

Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

MINUTE 7 OF THE EXPERT PANEL
National Direction Instruments
Southland Wind Farm [FTAA-2508-1095]

23 January 2026

[1] On 18 December 2025 the Government announced three new national direction instruments and a suite of amendments to existing national direction instruments effective from 15 January 2026.

[2] The Panel considers that three of those announcements are relevant to its assessment of the Southland Windfarm Project Application (the Application):

- a) National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management Amendment 2025
- b) Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Amendment Regulations 2025
- c) National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation Amendment 2025

[3] These instruments are available on the Ministry for the Environment webpage:

- a. <https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/national-policy-statements/national-policy-statement-freshwater-management/>
- b. <https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/regulations/national-environmental-standards-for-freshwater/>
- c. <https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/national-policy->

[statements/national-policy-statement-for-renewable-electricity-generation/](#)

[4] For the benefit of readers of this Minute 7, and regarding the other instruments and amendments promulgated on 18 December 2025, we observe:

- a) Amendments to the National Policy Statement Indigenous Biodiversity are not relevant because clause 1.3(3) of that NPS states it does not apply to renewable electricity generation activities;
- b) The National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Amendment 2025 is not relevant because the Southland Windfarm Project does not meet the definition of an electricity network;
- c) The National Policy Statement for Infrastructure 2025 is not relevant because clause 1.3(3)(a) states it does not apply to renewable electricity generation;
- d) The National Policy Statement for Natural Hazards 2025 is not relevant because clause 1.3(2) states it does not apply to infrastructure;
- e) The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement Amendment 2025 is not relevant because the Application is not located in the coastal environment; and
- f) The National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land Amendment 2025 is not relevant because the amendments are not to policies relevant to the Application.

[5] In Minute 4 the Panel requested the Applicant, the Southland District Council, the Gore District Council and the Southland Regional Council to each identify amendments in the relevant instruments that pertained to their previous assessments of the Southland Windfarm Project and to undertake an assessment of the Project against those amended provisions, with a particular focus on any new or amended provisions that weighed either in favour of, or against, the

granting of the approvals sought for the Project with reference to section 85 of the FTAA.

[6] Any comments that were provided by the parties listed in [5] are available on the FastTrack website:

<https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/projects/southland-wind-farm>

[7] We now extend an invitation to all parties who provided comments on the Application under section 53 of the FTAA to provide us with comments on the relevance of the amendments to the instruments listed in paragraph [2] to the Panel's assessment of the Southland Windfarm Project.

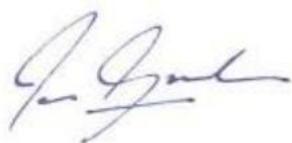
[8] We request that any such comments focus on the new or amended provisions of those instruments that weigh either in favour of, or against, the granting of the approvals sought for the Southland Windfarm Project.

[9] Comments must be made to the EPA by email to info@fasttrack.govt.nz.

[10] Comments must be received by **Friday 6 February 2026**.

[11] The Panel directs that the EPA publishes the information on the Fast-track website's Southland Windfarm Project page.

[12] Any queries regarding this Minute should be directed to Keely Paler, who can be contacted at: info@fasttrack.govt.nz



Ian Gordon
Expert Panel Chair of the Southland Wind Farm Panel.