

Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

MINUTE 2 OF THE EXPERT PANEL

Project overview conference

Twizel Solar Project [FTAA-2604-1217]

30 September 2026

Introduction

[1] This minute records the recent procedural steps taken by the Expert Panel (Panel), addresses invitations to comment on the application under section 53 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2025 (the Act), and advises of a request for information to be issued to the applicant concurrently with this Minute.

Project Overview Conference

[2] The Panel records that in accordance with the directions set out in Minute 1 dated 18 September 2026, the Panel convened a project overview conference with the Applicant and selected statutory parties on 22 September 2026. That conference was recorded on MS Teams and is available for public viewing on the EPA Fast Track website. The Panel notes that the conference was a very useful introduction to the project and thanks the participants for their contributions.

Site Visit

[3] Subsequently, on 24 September 2026, the Panel conducted a site visit. The Panel was met at the site and shown the site by two representatives for the applicant, Mr Bob Warnock (Project Delivery Lead - Nova) and Mr Cam Twigley (Planner - BTW). The Panel subsequently viewed the area surrounding the site and from the wider road network.

Invitation to s 53 Parties

[4] An invitation to s 53 parties will be issued shortly, via a separate minute.

Request for Information

[5] In addition, a request for information will shortly be issued to the applicant, addressing landscape and ecology questions that the Panel has at this early stage. The deadline for a response to this request is **5pm on 9 October 2026**.

[6] The timeframe for a response is short, recognising that this information may be of assistance to some of the s53 invitees.

Consent Conditions / Management Plans

[7] The Panel notes that several of the proffered resource consent conditions direct content for management plans. The Panel thanks the applicant for advancing drafts of the management plans for consideration. However, the Panel considers that the draft conditions advanced to date are deficient. If the applicant or s53 invitees are working towards a revised set of conditions, the Panel requests: First, for any topic where a management plan is contemplated, a standalone condition should set out the enforceable outcomes to be achieved, which will then be delivered by the management plan. Second, a further condition should clearly set out the required management plan content. Third, standardised process conditions should specify amendment, certification, compliance with the management plan, and timeframes. Whether a single set of these process conditions applies to all management plans, or whether they are repeated for each management plan, is for discussion between the applicant and councils.

Qualification of Experts

[8] The Panel notes that some of the reports and technical information provided with the substantive application and subsequent updates do not have a statement setting out the author's qualifications and experience, and a few do not have a statement confirming compliance with Environment Court Practice Note 2023 (Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses). The Panel requests that counsel for the applicant appropriately brief the relevant experts and that such statements are provided, in accordance with clause 4.1 of

the Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024: Panel Conveners' Practice and Procedure Guidance.¹

Appointment of Special Adviser

[9] The Panel has appointed Phil Page to provide technical legal assistance to the Panel. The appointment is made in accordance with FTAA, Schedule 3 clause 10(2).

[10] Mr Page's scope of work will include assisting in advising on specialist RMA issues, and assisting with general drafting focussing on conditions.



Raynor Asher KC

Twizel Solar Expert Panel Chair

¹ Where the reports already include a statement qualifying the authors and confirming compliance with the Code, this does not need to be resubmitted.