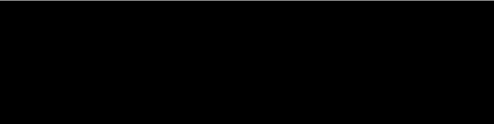


Rangitikei Guardians Incorporated



28th April 2025

To:

The Chief Executive
Rangitikei District Council
Private Bag 1102
Marton 4741
Email: info@rangitikei.govt.nz

Subject: Urgent Request to Appeal Consent Decision for Huri Waka Wind Farm and Refer to Full Council

Dear Carol Gordon,

Rangitikei Guardians Incorporated, a community group dedicated to preserving the biodiversity, natural beauty, and historic significance of the Rangitikei District, particularly the Hihitahi Plateau within the Moawhango Ecological District, urgently requests that the Rangitikei District Council appeal the decision to grant resource consent for the Huri Waka Wind Farm (formerly Project Central Wind) under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). We further request that this matter be brought before the full Council for comprehensive consideration, as referenced in the Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda (page 45–52), section 3.7.

Non-Compliance with the Resource Management Act 1991

The Huri Waka Wind Farm, proposed for the Hihitahi Plateau, is inconsistent with the purpose and principles of the RMA, as outlined in Part 2. Under **Section 5**, the RMA mandates sustainable management to protect natural and physical resources while sustaining their potential for future generations, safeguarding ecosystems, and mitigating adverse environmental effects. The wind farm threatens the Hihitahi Plateau's unique biodiversity, including significant habitats for threatened indigenous fauna and flora, contravening **Section 6(c)**, which requires the protection of such areas from inappropriate development.

Furthermore, the Plateau is an outstanding natural landscape and feature, recognized for its unmodified character and cultural significance within the Moawhango Ecological District. Its development for industrial purposes violates **Section 6(b)**, which mandates protection of such landscapes from inappropriate use. The project also risks undermining the cultural and historic heritage of the area, including Māori relationships with ancestral lands and taonga (**Section 6(e)**), and fails to maintain amenity values for the Moawhango community (**Section 7(c)**), causing unacceptable discordance through visual, noise, and ecological impacts. The RMA requires a balanced approach to renewable energy development (**Section 7(j)**), but this must not come at the expense of finite natural resources (**Section 7(g)**) or the intrinsic values of ecosystems (**Section 7(d)**). The Huri Waka Wind Farm's significant adverse

effects outweigh its benefits, particularly when alternative sites with lesser environmental impacts may exist.

Concerns Regarding Project History and Council's Prior Position

When this project, previously known as Project Central Wind, was last considered, Councillors stipulated that construction must proceed, or no further extensions would be granted. The project's prolonged uncertainty and land banking have imposed an unreasonable burden on the Moawhango and northern Rangitikei communities, restricting land use and fostering ongoing anxiety. This history of delay and indecision undermines the ethic of stewardship (**Section 7(aa)**) and the efficient use of resources (**Section 7(b)**), further justifying an appeal to reassess the consent's validity.

Inaccuracies in the Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda

We note with concern that the Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda (pages 45–52) contains several inaccuracies, casting doubt on the document's overall reliability. These errors risk misinforming decision-making processes and undermine the Council's duty to ensure transparent and accurate governance. We urge the Council to address these discrepancies and ensure all information presented to Councillors is verified before deciding on this critical matter.

Community and Environmental Impacts

The Huri Waka Wind Farm threatens significant harm to the Hihitahi Plateau's ecological integrity, a significant habitat within the Moawhango Ecological District. It also jeopardizes the cultural and historic values cherished by the community, particularly for Māori, whose connections to the land are protected under **Section 6(e)**. The project's industrial scale will introduce unacceptable amenity discordance for Moawhango and northern Rangitikei residents, degrading their quality of life and the environment (**Section 7(f)**). These impacts are particularly concerning given the Council's obligation under the Local Government Act 2002 to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities.

Request for Action

Given the project's non-compliance with the RMA, its history of uncertainty, and the agenda's inaccuracies, we respectfully request that the Council:

1. Lodge an appeal against the decision to grant consent for the Huri Waka Wind Farm with the EPA, as provided under the RMA, to ensure a thorough review of its environmental, cultural, and amenity impacts.
2. Refer the matter to a full Council meeting for open discussion and decision-making, ensuring transparency and representation of community interests. We must insist that the councillors do not delegate their authority to the staff, as it is essential that councillors advocate and represent their community.
3. Reassess the project's alignment with the RMA's principles, the Rangitikei District Plan, and the long-term interests of the district, particularly the preservation of the Hihitahi Plateau as a national treasure.
4. Engage with the Moawhango community to better understand the enormous impact this proposed project will have on the people of Moawhango, Taihape and the northern Rangitikei.

Commitment to Engagement

Rangitikei Guardians Incorporated is committed to engaging with the Council through public forums, deputations, or submissions, as outlined in the Council's procedures for public participation. We request a response within 10 working days, per the Council's complaints and appeals process, and welcome the opportunity to discuss our concerns in person.

Please contact us at [REDACTED] to arrange a meeting or confirm receipt of this letter.

Thank you for considering this urgent request. We trust that the Rangitikei District Council will uphold its responsibilities under the RMA and prioritise the preservation of the Hihitahi Plateau's ecological, cultural, and amenity values for current and future generations.

Yours sincerely,

Jacqui Cottrell

Chairperson

Rangitikei Guardians Incorporated

