

File ref: 26-BRF-02110 / FTAA-2604-1213

24 August 2026

Danny Garret
Hokonui Hills Wind Farm Limited Partnership (the applicant)
s 9(2)(a)

c/- Megan Hankey
Mitchell Daysh Limited (the agent)
s 9(2)(a)

Dear Danny and Megan

Section 28 – Notice of Decisions on the referral application for the Hokonui Wind Farm Project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

This notice of decisions is for a referral application received from Hokonui Hills Wind Farm Limited Partnership (the applicant) for the Hokonui Wind Farm Project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act).

Project details

The project is an infrastructure development to construct, operate, maintain and carry out end-of-life decommissioning of a wind farm with a peak generation capacity of up to 500 MW (Megawatts) and an annual expected output of 1,905 GWh (Gigawatt hours) and establish a mixed-use industrial area of approximately 30 hectares to enable co-location of complementary industrial or energy-related activities.

The project area is approximately 11,000 hectares in the Hokonui Hills near Mandeville, mostly in the Southland District, and partly in the Gore District, Southland Region.

The project involves associated infrastructure and ancillary activities to connect and supply electricity to the National and local grids that will comprise:

- a. approximately 83 three-bladed wind turbines, with a maximum blade length of 90 metres and a hub height of approximately 150 metres (maximum blade tip height up to 240 metres above ground level)
- b. electrical reticulation consisting of underground and overhead cables and wind turbine transformers
- c. a new switching station and two new substations and associated transmission lines and connections to the National Grid

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- d. construction of internal roading and access tracks, turbine foundations and hard-stand areas adjacent to the wind turbines
- e. ancillary activities associated with the construction including earthworks and quarrying, concrete batching plants (approximately 4000m² in area), operation and maintenance of the wind farm including permanent on-site facilities comprising an approximately 400m² building
- f. mixed-use activities that may include data storage and processing facilities, battery energy storage systems and associated grid support infrastructure, electricity-intensive processing or manufacturing activities, renewable energy conversion activities, and directly associated ancillary facilities supporting industrial and logistics operations.

The applicant seeks the following proposed approvals via the fast-track approvals process to authorise the project:

- a. resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) as described in section 42(4)(a) of the Act
- b. concessions and land exchange under the Conservation Act 1987 as described in section 42(4)(e) and 42(4)(f) of the Act
- c. wildlife permits under the Wildlife Act 1953 as described in section 42(4)(h) of the Act
- d. archaeological authority under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 as described in section 42(4)(i) of the Act
- e. approvals under the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983 as described in section 42(4)(j) of the Act.

Statutory framework for referral applications

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits.

The project can only be accepted if the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) is satisfied the criteria in section 22 are met, which includes being satisfied the project is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional or national benefits and referring the project to the fast-track approvals process would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost effective way than under normal processes, and is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process.

Under section 21(3) of the Act, the Minister must decline a referral application if:

- a. the Minister is satisfied that the project does not meet the criteria in section 22
- b. the Minister is satisfied that the project involves an ineligible activity
- c. the Minister considers they do not have adequate information to inform the decision.

Additionally, the Minister has the discretion to decline a referral application for any other reason, even if the project meets the criteria outlined in section 22 of the Act.

Decision on referral application

The Minister has decided to accept the referral application under section 21(1)(c) and refer the whole project to the fast-track approvals process under section 26(2)(a). The Minister is satisfied that the project meets the criteria in section 22 of the Act, for the reasons detailed below.

Reasons for accepting referral application

The Minister is satisfied the project:

- a. is an infrastructure and development project that would have significant regional or national benefits; and
- b. referring the project to the fast-track approvals process:
 - i. would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes; and
 - ii. is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process.

Specifically, the Minister is satisfied the project meets the criteria in section 22 of the Act as:

- a. it is an infrastructure and development project that would have significant regional benefits [section 22(1)(a)] because it:
 - i. would deliver new regionally or nationally significant infrastructure
 - ii. would deliver significant economic benefits [section 22(2)(a)(iv)] by generating approximately \$136.5 million in direct benefits to the region and approximately 185–250 full-time equivalent (FTE) direct construction jobs over the development period and 24–33 FTE once operational. The project will deliver \$256.7 million in total direct expenditure for the construction period and, once operational, up to \$18 million into the local economy annually.
- b. referring the project to the fast-track approvals process would facilitate its delivery [section 22(1)(b)(i)], including by enabling it to be processed in a timelier and more cost-effective way than under normal processes because it precludes public and limited notification in an RMA context and enables multiple approval types under specific Acts to be considered under a singular process, and appeals under the Act are to the High Court and limited to points of law.
- c. referring the project is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process [section 22(1)(b)(ii)] because the project is neither novel in the New Zealand context nor beyond the scope of what a panel would typically assess where multiple approval types are sought under the fast-track approvals process.

The Minister is satisfied there is no reason they must decline the project under section 21(3) of the Act. The Minister is also satisfied there is no reason to decline the project under section 21(4) of the Act.

Specified matters for accepted referral application

1. Hokonui Hills Wind Farm Limited Partnership, who lodged the referral application, as the person who is authorised to lodge a substantive application for the project under section 27(2) of the Act.
2. Under section 27(3)(c)(i) of the Act, a deadline of two years from the date of issue of this letter applies for lodging the land exchange application.

Under section 28 of the Act, the Secretary for the Environment must also give written notice of decisions made by the Minister on an accepted referral application to the parties specified in Appendix 1 of this letter.

If you have any queries about this notice of decisions, email: referral@fasttrack.govt.nz and include the name of the lead contact – Stephanie McNicholl.

If you have any queries about the substantive process, email: contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 225 537).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S Frame', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Stephanie Frame

Manager – Fast-track Operations

Appendix 1: Section 28 – Notice of Minister’s decisions on accepted referral application

Appendix 1: Section 28 – Notice of Minister’s decision on accepted referral application

Section 28(1)(a)(i) – the applicant	Hokonui Hills Wind Farm Limited Partnership
Section 28(1)(a)(ii) – anyone invited to comment on the application	
<i>Relevant local authorities</i>	Southland Regional Council Southland District Council Gore District Council
<i>Relevant portfolio Ministers</i>	Minister for the Environment Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti Minister for Māori Development Minister of Conservation Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage Minister for Energy Minister for Climate Change
<i>Relevant administering agencies</i>	Department of Conservation Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga
<i>Māori groups under section 17(d)</i>	Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Hokonui Rūnanga Waihōpai Rūnaka Te Rūnanga o Awarua Te Rūnanga o Ōraka Aparima Te Ao Mārama Incorporated
<i>Any other persons under section 17(5)</i>	Minister for Economic Growth Minister for Regional Development Chief Executive of Transpower New Zealand Limited Chief Executive of PowerNet Limited
Section 28(2) – other parties for an accepted referral application	
<i>The Panel Convener</i>	Including all the information received by the Minister as required by section 28(4).
<i>Any iwi authorities or Treaty settlement entities (other than those that must be notified as identified above) that the Minister considers have an interest in the matter</i>	No additional iwi authorities or Treaty settlement entities have been identified beyond those listed above.
<i>Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)</i>	Including all the information received by the Minister as required by section 28(4).
<i>Relevant administering agencies</i>	No additional administering agencies have been identified beyond those listed above.