

Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – Treaty settlements and other obligations (Section 18) report

Project Name: FTAA-2603-1191 Waiinu Energy Project

To:	Date:
Hon Chris Bishop, Minister for Infrastructure	12 June 2026

Number of attachments: 6	Attachments: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Provisions of section 18 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 Project location maps List of relevant Māori groups Statements of association for statutory acknowledgements from the Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi deed of settlement Excerpts regarding deeds of recognition from the Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi deed of settlement Comments received from invited Māori groups
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Ministry for the Environment contacts:

Position	Name	Cell phone	1 st contact
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Key points

- The Ministry for the Environment (on behalf of the Secretary for the Environment) has prepared this report on Treaty settlements and other obligations under section 18 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act), in relation to the FTAA-2603-1191 Waiinu Energy Project referral application.
- The applicant, Meridian Energy Limited, proposes to construct and operate a 746 MW integrated renewable energy development comprising a wind farm, solar farm, and battery energy storage system at Waiinu Beach, approximately 37 km northwest of Whanganui and 16 km southeast of Waverley.

3. The applicant is seeking a range of resource consents that would otherwise be sought under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). The applicant is also seeking a wildlife authority under the Wildlife Act 1953 and an archaeological authority under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.
4. No identified Māori land is located within the project area, however, five blocks of Māori land directly adjoin or are surrounded by the project area. The project environs contain a number of culturally sensitive sites.
5. Section 18(2) of the Act requires that the report provide a list of relevant Māori groups, including relevant iwi authorities and Treaty settlement entities. We have identified Te Kaahui o Rauru as a relevant iwi authority and Treaty settlement entity, and Ngaati Hinewaiata hapuu and Parininihi ki Waitotara as other Māori groups with relevant interests. Should you accept this application for referral, at least Te Kaahui o Rauru must be invited by the panel to comment on a substantive application under section 53(2) of the Act.
6. We have identified the Ngaa Rauru Claims Settlement Act 2005 as relevant to the project area.
7. The Ngaa Rauru Kītahi Settlement Act 2005 provides for a statutory acknowledgement over the Waitotara River, Tapuarau Conservation Area, and Nukumarū Recreation Reserve. The Ngaa Rauru Kītahi settlement also provides for deeds of recognition in relation to the Waitotara River and Tapuarau Conservation Area. Parts of the project area directly adjoin the associated statutory areas. Under the RMA and the settlement legislation, a consent authority must have regard to a statutory acknowledgement when deciding whether an iwi is an 'affected person' for the purposes of notification decisions, and must provide a summary of any consent applications relevant to the statutory area to a statutory acknowledgement holder.
8. We consider the process of you inviting comment (including providing information about the application) from Te Kaahui o Rauru under the Act is comparable to the requirements for statutory acknowledgements under the RMA and Treaty settlements.
9. The project area does not extend into the statutory areas, therefore no procedural requirements are triggered in relation to deeds of recognition.
10. In response to the invitation for Māori groups to comment under section 17(1)(d) of the Act, Ngaati Hinewaiata (Te Ihupuku Marae) provided feedback on the application. Ngaati Hinewaiata expressed a desire to formalise a relationship with Meridan as partners to promote the hapuu's environmental, social, cultural, and spiritual interests in relation to the project.
11. We do not consider there are any matters identified in section 18 which make it more appropriate for the proposed approvals to be authorised under another Act or Acts.

Signature



Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

Introduction

12. Under section 18 of the Act, you must consider a report on Treaty settlements and other obligations for each referral application, prepared and provided by the responsible agency (Secretary for the Environment).
13. The information which must be provided in this report includes:
 - a. relevant iwi authorities, Treaty settlement entities, applicant groups under the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011 (MACA), and other Māori groups with interests in the project area;
 - b. relevant principles and provisions in Treaty settlements and other arrangements;
 - c. a summary of comments and further information received from invited Māori groups; and
 - d. advice on whether it may be more appropriate to deal with the matters that would be authorised by the proposed approvals under another Act or Acts.
14. This report is structured accordingly. We have provided a list of the relevant provisions of section 18 at **Attachment 1**.

Proposed project

15. The applicant, Meridian Energy Limited, proposes to construct and operate an integrated renewable energy development at Waiinu Beach, approximately 37 km northwest of Whanganui and 16 km southeast of Waverley. The Waiinu Energy Project will include wind turbines, solar arrays, and a battery energy storage system (BESS). The wind farm includes up to 56 turbines (up to 250 m high), with associated foundations, crane pads, met masts and a generating capacity of 392 MW. The 232 MW solar farm comprises approximately 510,000 panels over 350 ha, supported by power conversion units, underground cabling, and internal access tracks. Together the wind and solar facilities would be capable of generating 1,760 GWh of electricity per year. A distributed BESS will store and supply electricity to support grid stability. The capacity of the BESS is proposed to be more than 122 MW for up to 6 hours or approximately 732 MWh. Supporting infrastructure includes a 37.5 km internal road network, substations, a 220 kV transmission line to connect to the national grid, operations and maintenance facilities, and security systems.
16. The applicant is seeking resource consents under the Act that would otherwise be sought under the RMA, including land use consents, water permits, and discharge permits. The applicant is also seeking a wildlife authority under the Wildlife Act 1953 (to catch, handle and track bittern and bats, and to trap handle and relocate lizards) and an archaeological authority under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.
17. The land on which the project is proposed is owned by a number of private landowners. No identified Māori land is located within the project area. However, five blocks of Māori land directly adjoin or are surrounded by the project area. This includes Ihupuku Māori Reservation at Ihupuku Pā Road which encompasses Te Ihupuku Marae and an urupā, and four blocks administered by Parininihi Ki Waitotara, one of which is the 'surrounded' block. We note there are four other marae in the wider environs, two of which, Kaipoo and the ancient marae Herehere i Moana (Waikaramihi Tawhito Marae), are located close to project area. We also note there are a number of archaeological sites in and around the project area.
18. We have provided location maps at **Attachment 2**, which show the location of Māori land, marae, and archaeological sites in relation to the project area.

Relevant iwi authorities, Treaty settlement entities, and other Māori groups

19. We note that some entities identified below may be included in more than one category. We have included a composite list of all groups at **Attachment 3**.

Iwi authorities

20. Under section 4(2) of the Act, 'iwi authority' has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the RMA:

the authority which represents an iwi and which is recognised by that iwi as having authority to do so.

21. We consider the following groups to be the relevant iwi authorities for the project area:

- a. Te Kaahui o Rauru, representing Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi.

Treaty settlement entities

22. Under section 4(1) of the Act, "Treaty settlement entity" means any of the following:

(a) a post-settlement governance entity (PSGE):

(b) a board, trust, committee, authority, or other body, incorporated or unincorporated, that is recognised in or established under any Treaty settlement Act:

(c) an entity or a person that is authorised by a Treaty settlement Act to act for a natural resource feature with legal personhood:

(d) Te Ohu Kai Moana or a mandated iwi organisation (as those terms are defined in section 5(1) of the Maori Fisheries Act 2004):

(e) an iwi aquaculture organisation (as defined in section 4 of the Maori Commercial Aquaculture Claims Settlement Act 2004).

23. Under the Act, a PSGE:

(a) means a body corporate or the trustees of a trust established, for the purpose of receiving redress in the Treaty settlement of a claimant group,—

(i) by that group; or

(ii) by or under an enactment or order of a court; and

(b) includes—

(i) an entity established to represent a collective or combination of claimant groups; and

(ii) an entity controlled by an entity referred to in paragraph (a); and

(iii) an entity controlled by a hapū to which redress has been transferred by an entity referred to in paragraph (a).

24. In keeping with the procedural principles outlined at section 10 of the Act, we only identify those PSGEs which are specified in the relevant Treaty settlement Act or Treaty settlement deed.¹

25. We have identified the following relevant Treaty settlement entity for this project area:

- a. Te Kaahui o Rauru, PSGE for Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi Claims Settlement Act 2005.

Groups mandated to negotiate Treaty settlements

26. There are no groups which have recognised mandates to negotiate a Treaty settlement over an area which may include the project area. All historical claims under te Tiriti o Waitangi / the Treaty of Waitangi have been settled in respect of the project area.

Takutai Moana groups and ngā hapū o Ngāti Porou

27. The project area does not include the common marine and coastal area, and accordingly there are no relevant applicant groups under MACA, and no court orders or agreements that recognise protected customary rights or customary marine title within the project area.

28. The project area is not within ngā rohe moana o ngā hapū o Ngāti Porou (as set out in the Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019).

Iwi or hapū whose practices are recognised under the Fisheries Act 1996 through regulation or bylaws

29. The project area does not include a taiāpure-local fisheries area, mātaihai reserve, or area subject to a bylaw or regulations made under Part 9 of the Fisheries Act 1996.

Owners of identified Māori land where electricity infrastructure or land transport infrastructure is proposed

30. Section 23 of the Act provides that, in making a decision on a referral application under section 21, the Minister may determine that, for the purposes of the project, an activity described in section 5(1)(a) is not an ineligible activity if it:

- a. is the construction of electricity lines or land transport infrastructure by (or to be operated by) a network utility operator that is a requiring authority; and
- b. would occur on identified Māori land that is Māori freehold land or General land owned by Māori that was previously Māori freehold land.

31. This project does not involve an activity described in section 23(1) (i.e. including both (a) and (b)) of the Act.

Iwi authorities and groups representing hapū who are party to relevant Mana Whakahono ā Rohe or joint management agreements

32. If the project area is within the boundaries of either a Mana Whakahono ā Rohe or joint management agreement, and the application includes a proposed RMA approval described in section 42(4)(a) to (d) (resource consent, certificate of compliance, or

¹ Should a panel be made aware of a Treaty settlement entity established after the Treaty settlement Act is enacted (e.g. on the advice of a PSGE), then there would appear to be nothing to prevent the panel from inviting that entity to comment on the application under section 53(2)(c) of the Act.

designation), we are required to identify the relevant iwi authority/group that represent hapū that are parties to these arrangements.

33. We have not identified any Mana Whakahono ā Rohe or joint management agreements that are relevant to the project area, and accordingly there no parties to these arrangements to identify. South Taranaki District Council (STDC) comments on the project indicate that STDC has received an invitation from Te Kaahui Rauru to enter a Mana Whakahono ā Rohe, however, an agreement has not yet been formed.

Any other Māori groups with relevant interests

34. In addition to Te Kaahui o Rauru above, we have also identified Ngaati Hinewaiata (Te Ihupuku Marae) and Parininihi ki Waitotara as other Māori groups which may have relevant interests. Parininihi ki Waitotara administers Māori owned land that is primarily used for farming, forestry, and horticulture.
35. The applicant advises that they started engagement with Te Kaahui o Rauru on the project in August 2021, and have maintained regular engagement ever since. They also signal their intention to continue working with Te Kaahui o Rauru through all phases of the Project. Additionally, the applicant states that they have undertaken direct engagement with hapuu when requested, and that this engagement is ongoing. Te Kaahui o Rauru is working with the Ngaa Iwi o Taranaki Taiao team to prepare a cultural effects assessment (CEA) for the project.

Relevant principles and provisions in Treaty settlements and other arrangements

Treaty settlements

36. Under section 4(1) of the Act, a Treaty settlement includes both a Treaty settlement Act and a Treaty settlement deed which is signed by both the Crown and representatives of a group of Māori.
37. The following Treaty settlements relate to land, species of plants or animals, or other resources within the project area:
- a. Ngaa Rauru Kaitahi Claims Settlement Act 2005.

Relevant principles and provisions

38. Section 7 of the Act requires all persons exercising powers and functions under the Act to act in a manner consistent with Treaty settlements. The relevant principles and provisions for each of these settlements are set out below.

Crown acknowledgements and apologies

39. The Crown offers acknowledgements and an apology to relevant groups as part of Treaty settlement redress to atone for historical wrongs that breached te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi, to restore honour, and begin the process of healing.
40. As part of its acknowledgements and apology to Ngaa Rauru Kaitahi, the Crown stated it profoundly regrets, and unreservedly apologises to Ngaa Rauru Kaitahi for the cumulative effects of its actions and omissions, which have had a devastating impact on Ngaa Rauru Kaitahi and their economy, development, and social structure, and resulted in virtual landlessness. Accordingly, the Crown seeks to atone for these wrongs and build a stronger

relationship with Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi based on the Treaty of Waitangi and its principles. The redress mechanisms provided for in the Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi Treaty settlement should be viewed in the context of these intentions.

Statutory acknowledgements

41. The Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi Claims Settlement Act 2005 provides for statutory acknowledgements over the Waitotara River, Tapuarau Conservation Area, and Nukumarū Recreation Reserve. We have identified these statutory areas as being relevant because they directly adjoin the project area, and parts of the project area drain to the Waitotara River.
42. We have provided maps at **Attachment 2** showing the location of the project area in relation to the statutory areas. We have also included statements of association with the statutory areas from the Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi deed of settlement at **Attachment 4**.
43. Under the RMA and relevant Treaty settlement Acts, a consent authority must, when considering a resource consent for a proposed activity that is within, adjacent to, or affecting a statutory area:
 - a. provide a summary of the application to the holder of the statutory acknowledgement. The summary of the application must be the same as would be given to an affected person by limited notification under the RMA. The summary must be provided as soon as is reasonably practicable after the relevant consent authority receives the application, but before they decide whether to notify the application; and
 - b. have regard to the statutory acknowledgement when deciding whether the holder (generally a PSGE) is an 'affected person' for the purposes of notification decisions under the RMA.
44. The holder of a statutory acknowledgment may also cite this as evidence of their association with a statutory area in any submission before a relevant consent authority (or the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), board of inquiry, Environment Court, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga), who may, in turn, take that statutory acknowledgement into account.
45. The application information indicates that the project area will not encroach onto the statutory areas of the Waitotara River, Tapuarau Conservation Area, and Nukumarū Recreation Reserve. However, establishing wind farm infrastructure, especially wind turbines, is likely to involve earthworks and construction activities which have the potential to stimulate soil movement and dust in areas that drain to the Waitotara River. We note the applicant states that a construction environment management plan, and an erosion and sediment control plan or similar, will be used to reduce sediment discharge from physical works and protect freshwater receiving systems.
46. The applicant advises the project will generate noise during construction and operation, and localised visual effects. We note that some wind turbines in the eastern part of the project area will be established close to the boundary with Nukumarū Recreation Reserve. Te Kaahui o Rauru and local hapuu may have a view on whether or how construction and operation of the wind turbines in this part of the project might potentially affect Nukumarū Recreation Reserve from a cultural perspective.
47. We consider the process of inviting comment (including providing information about the application) is comparable to the process under Treaty settlement and the RMA of providing those who hold statutory acknowledgements with a summary of the application. You have already invited Te Kaahui o Rauru, as the relevant Treaty settlement entity, to

comment on the application. Should you accept this referral application, this group will also be invited for comment by the panel under section 53(2)(c) of the Act.

Deeds of recognition

48. A deed of recognition may be entered into between a PSGE and the Crown agency managing any statutory area for which a statutory acknowledgment has been agreed. The Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi settlement provides for a deed of recognition to be entered into with each of the Minister of Conservation and Commissioner of Crown Lands in relation to the Waitotara River, and with Minister of Conservation in relation to Tapuarau Conservation Area (formerly known as Hawkens Lagoon Conservation Area). A deed of recognition over a river applies only to a part of the bed of the river or stream owned by the Crown, which is the land that the waters of the river or stream cover at their fullest flow without flowing over the banks of the river or stream.
49. The Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi settlement provides that the Minister of Conservation or the Commissioner of Crown Lands, as the case may be, must, when undertaking the activities specified in that deed in relation to or within a statutory area to which the deed applies, consult and have regard to the views of Te Kaahui o Rauru concerning the association of Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi with that statutory area as described in the relevant statement of association.
50. We are unable to identify any proposed activities in the application that are relevant for the deeds of recognition. As far as we can ascertain, the project will not extend into any part of the statutory areas. As such, no process for a right of use or occupation in the areas to which the deeds of recognition apply will be triggered – which would otherwise require the Minister of Conservation or the Commissioner of Crown Lands to consult with Te Kaahui o Rauru.
51. We have provided the relevant excerpts regarding deeds of recognition from the Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi deed of settlement at **Attachment 5**.

Other redress

Uukaipoo Entitlements

52. The Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi Claims Settlement Act 2005 provide for a one-hectare uukaipoo entitlement within the Tapuarau Conservation Area close to the Waitotara River (near its mouth) and the project area. The purpose of uukaipoo entitlements is to enable members of Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi to occupy the Tapuarau uukaipoo site temporarily, exclusively, and on a non-commercial basis, so as to have access to a waterway for lawful fishing, and for the lawful gathering of other natural resources in the vicinity of the uukaipoo site.
53. Although the settlement provisions regarding uukaipoo entitlements do not place any obligations on you, or any subsequent panel should you accept the referral application, in relation to the approvals being sought by the applicant, the redress illustrates the importance of these uukaipoo entitlements to Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi. Accordingly, the panel may wish to take the Tapuarau uukaipoo entitlement into consideration.
54. For your reference, map 4 at **Attachment 2** shows the location of the Tapuarau uukaipoo site in relation the project area.

Cultural redress properties

55. The Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi Claims Settlement Act 2005 provides for two cultural redress properties in the vicinity of the project area to be vested in Te Kaahui o Rauru, these being the Waiinu Beach site (Section 1 SO 338218) and Nukumaru site (Section 1 SO 339326).

The Waiinu Beach site directly adjoins, and is practically surrounded by, the project area at Waiinu Beach Road, south of the Waitotara River.

56. The coastal Nukumarū site is located close to the eastern part of the project area and is separated from it by a narrow section of the Nukumarū Recreation Reserve. The Nukumarū site contains the ancient Herehere i Moana marae at Waikaramihi. Waikaramihi was traditionally used by Ngāa Rauru Kīitahi hapū as a base for fishing activities including the launching of fishing vessels, and is where the Karewaonui waka was housed until 1987. The Nukumarū site, and surrounding Nukumarū Recreation Reserve, underscore the relationship between hapū and customary use of this coastal environment for sustenance and cultural well-being.
57. We note that Te Kaahui o Rauru, the property owner, will already be invited to comment under section 53 of the Act. We are bringing these sites to your attention so that you, and potentially an expert panel, are aware of their significance to Ngāa Rauru Kīitahi when considering the proposal.
58. For your reference, map 4 at **Attachment 2** shows the location of the Waiinu Beach site and Nukumarū site in relation to the project area.

Conservation protocol

59. The Ngāa Rauru deed of settlement provides for the Minister of Conservation to issue a protocol which sets out how the Department of Conservation (DOC) will interact with Te Kaahui o Rauru and enable Ngāa Rauru Kīitahi to have meaningful input into matters specified in the DOC Protocol.
60. While the protocol which covers the project area provides for engagement with Te Kaahui o Rauru on certain matters,² in general it does not address the type of conservation-related approval sought by the applicant (i.e. wildlife authority under the Wildlife Act 1953).

Antiquities protocol

61. We note there are a number of archaeological sites within and around the project environs and that the applicant is seeking an archaeological authority under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014. While the Ngāa Rauru Kīitahi deed of settlement provides for the Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage to issue a protocol regarding interaction with Te Kaahui o Rauru on antiquities matters, this antiquities protocol does not include provisions relating to archaeological authorities.
62. Ultimately, iwi and hapū are likely to have cultural associations with ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, and other taonga beyond what is specifically identified in a Treaty settlement or other arrangements. Local tangata whenua and their representatives would be best placed to advise on such matters in the first instance.

² The protocol specifies the following matters: implementation and communication; input into business planning at the area office level; historic resources - wahi tapu and wahi taonga; cultural materials; species management; freshwater fisheries; marine mammals; marine reserves; pest control; the RMA; visitor and public information; provision of technical assistance to governance entity; consultation; and changes to policy and legislation affecting this protocol. The protocol provisions relating to the RMA are about working with DOC on advocacy regarding the environmental effects of activities controlled and managed under the RMA, and are unlikely to be directly relevant to this application.

Customary Marine Title/Protected Customary Rights

63. As noted above, the project area is not within a customary marine title area, protected customary rights area, or within or adjacent to ngā rohe moana o ngā hapū o Ngāti Porou.

Taiāpure-local fisheries/mātaitai reserves/areas subject to bylaws or regulations made under Part 9 of the Fisheries Act 1996

64. As noted above, the project area does not include a taiāpure-local fishery, mātaitai reserve, or area subject to bylaws or regulations made under Part 9 of the Fisheries Act 1996.

Mana Whakahono ā Rohe/Joint management agreement

65. As noted above, we have not identified any Mana Whakahono ā Rohe or joint management agreements that are relevant to the project area.

Summary of comments received and advice

Comments from invited Māori groups

66. Pursuant to section 17(1)(d) of the Act, on 24 April 2026 you invited written comments from the Māori groups identified above in paragraphs 21, 25 and 34, from a list we previously provided you. These groups were provided with access to the application material and had 15 working days from receipt of the copy of the application to respond.

67. You received comments on the application from Ngaati Hinewaiata (Te Ihupuku Marae) groups, which can be summarised as follows:

- a. Ngaati Hinewaiata, a hapuu of Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi based at Te Ihupuku Marae, Waitotara, asserts their Treaty of Waitangi rights as mana whenua, mana moana and kaitiaki to exercise rangatiratanga over natural resources and their rohe in which the proposed wind farm is situated. Ngaati Hinewaiata also –
 - i. seeks to develop a beneficial relationship with Meridian that respects Ngaati Hinewaiata rights while supporting sustainable renewable energy;
 - ii. confirmed that their cultural and spiritual interests include kaitiakitanga, cultural landscape, mahinga kai, ecological integrity, and spiritual connections;
 - iii. seeks that environmental and social considerations include impacts relating to visual, noise, biodiversity, aquatic environment, and community benefits such as employment, training, and community investments;
 - iv. acknowledges Meridian's commitment to establishing a relationship with Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi marae/hapuu;
 - v. expects engagement through early direct consultation (kanohi ki te kanohi) and active partnership including an MOU with Meridian for a relationship throughout the life of the project; and
 - vi. requests Meridian to commission Te Ihupuku Marae to conduct a cultural impact assessment of the project.

68. We have provided a copy of these comments at **Attachment 6**.

Consultation with departments

69. In preparing this report, we are required to consult relevant departments.

70. We sought advice from Te Puni Kōkiri and the Office of Treaty Settlements and Takutai Moana – Te Tari Whakatau regarding the relevant Māori groups, and have incorporated their views into this report.

Advice on whether it may be more appropriate to deal with the proposed approvals under another Act/s

71. Under section 18(2)(m), this report must include our advice on whether, due to any of the matters identified in section 18, it may be more appropriate to deal with the matters that would be authorised by the proposed approvals under another Act or Acts.

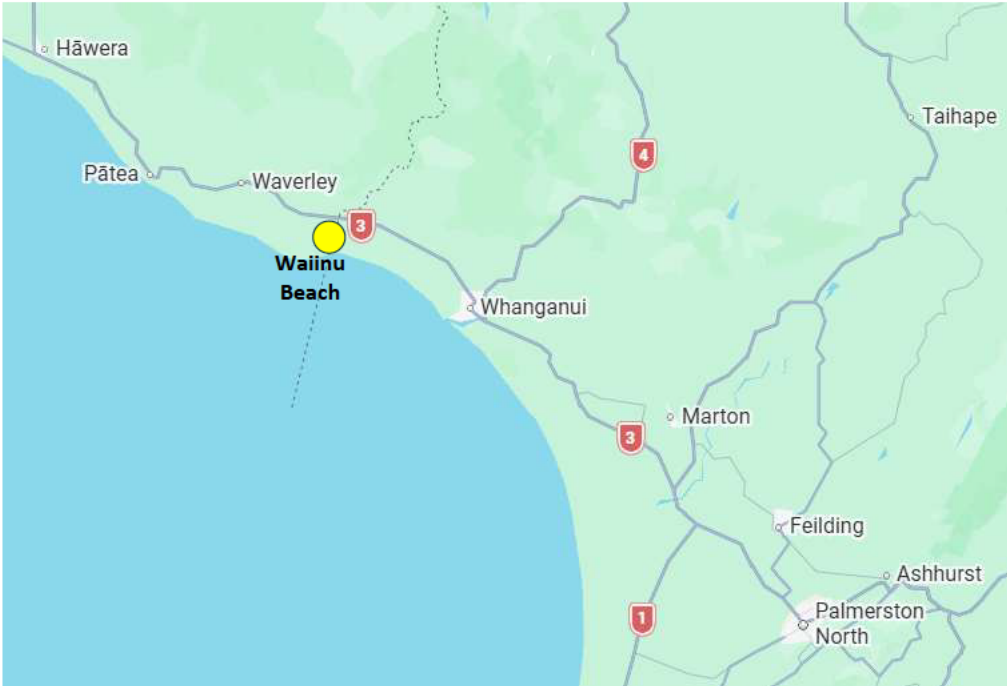
72. We do not consider there are any matters raised in this report which make it more appropriate for the proposed approvals to be authorised under another Act or Acts.

Attachment 1: Provisions of section 18 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

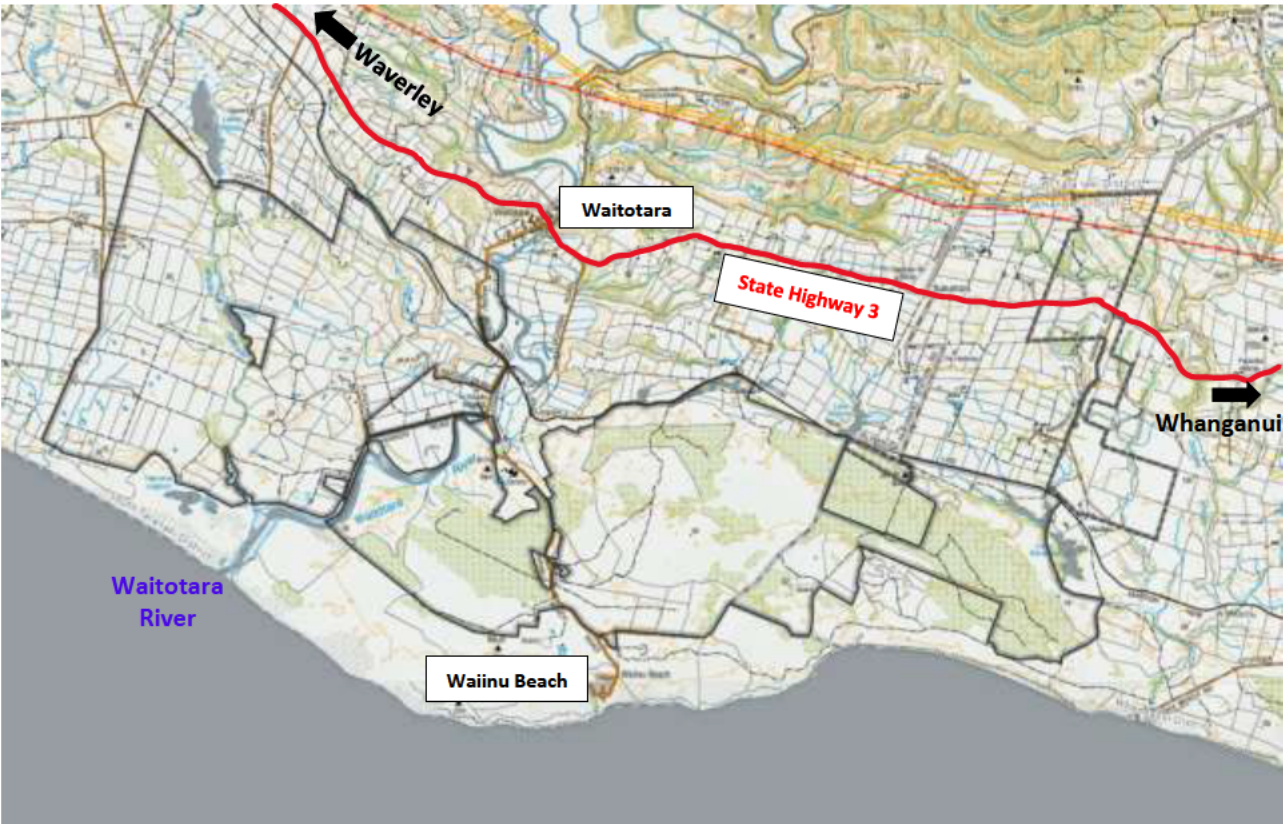
Section	Information required	Paragraph reference in this report
18(1)	The Minister must, for a referral application, consider a report that is prepared and provided by the responsible agency in accordance with this section.	12, 13
18(2)(a)	Any relevant iwi authorities and relevant Treaty settlement entities	21
18(2)(b)	Any Treaty settlements that relate to land, species of plants or animals, or other resources within the project area	25
18(2)(c)	The relevant principles and provisions in those Treaty settlements, including those that relate to the composition of a decision-making body for the purposes of the Resource Management Act 1991	38-62
18(2)(d)	Any recognised negotiation mandates for, or current negotiations for, Treaty settlements that relate to the project area.	26
18(2)(e)	Any court orders or agreements that recognise protected customary rights or customary marine title within the project area.	27, 63
18(2)(f)	Any applicant groups under the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011 that seek recognition of customary marine title or protected customary rights within the project area.	27, 63
18(2)(g)	Whether the project area would be within or adjacent to, or the project would directly affect, ngā rohe moana o ngā hapū o Ngāti Porou (and, if so, the relevant provisions of the Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019).	28, 63
18(2)(h)	Whether the project area includes any taiāpure-local fisheries, mātaihai reserves, or areas that are subject to bylaws or regulations made under Part 9 of the Fisheries Act 1996 (and, if so, who the tangata whenua are).	29, 64
18(2)(i)	Whether the project involves an activity that could be the subject of a determination under 23 (and, if so, who the owners of the land are).	31
18(2)(j)	If the proposed approvals include an approval described in any of section 42C(4)(a) to (d) (resource consent, certificate of compliance, or designation), <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) iwi authorities and groups that represent hapū that are parties to any relevant Mana Whakahono ā Rohe or joint management agreements. 	33, 65

	(ii) The relevant principles and provisions in those Mana Whakahono ā Rohe and joint management agreements.	
18(2)(k)	Any other Māori groups with relevant interests.	34
18(2)(l)	A summary of— (i) comments received by the Minister after inviting comments from Māori groups under section 17(1)(d) and (e); (ii) any further information received by the Minister from those groups	67
18(2)(m)	The responsible agency's advice on whether, due to any of the matters identified in this section, it may be more appropriate to deal with the matters that would be authorised by the proposed approvals under another Act or Acts.	72
18(3)	In preparing the report required by this section, the responsible agency must consult relevant departments.	70
18(4)	The responsible agency must provide the report to the Minister not later than 20 working days after the date for providing comments under section 17(6).	N/A
18(5)	However, if the Minister requests further information about a referral application under section 20, the time period specified in subsection (4) ceases to run for the period of time specified in the request.	N/A

Attachment 2: Project location maps

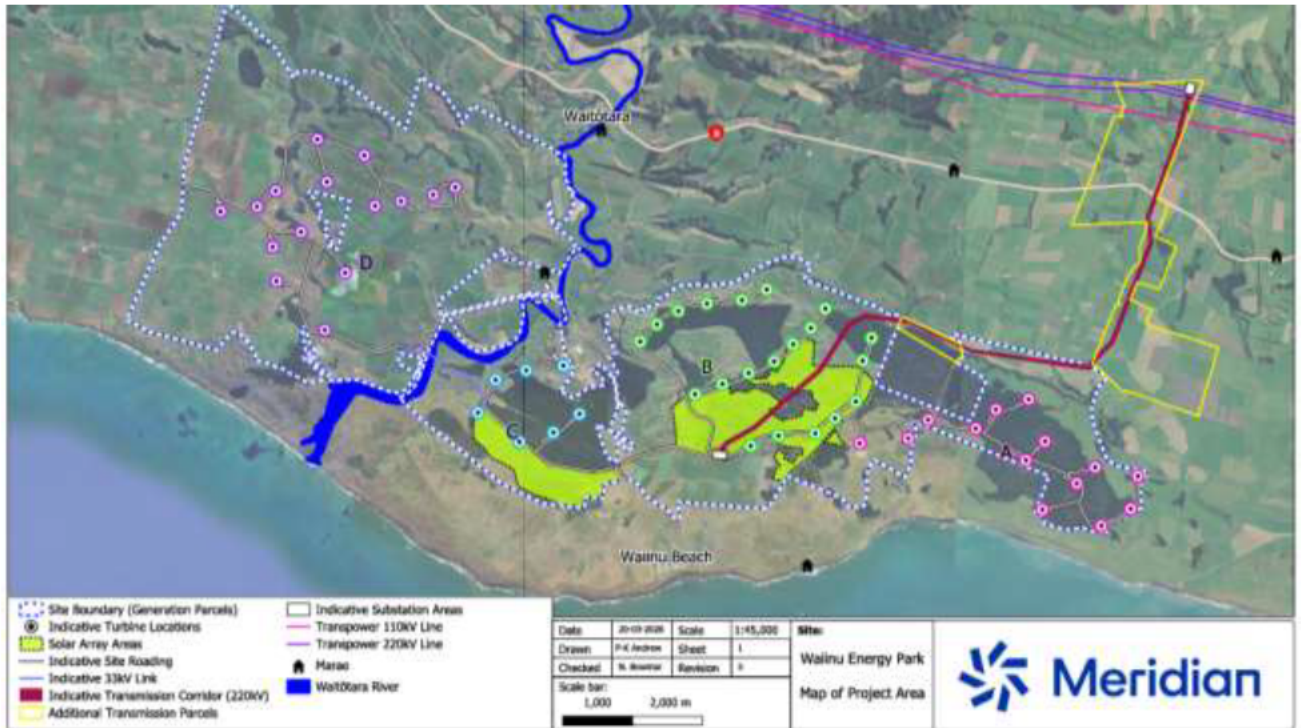


Map 1. Location of proposed Waiinu Energy Project shown by yellow circle above.

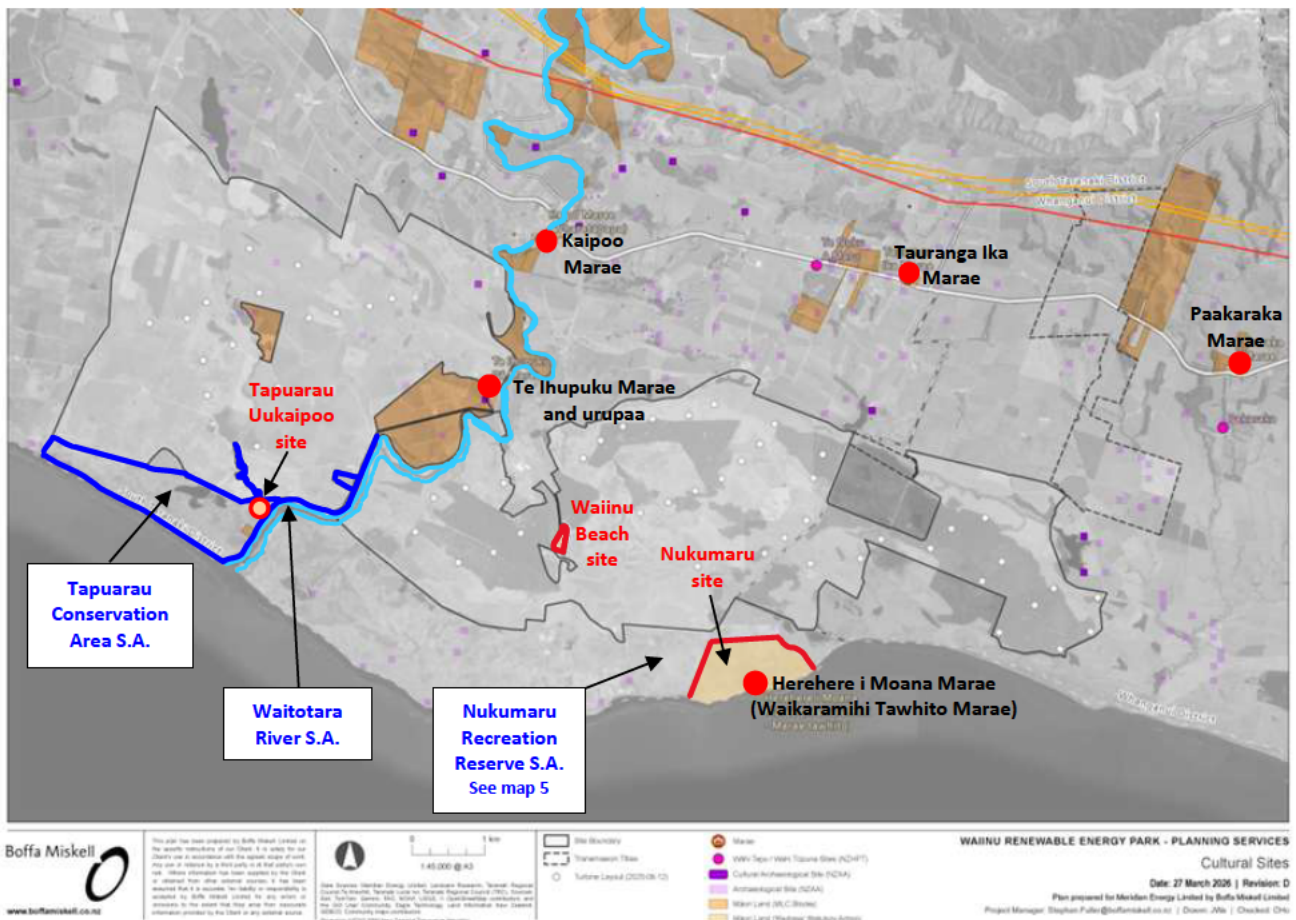


Map 2. Footprint and local environs of proposed Waiinu Energy Project

Source: Adapted from Boffa Miskell / Meridian 2026

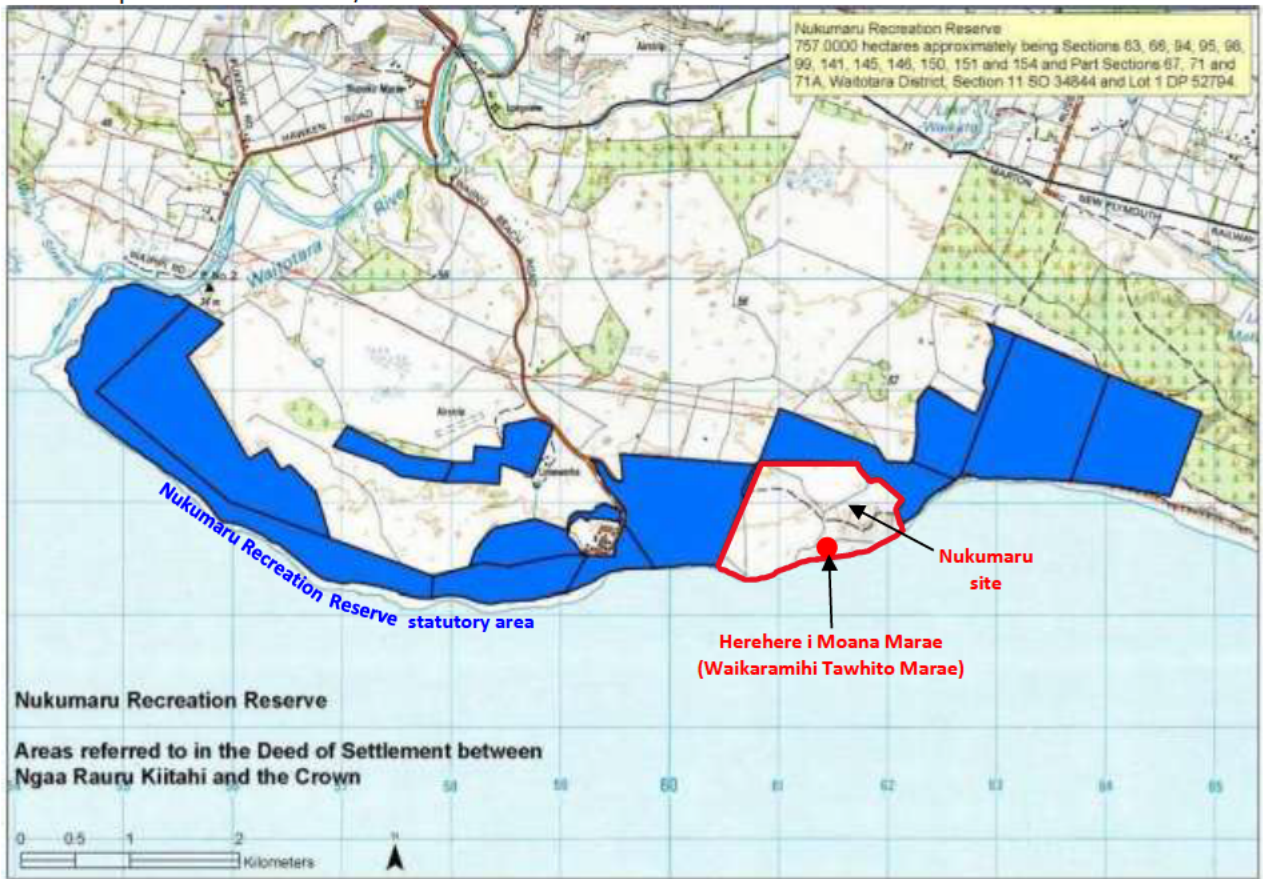


Map 3. Key elements of the proposed Waiinu Energy Project. Source: Boffa Miskell / Meridian 2026



Map 4. Māori land, marae, Treaty settlement redress sites, and archaeological sites

Source: Adapted from Boffa Miskell / Meridian 2026



Map 5. Nukumaru Recreation Reserve statutory area shown by blue shading above.

Source: Adapted from Te Kaahui o Rauru 2017

Attachment 3: List of relevant Māori groups

Name of group	Type of group (section of Act)
Te Kaahui o Rauru	Iwi authority (s18(2)(a)), Treaty settlement entity (s18(2)(a) – Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi Claims Settlement Act 2005
Ngaati Hinewaiata (Te Ihupuku Marae)	Other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))
Parininihi ki Waitotara	Other Māori group with relevant interests (s18(2)(k))

Attachment 4: Statements of association for statutory acknowledgements from the Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi deed of settlement

NGAA RAURU KIITAHI DEED OF SETTLEMENT: CULTURAL REDRESS SCHEDULE

PART 4: STATEMENTS OF ASSOCIATION

Statutory Area	Description
Waitotara River	That part of the Waitotara River from its source in the Matemateaonga Range to the sea, as shown on SO 314768.

The following Statement of Association by Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi applies to the area known as Waitotara River, the general location of which is indicated on SO 314768.

Rauru of the Gods, Sky, Lands, and Seas

Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi emanated from the cosmogenic tree of the gods. It came by way of the legion of spirits who were not seen but heard, down through the generations of the Kahui Rere and the genealogies of the 'immediate assembly of elders'. In this respect, Rauru is a progeny of both 'divine and human parentage' and, therefore, so is Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi.

This divine origin is particular to the sacred, mystical and theological insight of the people of Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi. The esoteric nature of these claims is expressed through their own pertinent whakapapa link. It is through a knowledge and awareness of this whakapapa, that one is able to gain a perception of the attitudes of the tribe towards the almighty powers of the celestial realm, the cosmic emanations of the divine beginning, the world and its creation, and the evolution of earth and its people.

Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi makes a direct acclamation by stating its origins from the period of the Absolute Void to Rangī and Papa, to Rauru the man, and Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi the tribe. This claim draws together the spiritual and temporal manifestations of which Rauru is the central figure, it deals specifically with the origins of: the gods, man, vegetation and taonga.

Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi has a spiritual and physical relationship through whakapapa to its Taonga. It is espoused within mana atua, mana whenua, and mana tangata. These Taonga encompass the expanses of Ranginui (sky), the vastness of Tangaroa (sea), and the immensity of Papa-tua-nuku (land), from the Te Awa nui o Taikehu Patea River inland to the Matemateaonga ranges, seaward to the river mouth of Whanganui to our furthestmost fishing boundaries to the south, Te Moana o Raukawa, and across the western horizon then back inland to Te Awa nui a Taikehu Patea.

Ngaa Raurutanga has been exercised in relation to every statutory area in relation to which the statutory acknowledgement is provided. These values have been practised in the following ways:

- **Te reo:** Waiata and koorero relating to a Statutory Area is preserved in te reo.
- **Wairuatanga:** The relationship between Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi and a Statutory Area is expressed in waiata, koorero and karakia. Karakia, in particular, has always been used when harvesting kai. Wairua impacts upon the way in which individuals conduct themselves around kai, the harvesting of kai and the tikanga around the eating of kai.
- **Matauranga:** Matauranga was passed on from one generation to another through karakia, wananga and mihimihi. The knowledge that has been passed on includes the history of a Statutory Area and conservation methods exercised by Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi as kaitiaki of a Statutory Area.

- **Kaitiakitanga:** Kaitiakitanga has been continuously practised through sustainable land and resource management methods. It was the responsibility of the hapuu to only harvest enough kai to sustain their own, and other Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi hapuu, and ensure the ongoing health and sustainability of a Statutory Area.
- **Waiora:** Waiora manifests itself in individuals through the practice of te reo, wairuatanga, matauranga, and kaitiakitanga, and in the fulfilment of an individual's responsibilities in relation to both a Statutory Area and to all of Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi.
- **Whakapapa:** The relationship with a Statutory Area has been fostered through individuals' knowledge of the use and occupation of a Statutory Area that has been passed on throughout the generations.

Cultural, Spiritual, Historic and Traditional Association of Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi with the Waitotara River

The Waitotara River is the life force that sustains Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi. Many Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi hapuu are located either along or near the Waitotara River. These include Ngaa Ariki (Waipapa Marae) Ngaati Pourua (Takirau Marae), Ngaati Hine Waiatarua (Parehungahunga Marae), Te Ihupuku Marae, and Ngaati Hou Tipua (Whare Tapapa, Kaipō Marae). Ngaati Hou Tipua (Whare Tapapa, Kaipō Marae) is known by Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi as Te Pu-o-te-Wheke (head of the octopus), or the Ngaa Rauru headquarters.

Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi used the entire length of the Waitotara River for food gathering. Sources of food included kakahi (fresh water mussels) tuna, whitebait, smelt, flounder and sole. Historically, Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi also utilised the Waitotara River as a means of transport.

The Waitotara River remains significant to Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi as a symbol of a past mahinga kai source from which the physical wellbeing of Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi was sustained, and the spiritual wellbeing nourished.

Statutory Area	Description
Hawkens Lagoon Conservation Area (to be renamed Tapuarau Conservation Area)	219.6202 hectares approximately, being the Hawkens Lagoon Conservation Area, as shown on SO 314758.

The following Statement of Association by Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi applies to the area known as Hawkens Lagoon Conservation Area, the general location of which is indicated on SO 314758.

Rauru of the Gods, Sky, Lands, and Seas

Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi emanated from the cosmogenic tree of the gods. It came by way of the legion of spirits who were not seen but heard, down through the generations of the Kahui Rere and the genealogies of the 'immediate assembly of elders'. In this respect, Rauru is a progeny of both 'divine and human parentage' and, therefore, so is Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi.

This divine origin is particular to the sacred, mystical and theological insight of the people of Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi. The esoteric nature of these claims is expressed through their own pertinent whakapapa link. It is through a knowledge and awareness of this whakapapa, that one is able to gain a perception of the attitudes of the tribe towards the almighty powers of the celestial realm, the cosmic emanations of the divine beginning, the world and its creation, and the evolution of earth and its people.

Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi makes a direct acclamation by stating its origins from the period of the Absolute Void to Rangi and Papa, to Rauru the man, and Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi the tribe. This claim draws together the spiritual and temporal manifestations of which Rauru is the central figure, it deals specifically with the origins of: the gods, man, vegetation and taonga.

Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi has a spiritual and physical relationship through whakapapa to its Taonga. It is espoused within mana atua, mana whenua, and mana tangata. These Taonga encompass the expanses of Ranginui (sky), the vastness of Tangaroa (sea), and the immensity of Papa-tua-nuku (land), from the Te Awa nui o Taikahu Patea River inland to the Matemateaonga ranges, seaward to the river mouth of Whanganui to our furthest fishing boundaries to the south, Te Moana o Raukawa, and across the western horizon then back inland to Te Awa nui a Taikahu Patea.

Ngaa Raurutanga has been exercised in relation to every Statutory Area in relation to which the Statutory Acknowledgement is provided. These values have been practised in the following ways:

- **Te reo:** Waiata and koorero relating to a Statutory Area is preserved in te reo.
- **Wairuatanga:** The relationship between Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi and a Statutory Area is expressed in waiata, koorero and karakia. Karakia, in particular, has always been used when harvesting kai. Wairua impacts upon the way in which individuals conduct themselves around kai, the harvesting of kai and the tikanga around the eating of kai.
- **Matauranga:** Matauranga was passed on from one generation to another through karakia, wananga and mihimihi. The knowledge that has been passed on includes the history of a Statutory Area and conservation methods exercised by Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi as kaitiaki of a Statutory Area.
- **Kaitiakitanga:** Kaitiakitanga has been continuously practised through sustainable land and resource management methods. It was the responsibility of the hapuu to only harvest enough kai to sustain their own, and other Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi hapuu, and ensure the ongoing health and sustainability of a Statutory Area.
- **Waiora:** Waiora manifests itself in individuals through the practice of te reo, wairuatanga, matauranga, and kaitiakitanga, and in the fulfilment of an individual's responsibilities in relation to both a Statutory Area and to all of Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi.
- **Whakapapa:** The relationship with a Statutory Area has been fostered through individuals' knowledge of the use and occupation of a Statutory Area that has been passed on throughout the generations.

Cultural, Spiritual, Historic and Traditional Association of Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi with the Tapuarau Conservation Area

Tapuarau is the name given to the area at the mouth of the Waitotara River within the Tapuarau Conservation Area. The main hapuu of Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi that used Tapuarau included Ngaati Hine Waiatarua, Ngaati Hou Tipua, Ngaa Ariki and Ngaati Ruaiti. Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi has used Tapuarau as a seasonal campsite from where it has gathered mahinga kai in accordance with the values of Ngaa Raurutanga. Tapuarau extends from the mouth of the Waitotara River to Pukeone and includes several small lagoons, including Tapuarau Lagoon, which are the source of tuna, flounder, mullet whitebait and inanga. During flooding, Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi was able to take tuna as it attempted to migrate from the nearby lagoons to the river mouth. The old marae named Hauriri was also situated in this area.

The area is still significant to Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi as a mahinga kai source from which the physical wellbeing of Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi is sustained, and the spiritual wellbeing is nourished.

Statutory Area	Description
Nukumaru Recreation Reserve (the part that remains in Crown ownership)	757 hectares approximately, being part of the Nukumaru Recreation Reserve, as shown on SO 314760.

The following Statement of Association by Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi applies to the area known as Nukumaru Recreation Reserve, the general location of which is indicated on SO 314760.

Rauru of the Gods, Sky, Lands, and Seas

Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi emanated from the cosmogenic tree of the gods. It came by way of the legion of spirits who were not seen but heard, down through the generations of the Kahui Rere and the genealogies of the 'immediate assembly of elders'. In this respect, Rauru is a progeny of both 'divine and human parentage' and, therefore, so is Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi.

This divine origin is particular to the sacred, mystical and theological insight of the people of Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi. The esoteric nature of these claims is expressed through their own pertinent whakapapa link. It is through a knowledge and awareness of this whakapapa, that one is able to gain a perception of the attitudes of the tribe towards the almighty powers of the celestial realm, the cosmic emanations of the divine beginning, the world and its creation, and the evolution of earth and its people.

Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi makes a direct acclamation by stating its origins from the period of the Absolute Void to Rangi and Papa, to Rauru the man, and Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi the tribe. This claim draws together the spiritual and temporal manifestations of which Rauru is the central figure, it deals specifically with the origins of: the gods, man, vegetation and taonga.

Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi has a spiritual and physical relationship through whakapapa to its Taonga. It is espoused within mana atua, mana whenua, and mana tangata. These Taonga encompass the expanses of Ranginui (sky), the vastness of Tangaroa (sea), and the immensity of Papa-tua-nuku (land), from the Te Awa nui o Taikahu Patea River inland to the Matemateaonga ranges, seaward to the river mouth of Whanganui to our furthest fishing boundaries to the south, Te Moana o Raukawa, and across the western horizon then back inland to Te Awa nui a Taikahu Patea.

Ngaa Raurutanga has been exercised in relation to every Statutory Area in relation to which the Statutory Acknowledgement is provided. These values have been practised in the following ways:

- **Te reo:** Waiata and koorero relating to a Statutory Area is preserved in te reo.
- **Wairuatanga:** The relationship between Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi and a Statutory Area is expressed in waiata, koorero and karakia. Karakia, in particular, has always been used when harvesting kai. Wairua impacts upon the way in which individuals conduct themselves around kai, the harvesting of kai and the tikanga around the eating of kai.
- **Matauranga:** Matauranga was passed on from one generation to another through karakia, wananga and mihimihi. The knowledge that has been passed on includes the history of a Statutory Area and conservation methods exercised by Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi as kaitiaki of a Statutory Area.
- **Kaitiakitanga:** Kaitiakitanga has been continuously practised through sustainable land and resource management methods. It was the responsibility of the hapuu to only harvest enough kai to sustain their own, and other Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi hapuu, and ensure the ongoing health and sustainability of a Statutory Area.
- **Waiora:** Waiora manifests itself in individuals through the practice of te reo, wairuatanga, matauranga, and kaitiakitanga, and in the fulfilment of an individual's responsibilities in relation to both a Statutory Area and to all of Ngaa Rauru Kiihahi.

- **Whakapapa:** The relationship with a Statutory Area has been fostered through individuals' knowledge of the use and occupation of a Statutory Area that has been passed on throughout the generations.

Cultural, Spiritual, Historic and Traditional Association of Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi with the Nukumarū Recreation Reserve

Waikaramihi is the name given to the marae tawhito that is situated within the Nukumarū Recreation Reserve, on the coast between Waiinu and Tuaropaki. Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi traditionally camped at Waikaramihi from October to March each year. The main food gathering area was between the Waitotara river mouth and Tuaropaki. The sources of food include kakahi (fresh water mussels), sea mussels, kina, paua, papaka (crabs), karingo (seaweed), and very small octopus stranded in the small rock pools from the receding tides. While Ngaati Maika and Ngaati Ruaiti were the main hapuu that used Waikaramihi, all Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi hapuu traditionally gathered kai moana in accordance with the values of Ngaa Raurutanga.

The Karewaonui canoe (over 100 years old) was until 1987 housed at Waikaramihi and was used by Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi (mainly Ngaati Maika and Ngaati Ruaiti) to catch stingray, shark, snapper and hapuka about 10 miles off the coast. Karakia were used when Karewaonui was "put to sea", and an offering of the first fish caught on Karewaonui was always given to the Kaitiaki-o-te-moana.

The area is still significant to Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi as a mahinga kai source from which the physical wellbeing of Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi is sustained, and the spiritual wellbeing nourished.

Attachment 5: Excerpts regarding deeds of recognition from the Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi deed of settlement

DEEDS OF RECOGNITION

Obligation to enter into Deeds of Recognition

11.23 The Minister of Conservation must, by or on the Settlement Date, enter into a Deed of Recognition with the Governance Entity as contemplated by Part 5 of the Cultural Redress Schedule in respect of those parts of the following Statutory Areas described in Table 2 of Part 3 of the Cultural Redress Schedule that are owned and managed by the Crown, namely:

11.23.1 Hawkens Lagoon Conservation Area;

11.23.2 Lake Beds Conservation Area;

11.23.3 the Patea River;

11.23.4 the Whenuakura River; and

11.23.5 the Waitotara River.

11.24 The Commissioner of Crown Lands must, by or on the Settlement Date, enter into a Deed of Recognition with the Governance Entity as contemplated by Part 5 of the Cultural Redress Schedule in respect of those parts of the following Statutory Areas described in Table 3 of Part 3 of the Cultural Redress Schedule that are owned and managed by the Crown, namely:

11.24.1 the Patea River;

11.24.2 the Whenuakura River; and

11.24.3 the Waitotara River.

Deed of Recognition requires consultation with Governance Entity

11.25 A Deed of Recognition must provide that the Minister of Conservation or the Commissioner of Crown Lands must, when undertaking the activities specified in that deed in relation to or within a Statutory Area to which the deed applies, consult and have regard to the views of the Governance Entity concerning the association of Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi with that Statutory Area as described in the relevant Statement of Association.

If Statutory Area is a river

11.28 If a Deed of Recognition relates to a Statutory Area that is a river:

11.28.1 it relates only to:

(a) the bed of that river; and

(b) that part of the bed of the river (if any) that is:

- (i) owned by the Crown; and
- (ii) managed by the Crown;

11.28.2 it does not relate to:

- (a) the bed of an artificial watercourse;
- (b) land that the waters of the river do not cover at its fullest flow without overlapping its banks; or
- (c) the bed of a tributary flowing into that river; and

11.28.3 In determining whether the Crown manages a river for the purposes of this clause, management exercised by a local authority under the Resource Management Act is not relevant.


Attachment 6: Comments received from invited Māori groups

Ngaati Hinewaiata / Te Ihupuku Marae

Your written comments on a project under the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024

Project name	Waiinu Energy
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Before the due date, for assistance on how to respond or about this template or with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

 All sections of this form with an asterisk (*) must be completed.

1. Contact Details		
Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.		
Organisation name (if relevant)	Te Ihupuku Marae Reservation	
*First name	Tawhirangi	
*Last name	Sullivan	
Postal address	8 Murray Street Aramoho Whanganui 4500	
*Contact phone number	s 9(2)(a)	Alternative
*Email	s 9(2)(a)	

2. Please provide your comments on this application
<p>Kia ora my name is Tawhirangi Sullivan I am the representative of Te Ihupuku Marae, my role to Te Ihupuku marae is rep, admin and negotiator. I am a direct descendant to Te Ihupuku marae to the hapuu Ngati Hinewaiata.</p> <p>We have a team of 6 to this kaupapa:</p> <p>Darcy Karaka – Researcher. Negotiator for kaupapa</p> <p>Te Huia Bill Hamilton – Treaty education, Human rights commission. Negotiator for kaupapa</p> <p>Rauru Broughton – cultural Advisor. Negotiator for kaupapa</p> <p>I eanne Wiari – Te Hou ora -- Te Oranganui. Support Admin for kaupapa</p> <p>Rawharangi Katene – support Admin for kaupapa</p> <p>Our purpose:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seeking approval from fast track for Te Ihupuku marae for individual relationship and agreement with meridian. 2. Te Ihupuku marae have their own mana. We have no representation in the Tkor forum. Within the settlement we are not noted as the hapu Ngati Hinewaiata of Te Ihupuku and is gazetted

as so in the MLC, Crown Grant and Maaori affairs. We are our own entity.

3. I will attatch letters of evidence
 - a) Letter stating my position to Te Ihupuku marae
 - b) Gazettes from MLC, Crown Grant and Maaori affairs
 - c) Statement of rights
 - D) Letter from TKOR refusing to correct mistake within the settlement to hapu name from Ngati Hinewaiata-rua to Ngati Hinewaiata.

We are also having a face to face meeting with meridian 28th May 2026 to discusss our mou. Ngaa mihi Tawhirangi Sullivan

Note: All comments will be made available to the public and the applicant when the Ministry for the Environment proactively releases advice provided to the Minister for the Environment.

Managers signoff

[Manager Name]

Date

Statement of Rights and Interests (Marae and Developer)

To: Meridian

From: Te Ihupuku Marae, Hapuu – Ngati Hinewaiata

Date: 10/01/2026

Subject: Statement of Rights and Kaitiakitanga Interests

(Waiinu Windfarm)

1. Mana Whenua and Recognition

- We, Te ihupuku Marae are the mana whenua, mana moana of the area known as Te Ihupuku and Waiinu where the proposed windmill farm is to be situated.
- Te Ihupuku exercises Rangatiratanga over our rohe and appreciate the support of Te Kahui o Rauru in helping us work with our other marae/hapuu to strengthen that Rangatiratanga. (*mai te rangi ki te whenua mai uta ki tai*)
- We are Kaitiaki of these areas to protect its natural resources, wahi tapu, and spiritual connection for the future of our uri (Descendants)
- We acknowledge the requirement for renewable energy nationally, but state our right through the Tiriti o Waitangi, article 2(Tino Rangatiratanga) over our whenua moana, marae and taonga.

2. Te Tiriti o Waitangi Principals

- Te Ihupuku acknowledge Meridian commitment for having this relationship with our iwi marae/hapu through the Te Tiriti o Waitangi Principals'
- Through the Te Tiriti o Waitangi, we expect direct consultation (kanohi ki te kanohi) active partnership not merely notifications via messages or phone calls or email.
- Our consent or consideration for development of renewable energy

3. Cultural and Spiritual Interests (Kaitiakitanga)

- Kaitiakitanga
- Cultural landscape
- Mahinga kai/Ecological Integrity
- Spiritual connection

4. Environment and Social considerations

- Visual impact- culturally and environmentally
- Noise impact – culturally and environmentally
- Biodiversity impact- native species birds wild animals plants
- Impact within the Rivers, lakes, creeks, sea to marine life
- **Community benefits= employment, training, community investments, meridian commitment to economic benefits**

5. Requirements for engagement

- Early consultation not just by notification to fulfil partnership principals
- MOU = to govern relationship between marae and meridian throughout the life of the project.
- CIA – must be commissioned and funded by developer, conducted by authorised reps of marae.

Conclusion- Developing a beneficial relationship that respects our rights as mana whenua, mana moana while supporting sustainable renewable energy

Note

Ngaati Hinewaiata submitted other documents providing evidence of ownership of the Ihupuku Māori Reservation on which Te Ihupuku Marae is located, along with the comments above. As ownership of the reservation land is not in doubt, those documents have not been included here.

Fast Track Application Team

info@fasttrack.govt.nz

18 May 2026

Teena koe e te Minita,

R.E: REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK ON REFERRAL APPLICATION CRM:0139012926 FROM MERIDIAN ENERGY FOR THE WAIINU ENERGY PARK

This feedback is provided in respect of the Meridian Energy (**The Applicant**) Waiinu Energy Park project (**The Proposal**).

This feedback is provided on behalf of Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi and Te Kaahui o Rauru Trust, the post-settlement governance entity (together, **Te Kaahui o Rauru**). Te Kaahui o Rauru is authorised to provide this statement on behalf of the trustees of the Trust (**the Paepae Representatives**).

The Trust is a relevant iwi authority, Treaty settlement entity and an applicant group for the purposes of section 18(2) of the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024 (**the Act**).

Te Kaahui o Rauru has a strong understanding of the significant adverse impacts on-shore wind generation has on the revitalisation of Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga. This in part is informed through the experience Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi has from the establishment of the wind farm adjacent to the application site at Waipipi operated by Mercury NZ Limited. This is considered to be relevant context for this proposal.

Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi Deed of Settlement 2003

The Crown and Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi settled our historical Treaty of Waitangi claims in 2003. In our settlement, the Crown has acknowledged the importance to Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi of revitalising Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga and our desire to practice Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga.

Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga is the foundation of Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi culture. Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga is the term used by Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi to describe those values, rights and responsibilities Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi holds according to custom, including the values, rights and responsibilities recognised by Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi and its principles.

Te Kaahui o Rauru Trust is a trust with charitable status and acts for the benefit of Ngaa Uki o Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi. The Trust holds many functions, including:

- a) As the post-settlement governance entity for Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi established pursuant to the Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi settlement;

- b) Representing Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi as an iwi authority for the purposes of the Resource Management Act 1991;
- c) Administration of statutory acknowledgements, deeds of recognition and statements of association including for those reserves adjoining and adjacent to the proposed location for the Application;
- d) Ownership and administration of fee-simple land parcels within and adjacent to the proposed location for the Application; and
- e) As an applicant on behalf of Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi for recognition orders under the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011, including:
 - i. Customary marine title between Te Awanui-a-Taiehu (Patea River) in the north, through to the Whanganui River, in the south, out to 12 nautical miles; and
 - ii. Protected customary rights for mahinga kai between Te Awanui-a-Taiehu (Patea River) in the north, through to Whanganui River, in the south, out to 12 nautical miles.

The Trust Deed (**'Te Kawa'**) provides that the Paepae Representatives will be guided by the following:

*Kia rangatira te tuu Te Kaahui o Rauru
hei roopuu whakatiinana i ngaa rau wawata
o te iwi Maaori, o te motu hoki*

Te Kawa requires that Paepae Representatives be guided by and informed by maatauranga maaori in their policy development and decision-making. That is, "Maatauranga Maaori is informed by purakau, karakia, mooteatea, whakataukii, whakapapa and many other puna koorero. Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga is the foundation of Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi culture and is derived from this Maaori world view".

Te Kaahui o Rauru has developed and lodged an iwi planning document with relevant local authorities which articulates this world view into a resource management context; that is the Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi Puutaiao Plan. The Puutaiao Plan itself is an expression of Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga.

In addition Te Kaahui o Rauru has developed Ka mate kaainga tahi, ka ora kaainga rua – the Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi Climate Change Strategy which contextualises Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga for climate change. Ka mate kaainga tahi, ka ora kaainga rua itself is an expression of Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga.

This world view is reliant on, and derived from the relationship of Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi with the attributes of the environment and associated aatua domains. Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga that is reliant on the Waiinu and Waitootara area face irreversible change with the prospect of this application. The relationship Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi are able to hold and maintain with these spaces similarly face this irreversible change.

Te Kaahui o Rauru engagement with the Applicant

As described in the referral application Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi has engaged with Meridian in good faith on this project for a number of years now. In our view that engagement is best characterised as incomplete with a number of information gaps and other concerns remaining unresolved. This

has limited the ability for Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi to apply our Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga to assess the impacts of the proposal and ultimately develop the Cultural Effects Assessment relied on in the referral application to demonstrate consistency with our Treaty Settlement arrangements.

Information about the proposed project and how it impacts on Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga has been and remains central to the engagement Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi is committed to with the Applicant.

Although time has elapsed it is our view that the assessment contained in the referral application remains at a high level. The referral application correctly identifies our Treaty Settlement. Despite this, the attributes of the settlement arrangements described above are yet to be reflected in and have bearing on the technical reports and assessments the proposal relies on.

The current benefits assessment remains high level, with no meaningful consideration of Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi or local communities. At present the assessment identifies the scale of economic activity, as well as general alignment of the project with national energy/climate change strategies. In our view economic activities should not be conflated with economic benefit. There is little detail available in the assessment completed to date with respect to how these benefits would accrue locally, or how these would meaningfully impact on Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi in a positive sense or assist in revitalising Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga.

Conversely, it is considered that the adverse effects on Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi that result from this proposal on the landscape when viewed through Ngaa Rauru Kiitahitanga, and on the limited maaori land parcels within and adjacent to the project area, as well as marae which overlook or are located within the proposed site remain significant.


Position on the referral application

Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi and Meridian have recently entered into a Terms of Engagement, in part to facilitate genuine engagement by the parties in this process. In our view there is risk that genuine engagement is frustrated if subjected to the time pressures of a fast-track process.

It is our view that upholding the Settlement arrangements of Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi is of substantial benefit to Aotearoa. Consistency with these Settlement arrangements is yet to be reflected into the proposal.

It is for these reasons Te Kaahui o Rauru stress that these issues, information gaps and the completion of the final Cultural Effects Assessment ('CEA') must be resolved ahead of any substantive application being lodged.

Ngaa manaakitanga,



Tahinganui Hina
Tumu Whakarae (Chairperson)
Te Kaahui o Rauru