

Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

MINUTE 1 OF THE EXPERT PANEL

Project overview conference

Twizel Solar Project [FTAA-2604-1217]

18 September 2026

[1] The purpose of this Minute is to confirm the time and the details for an online project overview conference.

[2] The project overview conference will be held on **Tuesday 22 September 2026 at 1 pm**. It is expected to last two hours.

[3] During the project overview conference:

- a) the Applicant has an opportunity to present a high-level overview of the application;
- b) the Expert Panel has an opportunity to ask any questions about the application, noting that by the time of the project overview conference, Panel members will have familiarised themselves with the documents; and
- c) The statutory parties specified in s 53 presently known to the Panel will be invited to attend.

[4] It will be helpful if the Applicant addresses at the project overview conference:

- a) the content of the application for approvals;
- b) the content and structure of proposed conditions, including the extent of collaboration with other parties in their development;¹
- c) the key points of evidence (technical reports, assessments and other

¹ Including management plans and strategic plan, drafting style

- information) provided in support of the application;
- d) proposed site visit details;
- e) relevant legal tests and legal issues in contention;
- f) an explanation of on-going engagement with other parties, if any and
- g) other relevant matters including issues raised by the Panel.

[5] The Expert Panel requests that the applicant make available the appropriate key experts, particularly in relation to landscape and ecological issues that they believe will assist in the Panel's understanding of the application in the project overview conference, recognising that this is a preliminary meeting of limited duration. The Panel may ask questions of those experts.

[6] The Panel invites the following statutory participants to observe the project overview conference:

- (a) Mana whenua (Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua, Te Rūnanga o Moeraki, and Te Rūnanga o Waihao);
- (b) Mackenzie District Council;
- (c) Canterbury Regional Council; and
- (d) Department of Conservation.

[7] It is envisaged that each of the statutory parties, if they wish, will make a short statement of up to 5 minutes following the conclusion of the Applicant's presentation. We request a single speaker for each of (b) to (d) above and welcome any efforts by mana whenua to confer and jointly present. There may be questions asked of them by the Panel during the course of that presentation.

[8] To facilitate the overview of the application referred to in paragraph 4(a) above, it is suggested that the Applicant provide a short PowerPoint presentation to the EPA's Application Lead, Awesta Seddiqi, no later than **5pm, Monday 21 September 2026** and then speak to it at the project overview conference on Tuesday 22 September 2026. It is appreciated that there will not be an opportunity to respond fully to the matters raised orally by the Panel.

[9] The details for the project overview conference and Teams invitation will be provided by Awesta Seddiqi by close of play today. For any questions, contact her at: info@fastrack.govt.nz. If you are unable to attend, please note the project overview conference will be recorded and published on the fast track website: <https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/projects/twizel-solar-project/conferences,-workshops-and-hearings>

[10] Following the project overview conference, the Applicant may wish to provide a written update on matters discussed that would be included in the information to be considered by the parties invited to comment on the application. Any such written material would need to be received by the Expert Panel by **5pm on Thursday 24 September 2026**.

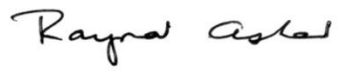
[11] The purpose of the project overview conference is primarily to give the Applicant a chance to present an overview of the Application, and in particular, address issues that may be controversial that arise.

[12] The Panel will discuss with the Applicant the site visit, which we propose to be held on **either Thursday 24 September 2026 or Tuesday 29 September 2026**.

[13] The Panel asks the Applicant to address issues that are likely to be controversial, with a particular focus on landscape and ecological issues. The Panel will be particularly interested in:

- (a) the Applicant's overview of the landscape issues, given the size of the project and its proximity to places frequented by the public;
- (b) The Applicant's overview on ecological issues, in particular avifauna, and the risk of mortality for endangered species; and
- (c) cumulative effects.

[14] The Panel notes that, in general terms, the originally proposed landscape mitigation appears to have been greatly reduced because of ecological concerns arising from the proposed plantings, and the Panel will be interested in exploring the exact reasons for the change, and any tensions between the landscape and ecological priorities.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raynor Asher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Raynor Asher KC

Twizel Solar Farm Expert Panel Chair