22* of the Act sets out the criteria that inform the Minister's decision-making process on referral applications.

I write under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(d) of the Act (which requires consultation with relevant Māori groups identified under section 18(2)). I invite you to provide written comments on the referral application, a copy of which is available to you via the portal.

The information you are receiving is being provided to you consistent with the statutory requirements for inviting written comments under section 17 of the Act. The information is being provided in-confidence and may be commercially sensitive. It should not be forwarded to, and comments should not be sought from, anyone outside of your organisation.

If you wish to provide written comments, these must be received within **15 working days** of receipt of this letter and copy of the application (refer to the due date above). The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame. Comments received will inform the Minister's considerations in making decisions on whether to accept the referral application. If a decision is made to refer the project, any comments received may assist in determining the information that must be submitted with the substantive application.

If you provide written comments as a **Māori consultation group**, you may be entitled to a financial contribution of \$2,000 (excluding GST) under Schedule 2 of the Fast-Track Approvals (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2025. For general information about contribution fees and invoices refer to the Fast-track webpage on *Cost recovery for agencies*. The process for applying for a contribution fee payment as a Māori consultation group is outlined here: *Applying for a contribution fee payment*.

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For assistance with the application portal or to update your account details, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

Nāku noa, nā



Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

CC: s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]

Appendix A: Project summary details

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11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

Mokoro Gillett
Chair
Ngāti Hauā Iwi Trust

Email: admin@ngatihauaiwitrust.co.nz

Tēnā koe Mokoro

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Nāku noa, nā

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Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

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11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

Waati Ngamane
Chair
Ngāti Maru Rūnanga Trust

Email: office@ngatimaru.iwi.nz

Tēnā koe Waati

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For assistance with the application portal or to update your account details, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S Frame', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

CC: eu@ngatimaru.iwi.nz

Appendix A: Project summary details

Appendix A – Project summary details

Application number	FTAA-2607-1261
Project name	Tauhei Solar Farm Extension
Applicant name	Harmony Energy NZ Limited
Project summary details	The project involves the construction, operation, and maintenance of an extension to the existing Tauhei Solar Farm in the Matamata-Piako District, Waikato. The extension would generate up to 50 megawatts of alternating current (MW AC) renewable electricity, which the applicant states is sufficient to meet the annual electricity requirements of approximately 15,500 households. The project area is described as approximately 95.6 hectares of rural land at Te Aroha West in the Matamata-Piako District, Waikato. The project area is located immediately south of the existing Tauhei Solar Farm and spans three land parcels across two titles. The project area is bounded by Mikkelsen Road to the west, Waiheka Road to the south, and is bisected by O'Donoghue Road. The applicant seeks the following approvals via the fast-track approvals process to authorise the project, including wildlife approvals sought at this stage on a precautionary basis, subject to further investigations prior to any substantive application: a. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), including standard freshwater fisheries activities (culverts) b. a change or cancellation of a resource consent condition that would otherwise be applied for under the RMA c. wildlife approvals under the Wildlife Act 1953.

11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

Michelle Wilson
Chief Executive
Ngāti Tamaterā Treaty Settlement Trust

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe Michelle

Invitation to provide written comments on the referral application for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

Note: Comments must be received by **Tuesday 1 September 2026, 11.59 pm.**

A referral application has been received by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) from Harmony Energy NZ Limited (the applicant) for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act). Project summary details are in Appendix A.

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits. *Section 22* of the Act sets out the criteria that inform the Minister's decision-making process on referral applications.

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If you provide written comments as a **Māori consultation group**, you may be entitled to a financial contribution of \$2,000 (excluding GST) under Schedule 2 of the Fast-Track Approvals (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2025. For general information about contribution fees and invoices refer to the Fast-track webpage on *Cost recovery for agencies*. The process for applying for a contribution fee payment as a Māori consultation group is outlined here: *Applying for a contribution fee payment*.

If the Minister decides to accept the application and refer the project to the fast-track approvals process, the applicant will be required to complete any preliminary steps under the Act before lodging a substantive application. If the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) deems the substantive application complete, an expert panel will be appointed to make a final decision on the required approvals.

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Nāku noa, nā

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Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

CC: s 9(2)(a)
admin@tamatera.iwi.nz
rma@tamatera.iwi.nz
chair@tamatera.iwi.nz

Appendix A: Project summary details

Appendix A – Project summary details

Application number	FTAA-2607-1261
Project name	Tauhei Solar Farm Extension
Applicant name	Harmony Energy NZ Limited
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11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

Amelia Williams
Executive Chair
Ngāti Tara Tokanui Trust

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe Amelia

Invitation to provide written comments on the referral application for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

Note: Comments must be received by **Tuesday 1 September 2026, 11.59 pm.**

A referral application has been received by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) from Harmony Energy NZ Limited (the applicant) for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act). Project summary details are in Appendix A.

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Nāku noa, nā

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Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

Appendix A – Project summary details

Application number	FTAA-2607-1261
Project name	Tauhei Solar Farm Extension
Applicant name	Harmony Energy NZ Limited
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11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

Norm Hill
RMA Contact
Ngāti Tumutumu Trust

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe Norm

Invitation to provide written comments on the referral application for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

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Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

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11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

Paul Majurey
Pare Hauraki Cultural Redress Trust

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe Paul

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Nāku noa, nā

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Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

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11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

Tōmairangi Smith
Chair
Te Puāwaitanga o Ngāti Hinerangi Trust

Email: info@ngatihinerangiwi.co.nz

Tēnā koe Tōmairangi

Invitation to provide written comments on the referral application for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

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Nāku noa, nā

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Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

Appendix A – Project summary details

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11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

Parekawhia McLean
Chair
Te Whakakitenga o Waikato

Email: secretariat@tainui.co.nz

Tēnā koe Parekawhia

Invitation to provide written comments on the referral application for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

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Nāku noa, nā

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Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

CC: s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]

Appendix A: Project summary details

Appendix A – Project summary details

Application number	FTAA-2607-1261
Project name	Tauhei Solar Farm Extension
Applicant name	Harmony Energy NZ Limited
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11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

James Kilty
Chief Executive Officer
Transpower New Zealand Limited

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear James

Invitation to provide written comments on the referral application for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

Note: Comments must be received by **Tuesday 1 September 2026, 11.59 pm.**

A referral application has been received by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) from Harmony Energy NZ Limited (the applicant) for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act). Project summary details are in Appendix A.

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits.

I write under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(5) of the Act. You have been identified as an “any other person” for the purposes of this section, as the electricity generated by the project is proposed to be exported to the national grid via existing overhead and underground lines to Transpower’s Waihou Substation. Accordingly, I invite you to provide written comments on the referral application, a copy of which is available to you via the portal.

The information you are receiving is being provided to you consistent with the statutory requirements for inviting written comments under section 17 of the Act. The information is being provided in-confidence and may be commercially sensitive. It should not be forwarded to, and comments should not be sought from, anyone outside of your organisation.

Any written comments you provide, must be received within **15 working days** of receipt of this letter and copy of the application (refer to the due date above). The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame.

Comments received will help inform the Minister and the criteria in *Section 22* of the Act will guide the Minister’s decision-making on whether to refer the project to the fast-track approvals process.

If the Minister decides to accept the application and refer the project to the fast-track approvals process, the applicant will be required to complete any preliminary steps under the Act before lodging a substantive application. If the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) deems the substantive application complete, an expert panel will be appointed to make a final decision on the required approvals.

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For assistance with the application portal or to update your account details, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

Yours sincerely

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Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

CC: s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]

Appendix A: Project summary details

Appendix A – Project summary details

Application number	FTAA-2607-1261
Project name	Tauhei Solar Farm Extension
Applicant name	Harmony Energy NZ Limited
Project summary details	The project involves the construction, operation, and maintenance of an extension to the existing Tauhei Solar Farm in the Matamata-Piako District, Waikato. The extension would generate up to 50 megawatts of alternating current (MW AC) renewable electricity, which the applicant states is sufficient to meet the annual electricity requirements of approximately 15,500 households. The project area is described as approximately 95.6 hectares of rural land at Te Aroha West in the Matamata-Piako District, Waikato. The project area is located immediately south of the existing Tauhei Solar Farm and spans three land parcels across two titles. The project area is bounded by Mikkelsen Road to the west, Waiheka Road to the south, and is bisected by O'Donoghue Road. The applicant seeks the following approvals via the fast-track approvals process to authorise the project, including wildlife approvals sought at this stage on a precautionary basis, subject to further investigations prior to any substantive application: a. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), including standard freshwater fisheries activities (culverts) b. a change or cancellation of a resource consent condition that would otherwise be applied for under the RMA c. wildlife approvals under the Wildlife Act 1953.

11 August 2026

FTAA-2607-1261

Chris McLay
Chief Executive
Waikato Regional Council

Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Chris

Invitation to provide written comments on the referral application for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

Note: Comments must be received by **Tuesday 1 September 2026, 11.59 pm.**

A referral application has been received by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) from Harmony Energy NZ Limited (the applicant) for the Tauhei Solar Farm Extension project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act). Project summary details are in Appendix A of this letter.

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits. *Section 22* of the Act sets out the criteria that inform the Minister's decision-making process on referral applications.

Under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 17(1)(a) of the Act, I invite Waikato Regional Council to provide written comments on the referral application, a copy of which is available to you via the portal.

Written comments must be received within **15 working days** of receipt of this letter and a copy of the application (refer to the due date above). The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame.

Under section 17(3) of the Act, a relevant local authority **must** provide comments advising on the following matters:

- 1. Any applications that have been lodged with the Council that would be a competing application or applications if a substantive application for the project were lodged. If no such applications exist, please provide written confirmation.*

2. *In relation to projects seeking approval of a resource consent under section 42(4)(a) of the Act, whether there any existing resource consents issued where sections 124C(1)(c) or 165Z1 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) could apply, if the project were to be applied for as a resource consent under the RMA. If no such consents exist, please provide written confirmation.*

In addition, under section 17(3)(b), a relevant local authority **may** also provide other comments, but only if those comments are **relevant** to the application and the decision on the application that the Minister is required to make under section 21.

Please note that consideration of a referral application is limited to the referral criteria and does not involve the level of detail required at the substantive application stage. Comments should therefore be confined to matters relevant to the referral criteria. Please avoid providing detailed comments on matters that would more appropriately be considered during the substantive application process.

You may have a later opportunity to provide further detail in comments on a substantive application (for example, site specific constraints or conditions), if the project is referred to an independent expert panel.

To this end, please ensure any comments you choose to provide are specific to this particular referral application, and linked to the Minister's decision-making criteria as set out in sections 21 and 22 of the Act. In this regard, we are particularly interested in comments you might have on the following matters:

3. *Whether you consider the project may involve an ineligible activity, and if so, why (as defined in section 5 of the Act)*
4. *Whether you consider any of the reasons to decline a referral application may be applicable to this application, and if so why (under section 21(5) of Act).*

The information you are receiving is being provided to you consistent with the statutory requirements for inviting written comments under section 17 of the Act. The information is being provided in-confidence and may be commercially sensitive. It should not be disclosed to, and comments should not be sought from, anyone outside of your organisation.

If the Minister decides to accept the application and refer the project to the fast-track approvals process, the applicant will be required to complete any preliminary steps under the Act before lodging a substantive application. If the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) deems the substantive application complete and within scope, an independent expert panel will be appointed to make a final decision on the required approvals.

Before the due date, please upload any comments to the application portal feedback page using the template for written comments (attached) or similar format/document.

Alternatively, if you wish to email your feedback or have any queries about this letter, please email to referral@fasttrack.govt.nz and include the name of the lead contact – Ashiley Sycamore.

For assistance with the application portal or to update your account details, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S Frame', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Stephanie Frame

Manager – Fast-track Operations

CC: s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
s 9(2)(a) [redacted]

Appendix A: Project summary details

Appendix A – Project summary details

Application number	FTAA-2607-1261
Project name	Tauhei Solar Farm Extension
Applicant name	Harmony Energy NZ Limited
Project summary details	The project involves the construction, operation, and maintenance of an extension to the existing Tauhei Solar Farm in the Matamata-Piako District, Waikato. The extension would generate up to 50 megawatts of alternating current (MW AC) renewable electricity, which the applicant states is sufficient to meet the annual electricity requirements of approximately 15,500 households. The project area is described as approximately 95.6 hectares of rural land at Te Aroha West in the Matamata-Piako District, Waikato. The project area is located immediately south of the existing Tauhei Solar Farm and spans three land parcels across two titles. The project area is bounded by Mikkelsen Road to the west, Waiheka Road to the south, and is bisected by O'Donoghue Road. The applicant seeks the following approvals via the fast-track approvals process to authorise the project, including wildlife approvals sought at this stage on a precautionary basis, subject to further investigations prior to any substantive application: a. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), including standard freshwater fisheries activities (culverts) b. a change or cancellation of a resource consent condition that would otherwise be applied for under the RMA c. wildlife approvals under the Wildlife Act 1953.