

File ref: FTAA-2508-1095

19 November 2025

Matthew Cleland
Contact Energy Limited
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By Email: claire.hunter@mitchelldaysh.co.nz

Tēnā koe

Request for information from Contact Energy in relation to the Southland Wind Farm under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

The Southland Wind Farm Expert Panel (the Panel) has directed the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) to request further information from you under section 67 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act), relating to the Southland Wind Farm application.

At the direction of the Panel, the EPA is seeking information outlined in Appendix 1.

Supply of Information

In accordance with section 67(2) of the Act Contact Energy must:

- a) Provide electronic copies of the information or report requested; or
- b) Advise the EPA, with reasons that you decline to provide the information or report requested.

Please provide the further information to the EPA by 25 November 2025.

If the information requested is not received, the Panel must proceed as if the request for further information has been declined.

Please note, the information will be provided to the Panel, the applicant and every person who provided comments on the application. The information will also be made available on the Fast-track website.

If you have any questions, please contact Application Lead, Keely Paler by email at info@fasttrack.govt.nz

fasttrack.govt.nz | info@fasttrack.govt.nz | 0800 FASTRK

Fast-track is administered by the Environmental Protection Authority
Private Bag 63002, Wellington 6140, New Zealand | NZBN: 9429041901977

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keely Paler'.

Keely Paler

Application Lead

Appendix 1

1. Please confirm whether all of the consented turbines in the Kaiwera Wind Farm have been modelled in the relevant visual simulations or whether the 20 turbines that Mercury have said they no longer wish to develop have been excluded? (H03, paragraphs 167 to 169, including footnote 30, and paragraphs 267, 269).
2. Mr Coombs acknowledges the associative values of the site as an “*identifying backdrop and local landmark to the Mokereta farming community*” at H03 paragraph 95(g). There does not appear to be a discussion of effects in relation to this associative value (although reference to the landmark qualities of the area are acknowledged in the discussion of cultural landscape effects). Please provide an evaluation in this regard from both Mr Coombs and Mr Bray (given that Mr Bray’s evaluation is a stand-alone assessment that adopts Mr Coombs’ work where he is in agreement or does not consider that it needs expansion, and he has not specifically commented on this specific matter).
3. At H03 paragraph 215, Mr Coombs advises that “*the natural character values of parts of the SWF site are **high**. Some specific areas of the site have very high natural character values, as mapped in Figure 6, above. These areas include wetlands and streams*”. At H03 paragraph 409, Mr Coombs says “*the natural character values are assessed at **high** across the entire Project site and **very high** in some areas*”. (Emphasis added.) Please clarify Mr Coombs’ advice in this regard.
4. Please advise which viewpoints Mr Coombs considers there is a lack of intervening lighting from other sources which means that it will result in higher levels of nighttime adverse visual effects due to increased sensitivity to the flashing function of the obstacle lighting. (Refer H03 paragraph 284 (b).)
5. Please advise how Messrs Coombs and Bray have evaluated visual amenity effects in relation to dwellings in the local area (and in particular, for dwellings where adverse visual amenity effects are rated as **moderate-high** and **moderate** by Mr Coombs).
6. At H04 paragraph 132, Mr Bray explains “*I deviate somewhat from Mr Coombs’ evidence where he identifies whether potential visual effects will be adverse, neutral or positive. In my opinion, adversity can ultimately only be determined by the person affected. In my opinion, the role of the landscape architect is only to determine the nature and severity of the potential change, so that people can make their own judgement*”. Mr Bray advises that that he does not endorse the use of the descriptor ‘adverse’ in relation to Mr Coombs’ evaluation of adverse visual effects for a number of public viewpoints (see H04, paragraph 135).
 - a. It is noted that Mr Bray appears to concur with Mr Coombs’ rating of adverse visual amenity effects in relation to residential properties at H04 paragraphs 142, 147 and 148. Please clarify the meaning of Mr Bray’s evidence in this regard, as his paragraph 132 would suggest that Mr Bray may provide an update to his visual effects assessment

once he has reviewed any landscape related comments received from other parties on the application.

- b. In terms of perceptual effects for public audiences, please advise how the Panel should interpret Mr Bray's conclusion that effects on perceptual landscape values are 'somewhat limited' (H04, paragraph 146), noting that this is not an effects rating recommended in *Te Tangi a te Manu, Aotearoa New Zealand Land Assessment Guidelines* which Mr Bray repeatedly references in his statement.
7. Page 15 of the A02 Part A report explains that further analysis has been carried out since the Covid Fast-track decision, which is additional to the various modifications that Contact made to the Project and effects management measures through the last process to address concerns raised. The report goes on to list the refinements made during the Covid Fast-track but does not include reference to the deletion of GLE-01, GLE-02 and GLE-03. Please clarify whether this is an oversight, and if not, why Mr Coombs' evidence has changed in this regard as it is understood that he supported the removal of these turbines in response to concerns raised by landowners.