

Hon Simon Watts

Minister of Climate Change
Minister for Energy
Minister of Local Government
Minister of Revenue



To: Expert Panel, Mahinerangi Wind Farm (FTA-2510-1125)

By email: Substantive@fasttrack.govt.nz

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Tararua Wind Power Limited's application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) for approvals for the Mahinerangi Wind Farm.

I am providing these comments in my capacity as Minister for Energy, under section 53(2)(j) of the Act.

I have considered how this project would support the purpose of the Act, i.e. *to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits.*

I consider this proposed project has significant regional and national benefits as follows:

- Once completed, the scheme will have a maximum capacity of 164 MW, generating enough energy to power over 60,000 homes.
- Renewable electricity generation supports other outcomes including:
 - Contribution to climate change targets, as renewable electricity generation can displace use of fossil fuels in both the electricity and wider energy systems (e.g., reducing the use of thermal fuels for electricity generation, and supporting increased demand for electricity for sectors such as transport).
 - Contribution to security of energy supply, through diversity of energy generation.
 - Downward pressure on wholesale electricity prices, which supports more affordable energy for New Zealand firms and households. Affordable energy also has wider flow-on benefits to the wider economy – e.g., by reducing input costs for commercial and industrial energy users.

I support the Panel's continued consideration of this application.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Simon Watts', written over a horizontal line.

Hon Simon Watts
Minister for Energy