

**IN THE ENVIRONMENT COURT
WELLINGTON REGISTRY**

**I TE KŌTI TAIAO O AOTEAROA
TE WHANGANUI-A-TARA ROHE**

ENV-2024-WLG-001

UNDER the Resource Management Act 1991

IN THE MATTER the direct referral of applications for resource consents by
under section 87G of the Act for the Mt Munro Wind Farm

BY **MERIDIAN ENERGY LIMITED**
Applicant

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ANDREW CURTIS

**ON BEHALF OF MANAWATŪ-WHANGANUI REGIONAL COUNCIL, GREATER
WELLINGTON REGIONAL COUNCIL, TARARUA DISTRICT COUNCIL, AND
MASTERTON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

AIR QUALITY

Dated: 23 August 2024



227-231 Broadway Avenue
PO Box 1945
Palmerston North
DX PP80001

S Johnston
☎ 06 353 5210
🖨 06 356 4345
✉ sjohnston@crlaw.co.nz

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A.	INTRODUCTION	1
B.	CODE OF CONDUCT	2
C.	SCOPE OF EVIDENCE.....	2
D.	OUTSTANDING ISSUES	3
E.	RESPONSE TO SECTION 274 PARTY EVIDENCE.....	4
F.	CONDITIONS.....	5

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ANDREW CURTIS

A. INTRODUCTION

- [1] My name is Andrew Ferguson Curtis. I am a Technical Director at Pattle Delamore Partners Limited specialising in Air Quality. I have been in that position since April 2020, and prior to that held a similar role at AECOM¹ for over 20 years.
- [2] I prepared a report on the application required by s 87F of the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**) on behalf of Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Council (**Horizons**) and Wellington Regional Council (**WRC**), Tararua District Council (**TDC**), and Masterton District Council (**MDC**) (the **Consent Authorities**) dated 15 March 2024 (**s 87F Report**).
- [3] In my s 87F Report, I reviewed the application from Meridian Energy Limited (the **Applicant** or **Meridian**) for resource consent applications lodged with the Consent Authorities for the Mt Munro Wind Farm (**Mt Munro Project** or **Project**) relating to air quality. The s 87F Report provided recommendations to improve or further clarify aspects of the resource consent applications, including with regard to conditions, should the Court be minded to grant resource consents.
- [4] I confirm I have the qualifications and experience set out at paragraphs 5 - 9 of my s 87F Report.
- [5] On 31 July 2024, I participated in expert conferencing on air quality, resulting in a joint witness statement dated 31 July 2024 (**Air Quality JWS**). I confirm the contents of the Air Quality JWS.
- [6] Additionally, I was asked by the Consent Authorities, following mediation to participate in a discussion with Mr John Maxwell (a section 274 party). This occurred via telephone on 8 July 2024, and I answered a number of air quality related questions that he had.

¹ And its predecessors, URS New Zealand Limited and Woodward Clyde NZ Limited.

B. CODE OF CONDUCT

- [7] I repeat the confirmation provided in my s 87F Report that I have read and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2023. This evidence has been prepared in accordance with that Code. Statements expressed in this evidence are within my areas of expertise, except where I state I am relying on the opinion or evidence of other witnesses.

C. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- [8] My statement will cover the following:
- (a) The extent to which issues identified in my s 87F Report have been resolved through mediation, Meridian evidence, and expert conferencing;
 - (b) A response to section 274 party evidence; and
 - (c) Conditions.
- [9] In addition to the material that was reviewed for my s 87F Report, I have reviewed the following:
- (a) Joint Statement of Planning Experts dated 9 August 2024 (**Planning JWS**);
 - (b) Statement of Evidence of Rob Van de Munckhof (Air Quality) dated 24 May 2024, on behalf of Meridian;
 - (c) The proposed changes to conditions filed with Mr Anderson's evidence (the **Meridian conditions**);
 - (d) Evidence of Janet McIlraith (s 274 party) dated 10 July 2024;
 - (e) Evidence of Robin Olliver (s 274 party) dated 10 July 2024;
 - (f) Evidence of Hastwell/Mt Munro Protection Society Inc. (s 274 party) dated 10 July 2024;

- (g) Evidence (Social Impact Report) of John Maxwell (s 274 party) dated 10 July 2024; and
- (h) The draft conditions attached to the evidence of Mr Damien McGahan on behalf of the Consent Authorities (the **August Proposed Conditions**).

D. OUTSTANDING ISSUES

- [10] My s 87F Report identified that construction related air quality effects associated with the Project could be managed through appropriate conditions (as per the August Proposed Conditions) that require the development of an appropriate Dust Management Plan (**DMP**).²
- [11] I identified that the greatest potential for air quality (dust) related effects was associated with the vehicles using Old Coach Road to access the site, given that it is currently unsealed. However, sealing the road would eliminate the potential for dust from this source, and air quality effects for Old Coach Road would be minimised as far as practicable.³ I note that there is some potential for dust during the reconstruction of Old Coach Road prior to sealing occurring, but this is no different to that which could be created by any road rehabilitation process and can be managed appropriately.
- [12] Following review of Meridian's evidence, and expert conferencing, all outstanding issues highlighted in my s 87F Report have been resolved through the Air Quality JWS, Planning JWS and the August Proposed Conditions.⁴
- [13] Particular concerns that I had in relation to consenting and operation of the concrete batching plant and the portable crusher have been resolved by the inclusion of conditions CB1 to CB4 and MACF1 to MCF3 respectively.
- [14] Meridian has also proffered a condition (CTM2 (ii)) in relation to sealing Old Coach Road, which as discussed in the Air Quality JWS, is the most effective

² Section 87F Report – Andrew Curtis (Air Quality), 15 March 2024 at [12].

³ At [14].

⁴ Planning JWS at page 12, item 8. See also Conditions DM1 to DM2, CB1 to CB4, MACF1 to MACF4.

mechanism for avoiding potential dust effects on residents during the construction process.⁵

- [15] Following expert conferencing I am confident that with the mitigation proposed (for example ensuring that in locations where earthworks are complete, stabilisation occurs as soon as practicable and within 14 day as per condition ES3 I), the potential for effects beyond the northern site boundary during the construction of the site access road will be low, provided the management methods set out in the Erosion and Sediment Control Plan and DMP are effectively implemented.

E. RESPONSE TO SECTION 274 PARTY EVIDENCE

- [16] I have reviewed the section 274 party evidence of Mr Olliver who has raised concerns about contamination of roof-collected drinking water and fruit and vegetables grown on his property.⁶
- [17] I am confident that due to the distance between Mr Olliver's property and the proposed construction activities (approximately 800 m) that there will be no impact on roof collected drinking water or fruit and vegetables. In addition to the distance involved I consider that the management methods that have been proposed by Meridian are appropriate and should minimise as far as practicable the potential for dust to result in off-site nuisance effects.
- [18] Mr Maxwell, in his section 274 party evidence, raises concerns that Meridian's assessment has not specifically considered the construction occurring on the ridge, which is a more exposed location.⁷
- [19] I agree with him that the ridge is a more exposed location. However given the distance between this location and residences in the Hastwell area, I do not consider that this assessment would be significantly different to that already undertaken.

⁵ Air Quality JWS at page 4, item 3.

⁶ Evidence of Robin Olliver, 10 July 2024 at page 1.

⁷ Evidence of John Maxwell, 10 July 2024 at paragraphs 33-35.

- [20] That being said, due to the exposed nature of the ridgelines, the constructors will need to be vigilant and diligent in the implementation of management measures to minimise the potential for dust to be generated.

F. CONDITIONS

- [21] I have reviewed the August Proposed Conditions. For the reasons I explain above, I am comfortable with the conditions. From my perspective the critical conditions are:

- (a) Condition DM1 which sets the standard which must be met to ensure that dust from the proposed activity does not result in off-site dust nuisance effects; and
- (b) Condition DM2 which requires the applicant to develop a DMP that ensures compliance with Condition DM1, and which must be certified by the Councils as being appropriate to ensure compliance with DM1.

- [22] In addition, there is a requirement in Condition DM2 c) iv. to ensure the DMP contains appropriate contingency measures that can be implemented in the event that dust effects occur. Exactly what these contingency measures are will depend on the context and the work being undertaken, but could include for example, with respect to the reconstruction of Old Coach Road, that the Applicant provide a laundry service in the event that washing cannot be hung outside to dry.

23 August 2024

Andrew Curtis