

Hello,

I am writing because I have been invited to comment on the relevance of the three new national direction instruments and the suite of amendments to existing national direction instruments that are relevant to the panel's assessment of the Southland Windfarm Project Application.

I am particularly interested in facets of the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation Amendment 2025.

Contact Energy has long spoken of the need for this project to be granted approval due to our country's rising demand for electricity AND our need to develop additional renewable energy generation facilities. In general, it would appear as if the government's 2025 amendment to the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation aligns with these views.

In fact, whilst I strongly oppose the construction of this proposed wind farm, as a farmer (whose business relies heavily on the provision of electricity), much of what is proposed and promoted in this statement also reflects my own views.

However, what I think this panel must give strong consideration too is that large obtrusive generation schemes that stand to have a permanent impact on entire communities are not the ONLY answer. Smaller more localised renewable energy schemes are being encouraged in this statement by the government which in my view, make considerably more sense.

Take for instance, my own situation. Our farming business currently spends between \$30,000-\$35,000 on electricity per year. I have recently gone through the exercise of having our situation appraised for a solar generation system that would mean we are 63% self-powered whilst also utilising a battery controlled by an operating system that releases excess energy onto the grid during times of peak energy demand. This system can easily be added-to at a later date; should the price of energy increase further, justifying the increased amount of investment required to be more self-sufficient where increased amounts of energy is likely also able to be released onto the grid.

This recent appraisal has revealed a 7 year payback on the necessary infrastructure and a net saving of at least \$500,000 after 25 years, before the time value of money or any inevitable rise in energy costs due to inflation is considered (the life of this infrastructure is expected to exceed 30 years). Any other investment in business promising this rate of return would usually be a no-brainer and is only something I am now considering because I have only RECENTLY had it made aware to me that this IS in fact a realistic and economic option. In part, this is due to the improvement in technology regarding energy generation (particularly in the areas of batteries and solar). Are we really going to be facing an energy crisis as more and more consumers are made aware of these options?

These smaller private schemes also appeal because we are placing significantly less demand on the grid and our electrical distribution network. Afterall, most of the electricity generated at these private locations is to be used on site. Not only would an increase in abundance of these smaller schemes result in the need for reduced investment in electricity distribution infrastructure - their maintenance (and hence that eventual cost to the consumer) can also be minimised. It MUST also be remembered that large schemes stand to be rather inefficient if the electricity that they produce is required to be transferred any distance due to resistive, capacitive, and inductive line losses.

I am located in Southland (an area not particularly well known for its abundance of sunshine). For this to stack-up economically in my area, the potential for these schemes in other parts of the country is massive. Furthermore, this technology is continually improving and I am sure similar gains are also able to be found in small scale hydroelectric and wind generation systems.

I am not suggesting that the government needs to be subsidising these schemes and am certainly not suggesting that the tax payer should bear any cost whatsoever. However, I think that some simple advertising of the fact that these options do in fact exist (and some encouragement to those that can help with developing, sourcing, and constructing such schemes) could benefit the way we as a country are able to provide ourselves with renewable energy. Afterall, it is something that I have only recently been made aware of myself, which is crazy given the amount of money it stands to potentially save my business.

I would like to finish by saying that I think it would be a grave mistake to grant this proposed wind farm approval given that more suitable and economic alternatives to this large-scale project appear to be becoming more abundant. The energy market and an increase in demand will only promote these alternatives further. As a farmer and someone who is in business, my progressive ideas naturally align with that of a government who is intent on encouraging economic growth and removing unnecessary 'red tape'. I do however urge that this does not mean that significant decisions are rushed and that a result is pursued at any expense necessary, particularly when communities and their livelihoods are at stake.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Hamish Robinson

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