Attachment 9: Western Bays Solar Farm Referral Application – Summary of consultation

Groups required to be notified (section 11(1)(b))	
Local Authorities (s11(1)(b)(i))	
Taupō District Council	Meridian has consulted with Taupō District Council on the Project since early 2024. Council staff have visited the site and are regularly kept updated as the Project progresses, including to confirm consent requirements. Consultation with the Council has assisted with shaping the proposal around roading upgrades and traffic management.
Waikato Regional Council	Meridian has consulted with Waikato Regional Council on the project since early 2024, including pre-application discussions to confirm consent requirements and groundwater allocation.
Administering Agencies (s11(1)(b)(iii))	
Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga	Meridian has consulted with Heritage NZ Pouhere Taonga and provided the archaeological assessment that has been prepared for the site. Consultation is ongoing.
Iwi Authorities (s11(1)(b)(ii))	
Te Kotahitanga ko Ngāti Tūwharetoa (TKNT)	In April 2024, after a recommendation by Taupō District Council, Meridian first approached TKNT to discuss the Western Bays Solar Farm project concept. TKNT directed Meridian to engage directly with the relevant hapū – Ngāti Parekaawa – to progress the project. In addition, with hapū endorsement, an email update was provided by Meridian in January 2026 to the Chair of TKNT outlining progress with the project and hapū engagement, and ahead of any Fast Track application. Meridian has subsequently spoken with and met with the Chair and other TKNT staff in person to provide detail on the above.
Ngāti Parekaawa	As described above, following a recommendation by TKNT, Meridian has consulted with Ngāti Parekaawa with respect to the Project, noting that the hapū have mana whenua over the area in question. In November 2024, the hapū organised and mandated their own project team to engage with the Meridian project team. The two teams have met on twelve occasions at the time of writing and have regular scheduled project hui to discuss progress on relevant matters and issues. Ngāti Parekaawa have nominated two Cultural Advisors to support the project, with the Advisors being contracted directly by Meridian. The Advisors have authored a Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) with respect to the project, which has been subsequently reviewed by the hapū and Meridian. The Advisors have also completed mihi whakatau for all visitors to the project, and supported the archaeological and other effects assessments. Consultation with Ngāti Parekaawa has informed the siting of both the GIP and Transmission Line route. The archaeological assessment identified multiple areas of potential (but unconfirmed) archaeological value/wahi tapu close to proposed infrastructure. Through early consultation with Ngāti Parekaawa's cultural advisors, the original GIP site and parts of the transmission line corridor were relocated to avoid these areas.

Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board (TMTB)	On the recommendation of Ngāti Parekaawa, Meridan emailed the Chair of the Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board to provide an update on the project and engagement with the hapū. Subsequently Meridian has spoken to the Trust Board Environmental Coordinator and provided the draft ecology memos that will accompany the Referral application. TMTB have advised that they are happy with our consultation to date and asked to be kept informed of key developments as the project advances. They have not provided any comments on the draft memos provided.
Ngāti Raukawa	Meridian has consulted Ngāti Raukawa with respect to the Project. They have advised that they recognise the role of Tūwharetoa holding mana whenua and, as such, leading primary engagement in this area. They are comfortable for Tūwharetoa to continue to lead engagement in this kaupapa.
Other persons or groups that may be affected by or have an interest in the project. While there is no requirement for consultation or notification with these parties, Meridian has undertaken the following as outlined.	
Neighbouring landowners Gareth and Alison McVicar, Keith Ensor, Y Wuri Ltd, Sarah and Johnny Westbrook, Jack Bhana, Proprietors of Hauhungaroa 1C, Whakara wa Trust, Whareroa Trust	From April 2024, Meridian has consulted with the neighbouring landowners listed here. This has included regular phone and email contact, together with in-person meetings when on site or in the area, or as effects assessments have been completed. Consultation with neighbouring landowners is informing mitigation planting. A planting plan will continue to be developed prior to submission of the Substantive application.
NZTA	Meridian has consulted with NZTA and provided a draft Integrated Traffic Management Plan and draft Construction Traffic Management Plan for review. Consultation with the NZTA safety and network teams has resulted in several amendments to the design of the access points adjacent to the State Highway and suggested conditions. Discussions between Meridian and NZTA on this project are ongoing.
Transpower	Meridian has consulted with Transpower in relation to the Project since 2023. This consultation has shaped the transmission connection of Western Bays Solar to the existing transmission network.
Department of Conservation	Meridian has consulted with the Department of Conservation and provided drafts of the Ecology and Bat Memos for the Referral Application. DOC has provided an initial response after their review of the draft Memos. Consultation between Meridian and DOC will be ongoing to discuss the questions raised.
Fire and Emergency	Discussions with Fire and Emergency New Zealand are ongoing with meetings held throughout 2025 to confirm preliminary design requirements for fire safety measures which have been integrated into the layout. Further work with FENZ will take place through detailed design.
Ngāti Te Maunga	On the recommendation of Ngāti Parekaawa, Meridian contacted and met with representatives of Ngāti Te Maunga, who are the hapū to the north of Parekaawa. While the project does not relate directly to the rohe of Ngāti Te Maunga, being wholly contained within the Parekaawa rohe, there is a strong relationship between the two at both a hapū and whanau level.
The Lines Company	As there is an electricity line crossing the site that will need to be relocated, initial contact has been made with the Lines Company and consultation will be ongoing.