

Mt Munro Wind Farm

Summary of application for Wind Farm

29 June 2023

Meridian Energy Limited is seeking resource consents to construct, operate and maintain a wind farm, including all ancillary activities such as earthworks, transmission lines and substations, on a site known as Mt Munro, located approximately 5km south of Eketāhuna in the northern Wairarapa. The site, and its surrounds, are rural in nature and primarily used for pastoral farming.

Projections from energy sector organisations forecast a need to double the total electricity supply in Aotearoa New Zealand by 2050. Through commitments made under the Paris Agreement in 2015, the Climate Change Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019 and the Towards a productive, sustainable and inclusive economy, Aotearoa New Zealand's First Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP), the forecast demand in electricity supply must be met by renewable generation.

The site is classified as having a Class I wind energy resource. Therefore, it has one of the best wind resources available. It is proposed to construct up to 20 wind turbines on the site, each up to 160m tall (comprised of a hub height of 92m and a blade diameter of 136m). An envelope approach is proposed, whereby the final location of each turbine is yet to be determined, however the location must be within the identified Turbine Envelope Zone. All supporting infrastructure, including access roads and cables, can be located in the Turbine Envelope Zone or in another development envelope named the Turbine Exclusion Zone. This approach allows for flexibility in final turbine size and location. For the purposes of the resource consent application, the maximum potential development within the envelope has been assessed.

The site lies across the boundary of the Tararua and Masterton Districts, and Horizons and Greater Wellington regions, with resource consents being required from each of those Councils. Resource consents are also required under the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020. Overall, the necessary resource consents have a discretionary activity status.

The objective and policy framework which guides the resource consent application and Assessment of Environmental Effects includes the relevant Council statutory planning documents, as well as higher order documents being the National Policy Statement on Renewable Electricity Generation 2011 and the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020.

The proposal gives rise to substantial positive effects, in that it will provide for additional electricity generation at a time when it is needed and doing so in a way which contributes towards meeting Aotearoa New Zealand's renewable electricity needs and commitments outlined above.

The potential adverse effects of the proposed wind farm arise in respect of the following matters:

- Landscape, natural character and visual amenity;
- Noise;
- Traffic;
- Ecological;
- Earthworks;
- Cultural;
- Signage;
- Archaeological and historic heritage;
- Radio interference;
- Aviation;
- Electromagnetic fields;
- Hazardous substances; and
- Contaminated land.

In order to assist with the Assessment of Environmental Effects, including how the proposal gives effect to the relevant objectives and policies, a number of expert assessments have been undertaken. While the level of effect

varies (including significant effects on visual amenity experienced from four dwellings which sit outside of the subject site), it is concluded in all expert reports, and in the Assessment of Environmental Effects, that with the imposition of conditions to assist in the avoidance, remediation or mitigation of actual and potential adverse effects, the actual and potential adverse effects are either minor, can be appropriately avoided, remedied or mitigated or are otherwise acceptable.

In coming to this conclusion, recognition is given to Aotearoa New Zealand's reliance on electricity, and the need to provide for renewable energy generation.

Meridian undertook community consultation and stakeholder engagement during the development of this proposal. This included public open days, visits to neighbours, meetings with tangata whenua and meetings with other key stakeholders. While some individuals who will be affected do not want the proposal to proceed, there is also public and stakeholder encouragement for it to advance.