

# Southland Wind Farm project



# About Contact



- Formed out of ECNZ in 1996
- 100% privately owned – no Crown ownership

- We generate about 22% of New Zealand's electricity
- Over 640,000 customer connections

- Mainly geothermal and hydro generators, (boosted by recent purchase of Manawa) plus currently adding geothermal, solar and batteries
- On target to achieve net zero generation emissions by 2035, well ahead of NZ Govt target

# Why renewable generation is so important for Aotearoa

NZ Government target is net zero emissions by 2050 <sup>(1)</sup> – only electrification of the economy can achieve that.<sup>(2)</sup>

Contact has rapidly reduced our emissions and building more renewable generation:

- **Decarbonising our portfolio:** Since 2010, we've shut down over 1000MW of gas-fired power stations. The 400MW Taranaki Combined Cycle (TCC), our last big baseload gas turbine, will close in the next 2-3 months.
- **Reducing carbon emissions:** From 2,700,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> in 2012 to approximately 450,000 once TCC is closed - we expect to be above 95% renewable generation next year.
- **Increased renewable investment:** More than \$2 billion into geothermal, solar, and grid-scale batteries over the past four years to decarbonise the economy.

But gas is declining fast and power prices are still too high (rising from \$118 to \$158/MWh in the last four years)<sup>(3)</sup>

New Zealand businesses and industry are struggling with high power prices and retail prices increased 10% this year<sup>(4)</sup>

More renewables are desperately needed.

**New renewable generation, especially large contributors like the Southland Wind Farm, is needed to satisfy demand, help reduce power prices, enhance security of supply, and get large emitters off coal and gas.**

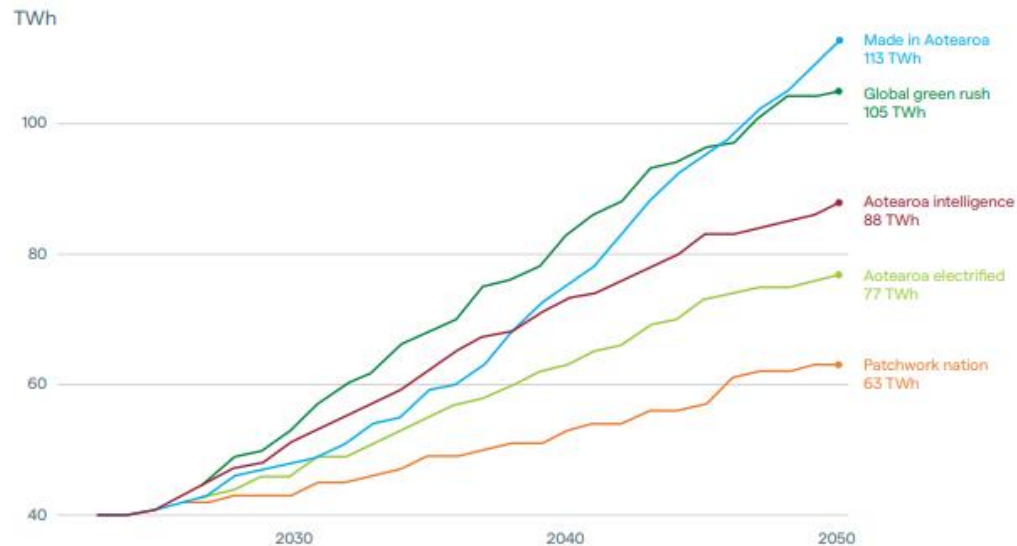
1. Climate Change Response Act (Zero Carbon Amendment) and Ministry for the Environment – *Greenhouse Gas Emissions Targets and Reporting*  
2. <https://www.ea.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/powering-the-future/>

3. Electricity Authority EMI wholesale price data  
4. Stats NZ SPI data

# New Zealand needs this project

Urgent action is needed. The transition away from fossil fuels is already underway, and delays in building new generation risks reliability, affordability, and public confidence.

Transpower National Electricity Demand by Scenario



- **Transpower’s long-term demand scenarios** show electricity demand will at least double over the next 25 years under most scenarios.<sup>(1)</sup>
- Meeting this demand would require building at least 500MW every year, ie three wind farms the size of Southland Wind Farm every two years til 2050.<sup>(2)</sup>
- Electrification is driving demand growth - increased use of electricity for industrial process heat and transport will significantly raise consumption.<sup>(3)</sup>

“Any delay in new resources entering the market will put more strain on existing resources, impacting the ability to manage energy and capacity challenges, which will impact the sector’s ability to meet growth in demand for electricity across New Zealand.”

Transpower Security of Supply 2025 Media Release – June 2025

1. Transpower – Te Kanapu Future Grid Blueprint, May 2025

2. [H01.-Part-H-Technical-assessment-1-Electricity-System-Benefits.pdf](#) (Concept)

3. MBIE – Electricity Demand and Generation Scenarios

# Southland needs this project

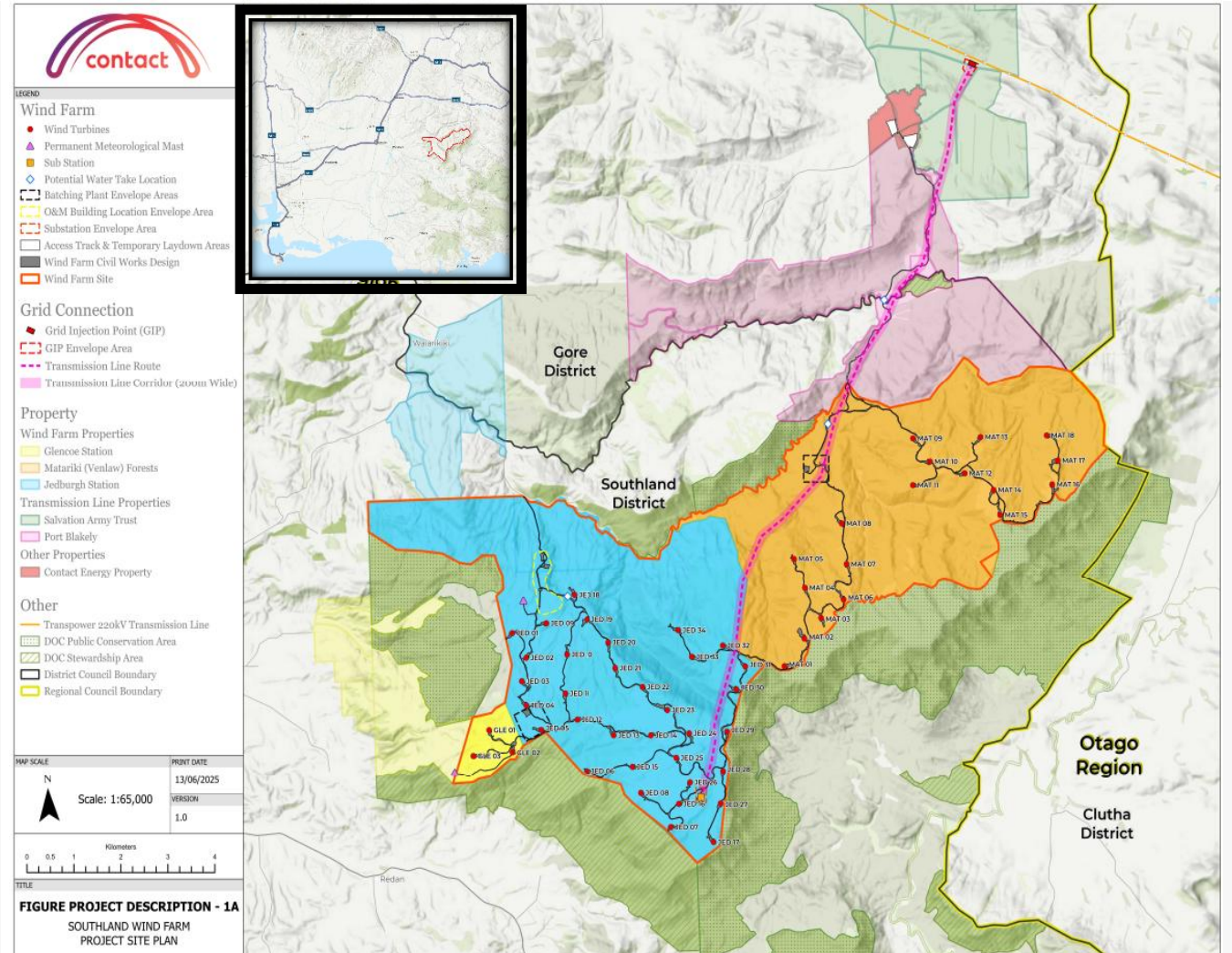
- **New Zealand Aluminium Smelter's** recent 20-year electricity supply agreement means they will operate here until at least 2044.
- **Southland's demand is rising fast:** Already a high-demand region, Southland will see further increases as new industries emerge and existing ones electrify. Southland is a net importer of electricity, with demand exceeding local generation. Peak demand expected by MBIE to rise from 556 MW (2023) to 900 MW by 2038.
- **Local economic benefit:** NZIER says construction could add between \$258 and \$426 million of spending on locally supplied goods and services during construction.
- **Conversions are underway:** Mataura Valley Milk has switched from coal to renewable electricity, and Fonterra's new electrode boilers at Edendale is enough to consume one-third of Southland Wind Farm's output alone ie 360+GWh.<sup>(1)</sup>
- **AI-driven computing demand** is surging, potentially attracting new demand here – e.g Datagrid who are proposing a 240MW data centre at Makarewa.



1. [H02.-Part-H-Technical-assessment-2-Economic-Framing-and-Impacts.pdf](#) (Clough)

# Project overview / Site suitability

- About 50km east of Invercargill & 30km southeast Gore
- 55 turbines, up to 220m tip height, and 7MW each - some of the largest & most powerful in NZ
- Exceptional wind resource, ~1.2TWh per annum – in the order of 2.8% of total current demand in NZ
- No houses within 2.3km & 30 within 5km
- Land use is mix of sheep and beef pasture, scrub, indigenous vegetation and nearly half is plantation forestry (Matariki)
- 65km of internal wind farm roads (plus an additional 6.5km for access to the site)
- 16km long transmission line
- Two temporary construction facilities & one permanent maintenance base
- Two concrete batching plants & water storage ponds
- Wind turbine components shipped to South Port in Bluff and transported to site mostly via the State Highway network
- About 2-3 years to construct & commission
- Limited planning constraints



# History of the application

## 2022-23:

Contact began engaging with mana whenua, community, councils and other stakeholders via hui, public open days, project website, and regular project communications.

## December 2023:

Application lodged under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020

## July 2024 - March 2025:

COVID-19 Panel process underway.

During the panel process (which included responses to numerous RFI's, expert witness conferencing, ongoing consultation and negotiation) Contact adopted further project refinements, e.g:

- Caps on vegetation clearance
- Bird mortality limits
- Engineering solutions to protect wetland hydrology
- Finalised a single transmission line and grid injection point.

## November 2024:

- Agreement reached with Ngāi Tahu ki Murihiku on cultural and environmental conditions and opposition withdrawn. Conditions have been carried through to the FTAA process and Rūnaka maintain their continued support for the project. (1)
- Agreement with DoC on resource consent conditions, and agreed conditions now carried through to the current FTAA application. (2)

## March 2025:

Application declined, with the panel citing concerns about landscape, and ecological impacts on Jedburgh Plateau, including wetlands.

Contact appealed the decision to the High Court - later withdrawn to pursue this FTAA application.

Further assessments we've carried out since the COVID-19 Panel decision:

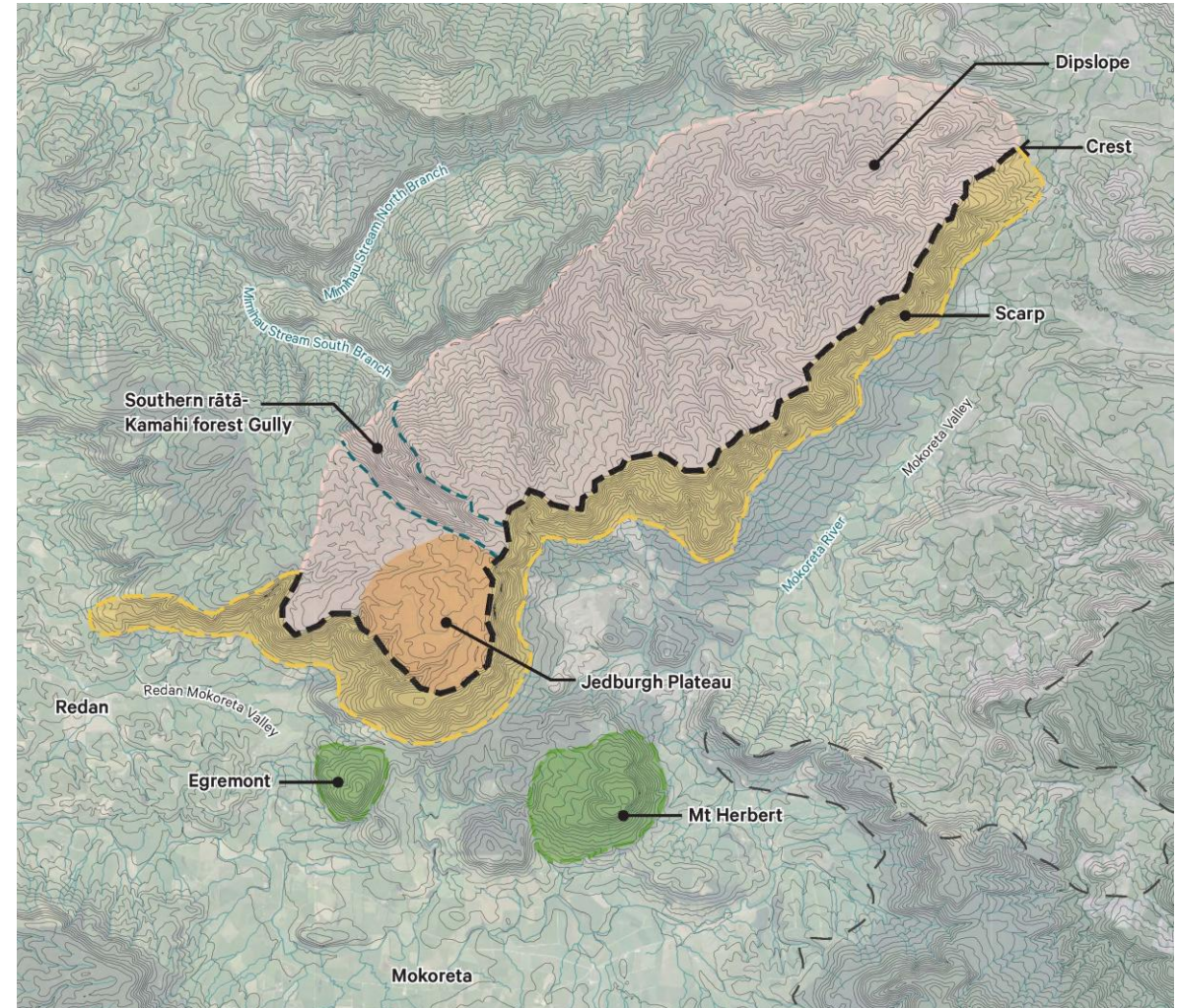
- Ground-truthing vegetation and wetland mapping.
- Hydrological modelling of the wetland complex on Jedburgh Plateau.
- Completed surveys on birds, lizards, and invertebrates.
- Collision risk modelling for birds.
- Further independent landscape assessment.
- Narrowed scope of spoil disposal areas.
- Independent review of terrestrial and wetland ecology, and offset and compensation

## 29 August 2025:

Contact submitted the current FTAA application.

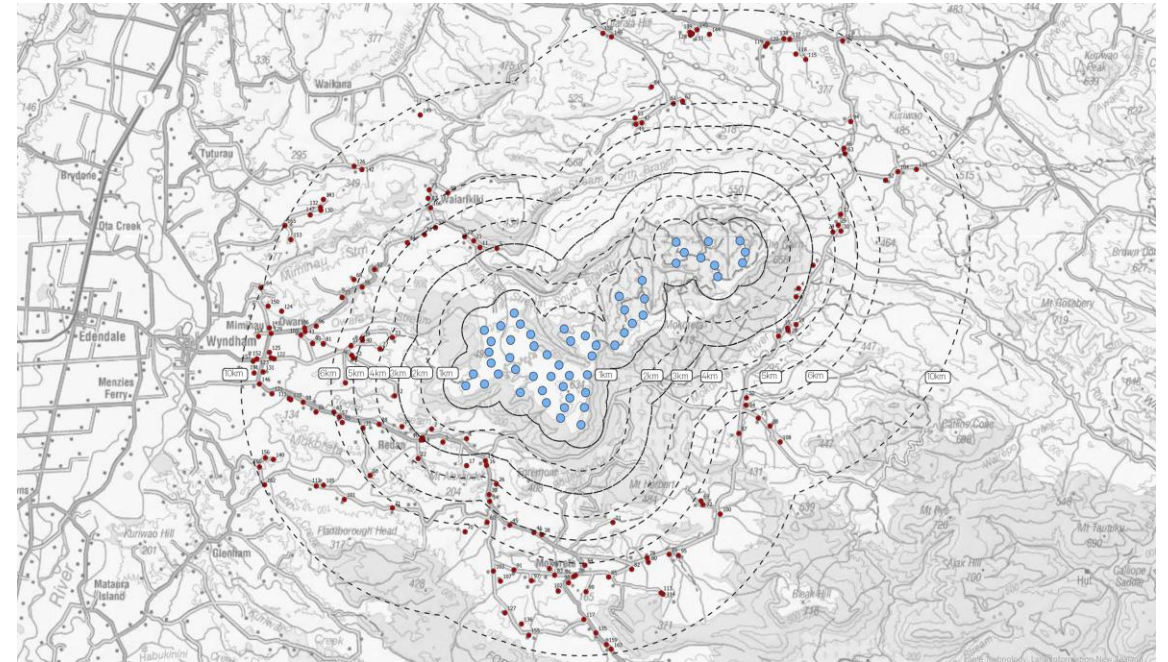
# Landform, landscape effects

- **Large scale cuesta landform Slopedown – Mokoreta – Pukemimihau**, with distinctive scarp and dipslope land features. Part of the Southland syncline. The landform includes highpoints along the crest of the cuesta and 400-500m of vertical topography as a plinth to the wind farm.
- **Wind farm roads, turbines, substation and transmission route** are largely on the dipslope and lower slopes, including the Jedburgh plateau, which is an accommodating land feature due to the relatively shallow slopes. No steep slopes or heavy earthwork cuts required. Most of the wind farm site is plantation forest and grazed pasture.
- **The wind turbine layout provides a generous buffer** from the highest points along the crest of the cuesta – Mokoreta, Pukemimihau and the Cairn.
- **Wind turbine layout largely avoids the most natural parts of the site** and avoids the highest natural character values.
- **No ONLs or ONFs in a statutory sense**, however a 2019 regional technical landscape study assessed part of the site (and some surrounding areas) as an ONF candidate. The wind farm has been assessed against these values.
- **Valued cultural landscape** but te taiao effects confirmed by Rūnaka as appropriately addressed.



# Landscape and visual effects

- **The wind farm visible from extensive areas** from the west and the south. Less visibility from the north and the east.
- **Viewed from the west (the Southland Plains), the wind turbines are set back** from the distinctive slopedown profile of the landform.
- **164 residences identified and assessed within 10km of the closest wind turbine.** 10 assessed as experiencing moderate-high adverse visual effects, 5 experiencing moderate adverse effects, 23 experiencing moderate low effects and 126 experiencing low effects or less.
- **Closest residence is 2.3km from the wind turbines** and 12km from the closest settlement at Wyndham.
- **For the 15 properties experiencing moderate-high and moderate visual effects,** a condition is proffered to offer mitigation planting.
- **Extensive ecological and landscape mitigation and offset package** will have positive landscape and natural character effects on parts of the site, the immediate area and the surrounding landscape context.



# Ecological survey work undertaken

- **All vegetation types** were mapped and described over several site visits between December 2022 and March 2025.
- **Targeted surveys** for birds, reptiles, and invertebrates were undertaken between January 2023 and August 2025, using a range of field and data collection methods.
- Collectively, Wildlands ecologists have spent **approximately 3,600 person hours in the field** since December 2022, comprising of:
  - Vegetation mapping and plots, and wetland delineation – 550 hours;
  - Avifauna surveys – 1,100 hours;
  - Lizard surveys – 1,100 hours; and
  - Invertebrate surveys – 875 hours.
- Development of a **BAND collision model** to assess risk to various bird species during the operational phase of the wind farm.



Vegetation surveys



Avifauna (bittern) monitoring



Lizard monitoring



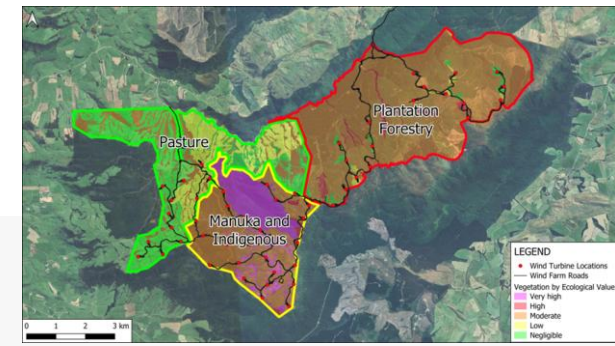
Invertebrate surveys



Freshwater surveys

# The existing natural environment

- **The wind farm site is approx. 5,800 hectares**, and only about 3% will be impacted by roads, turbines and other wind farm infrastructure.
- **62% is exotic:** pine plantation forest and exotic grass.
- **38% is indigenous/mixed:** including mānuka forest and scrub (689 ha), Southern rātā-kāmahi forest (339ha), mānuka shrubland (249 ha), and bog and fen wetlands (134 ha) – the majority of which is currently (or previously) farmed.
- **The Jedburgh Plateau** (~530 ha) is an elevated area with a bog and fen wetland mosaic within regenerating shrubland, but subject to immense pressure from feral ungulates and other pests
- **Historically cleared for pasture** in the mid-20th century through repeated burning (which is responsible for the creation of the induced bogs) but farmed less intensively today.
- **Long-term browsing** by low numbers of livestock and increasing numbers of feral deer and pigs have caused soil pugging, and limited regeneration, and degraded wetlands and vegetation. Browsing damage is widespread, and native seedling regeneration is limited, particularly in terrestrial habitats.
- **Several threatened or at-risk species** are present in different parts of the site, including:
  - Long-tailed bats
  - Birds: South Island fernbird, pipit, eastern falcon
  - Reptiles: Tussock skink, tautuku gecko
  - Invertebrates: Helms' stag beetle, short-horned grasshopper
  - Fish: Longfin eel, Gollum galaxias and koura
- **The bog and fen wetlands** found on the Plateau are ecologically significant but many are in poor condition, primarily due to the presence of feral ungulates.
- The Southland Wind Farm presents a **significant opportunity** for environmental enhancement and nature-positive outcomes - **Contact is committed to achieving those outcomes.**

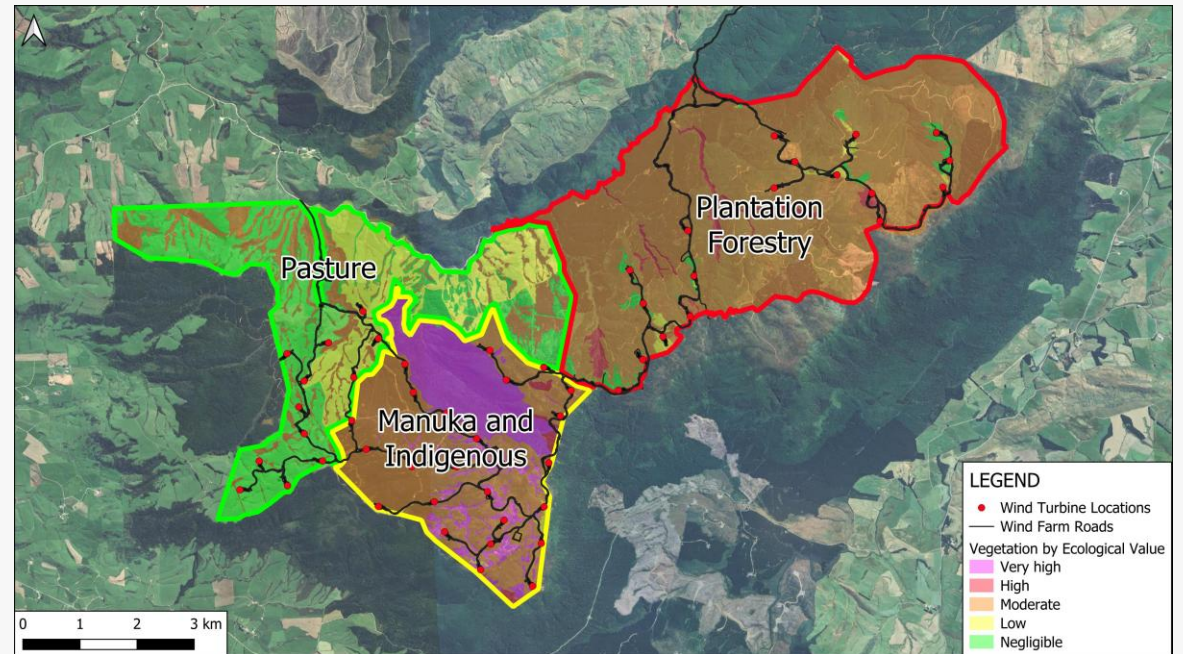


# Assessment of ecological values and significance

- All ecological features were assigned an **ecological value** (i.e. Very Low to Very High) using the EIANZ guidelines.
- All vegetation and habitat types were assessed against the **significance criteria** in the Southland RPS.
- Habitats beyond the Jedburgh Plateau are largely pasture and plantation forestry.
- Most terrestrial habitats on the Jedburgh Plateau are of **Low to Moderate ecological value**.
- **Indigenous-dominated shrubland** on the Jedburgh plateau was assessed as ecological significant.
- **All wetlands on the Jedburgh Plateau** and at Matariki were assessed as significant and having **Very High ecological values**.
- The gully characterised by **southern rata-kamahi forest** is ecological significant and has **Very High ecological values**.
- **Bog wetlands** on the Jedburgh Plateau include both 'natural' and 'induced' systems.
- The wind farm footprint has been designed to **avoid and minimise the impact on high and very high ecological value areas** as much as practicable.

# Site classification – vegetation/values

- Wildlands has classified the site into **36 different vegetation types** (550 hours of field work and mapping).
- **Three main vegetation areas** – ‘Plantation Forestry’, ‘Pasture’ and ‘Mānuka and Indigenous’.
- Each vegetation type was also assessed for its **‘ecological value’ ranking** (from Negligible to Very High) – as shown on this image.
- The wind farm footprint has been designed to **avoid and minimise the impact on high and very high ecological value areas** as much as practicable.
- **Most of the offset and compensation measures** to address residual effects are proposed within the Mānuka and Indigenous area, which is mainly moderate and very high value vegetation.



# How Contact approaches ecological effects management

## Consistent with our tikanga, our priorities have been to:

- Identify, and **avoid** high value areas as far as practical, then
- Refine the layout and design to **minimise** construction effects (e.g veg clearance, wetland hydrology, earthworks, stream crossings, roads and turbine locations)
- **Offset and compensate** for any losses, and seek to generate **net environmental and biodiversity gains** for the 30+year life of the Wind Farm and beyond.
- This is something we seek to achieve on all our projects.

## To do that we adopted an effects management hierarchy:

- firstly, to **identify**, and as far as practicable, **avoid** affecting high value habitats and indigenous species, while **remediating** and **minimising** any unavoidable impacts.
- volunteering immutable **limits** on vegetation clearance and other possible effects (e.g bird mortality, pest-control targets) in conditions.
- helping nurture and improve the environment in the decades after construction through comprehensive environmental **mitigation, offset and compensation** commitments.
- Our goal and bottom-line is to ensure our investment in the SWF achieves nature-positive outcomes over the life of the project and beyond

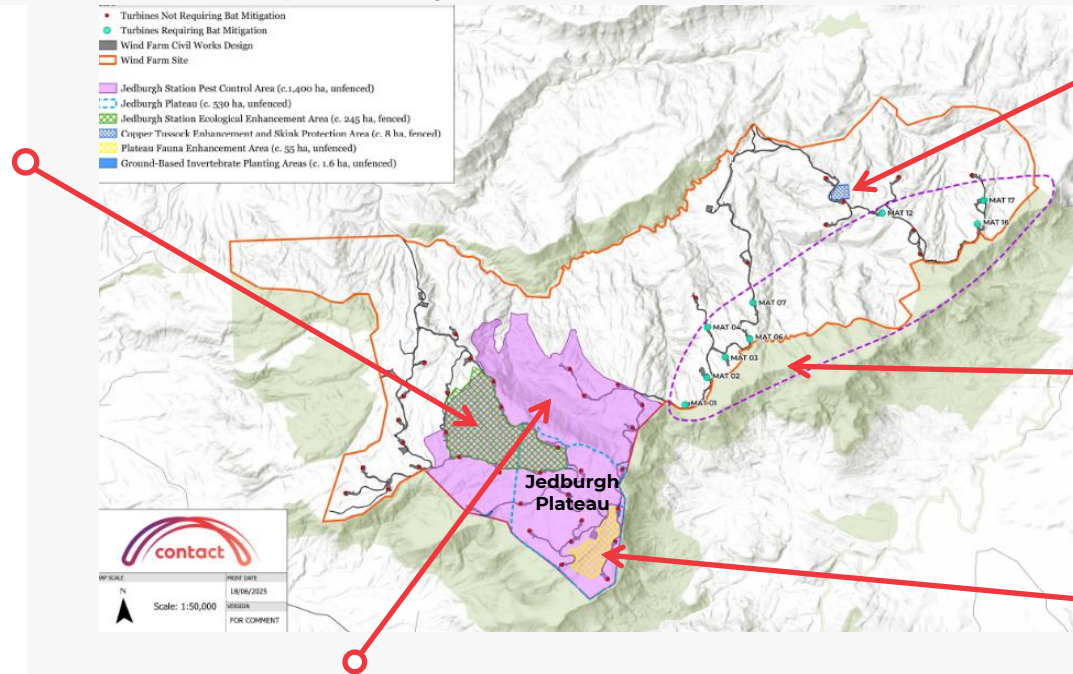


# Approach to residual effects

**Biodiversity net gain and a nature positive outcome is the goal.** This will be achieved through guaranteed long-term pest and predator control, areas of exclusion fencing, habitat restoration, nature funding for DoC, and enhanced environmental conditions for threatened species, **all required by conditions of consent.**

## Ecological Enhancement Area (Jedburgh Station)

- 245 ha fenced and permanently covenanted area to exclude livestock, pigs, and deer.
- Eradication of feral ungulates, plus enrichment planting of 5,000 plants comprising 12 species.
- Protection and enhancement of 15.0 ha of fen and 2.3 ha of natural bog wetlands within the fenced area
- Habitat restoration within this area and assisted regeneration of 8.7 ha of existing tracks and firebreaks.



## Copper Tussock Enhancement and Skink Protection Area:

- Fenced, enriched 8ha area within Matariki Forest

## Area of wind turbine curtailment:

- 9 turbines to be curtailed within the 'moderate bat risk area' in order to reduce risk to bats during wind farm operation.

## Fauna Enhancement Area:

- Targeted, intensive ground-based predator control (min. 2 devices/ha) over 55 ha. Species include rats, stoats, and hedgehogs, which will benefit fernbird, pipit, lizards, and invertebrates, and offsetting residual effects on indigenous birds.

## Pest and predator control (for the life of the project)

- Aerial pest control over all 1400 ha of indigenous habitat at Jedburgh Station every 3 years
- Targeted deer control over 500 ha of the Plateau every 6 months for 2 years, then every 3 years
- Predator control (e.g. cats, mustelids) along wind farm roads



Davidson Road Wetland Restoration Site.  
See Figure HREP - 4 for Detailed View

Davidson Road Wetland  
Restoration Site  
Approximately 1.5km North

LEGEND

Wind Farm

- Wind Turbines
- - - Transmission Line Route
- ▭ Wind Farm Site
- ▭ Civil Works Design

Enhancement & Restoration Areas

- ▭ Jedburgh Station Pest Control Area (c.1,400 ha, unfenced)
- ▭ Jedburgh Plateau (c. 530 ha, unfenced)
- ▭ Jedburgh Station Ecological Enhancement Area (c. 245 ha, fenced)
- ▭ Copper Tussock Enhancement and Skink Protection Area (c. 8 ha, fenced)
- ▭ Plateau Fauna Enhancement Area (c. 55 ha, unfenced)

Davidson Road

- ▭ Davidson Road Wetland Restoration Areas (c. 5.1 ha)
- ▭ Davidson Road Terrestrial Vegetation Planting Areas (c. 1.0 ha)
- ▭ Davidson Road Wetland Enhancement Areas (c. 6.7 ha)

MAP SCALE	PRINT DATE
<p>Scale: 1:50,000</p>	7/08/2025
	VERSION
	1.0



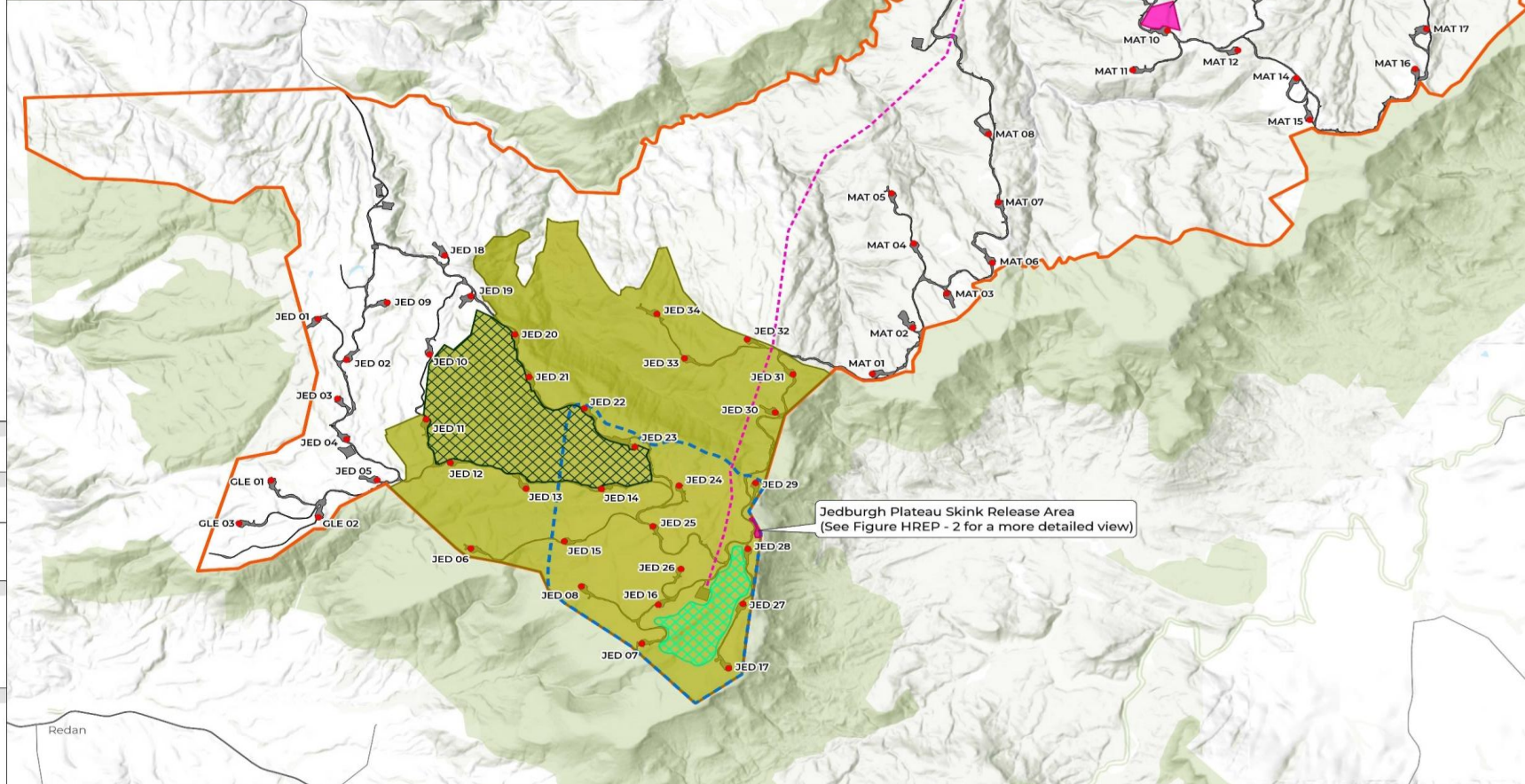
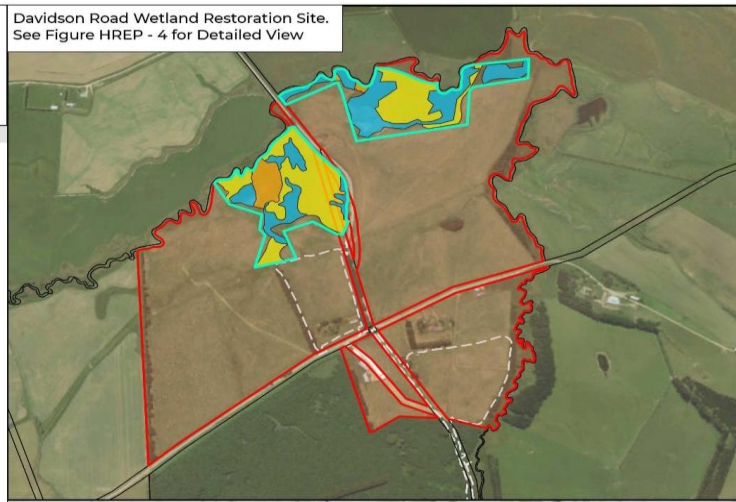
CREDITS:



Ecological data provided by Wildlands Consultants

TITLE

**FIGURE HREP - 1**  
**OVERVIEW OF THE ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT AND RESTORATION AREAS ON THE WIND FARM SITE**



Redan

# Further off-site compensation

## To cover maximum 2.5ha wetland loss

- Restoration and enhancement at the Davidson Road Wetland Restoration Site
- 5.1 ha of pasture restored to rare copper tussock-rautahi marsh
- 6.7 ha of enrichment planting in existing indigenous wetland
- 1 ha of terrestrial (buffer) planting between wetlands
- All areas to be fenced and legally protected in perpetuity
- This is in addition to the onsite activities that will benefit wetlands

## Long-Tailed Bat Compensation

- In addition to curtailment of 9 turbines, the funding of a DOC managed landscape-scale predator control programme over a 10,000 ha area of the Beresford Range, in the Catlins Conservation Area
- Guaranteed long-term, annual funding provided to DOC for track building, trap purchase, and ongoing control for the life of SWF
- Expected to benefit not only long-tailed bats but also a wide range of forest birds, reptiles, invertebrates and plants



# Approach to community and neighbours

It's important for Contact to share some of the benefits of our activities with the communities in which we operate.

## We will establish a Community Benefit Fund before construction (see Condition SC10).

This will include an initial contribution of \$200,000 and then a **minimum** of \$70,000 per year, indexed for inflation (and increased by \$250 per year for every MW above 200 MW of capacity).

So, for example at 330 MW, the annual payment would increase to \$102,500 annually.

## Community Liaison Group

Prior to construction, Contact will invite the establishment of the Community Liaison Group comprising of representatives from:

- Waihopai Toetoe Community Board
- Local residents (4 representatives)
- Southland District Council
- Southland Regional Council
- Gore District Council

Objective of the Group is to foster good communication, share information, and help address any concerns or opportunities that arise.

## Consultation and Distribution of Grants

- Contact will consult with the Community Liaison Group regarding the distribution of grants
- Priority is for local projects or recipients in the Waimumu-Kaiwera, Clinton, and Wyndham-Catlins areas (pop. approx 5000). <sup>(1)</sup>
- The Community Liaison Group will meet as agreed in the terms of reference, but no less than twice a year.