

Before Independent Hearings Commissioners
appointed by the Northland Regional Council

under: the Resource Management Act 1991

in the matter of: an application by Meridian Energy Limited for resource consents for earthworks, associated stormwater diversion and discharges, vegetation clearance, and wetland removal for the construction of a solar farm at Ruakākā, Northland (APP.045356.01.01)

between: **Meridian Energy Limited**
Applicant

and: **Northland Regional Council**
Consent Authority

Summary statement – Grant Telfar (Company)

Dated: 5 August 2024

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SUMMARY STATEMENT OF GRANT TELFAR

INTRODUCTION

- 1 My full name is Grant John Barnard Telfar.
- 2 My qualifications and experience are set out at paragraphs 2–8 of my statement of evidence.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

- 3 Meridian Energy Limited (MEL) is a renewable electricity generator and an electricity retailer. MEL is committed to generating electricity only from 100% renewable sources – sun, water and wind – and to ensuring that renewable generation is used where it can do the most good via hydro and battery storage systems. MEL generates around 30% of New Zealand’s annual electricity production.
- 4 There is an inevitable transformation occurring, and a clear imperative, driving New Zealand’s electricity system to be close to 100% renewable by 2035 and to support a low-carbon economy by 2050. This will require a substantial amount of new renewable electricity generation to be built over the next few decades. Generation investment and construction is driven by a need: to replace retiring thermal generation; to satisfy the expected growth in demand that comes with a bigger population; and to meet load from elsewhere in the economy that is new to the power system as the country decarbonises (transport, process-heat boilers, etc).
- 5 With a potential generation capacity of around 100-150MW, and an estimated annual energy production of 150-200GWh, the Proposal is well placed to contribute to predicted demand growth and to provide associated community and societal benefits.
- 6 The Proposal site was carefully selected, with advantageous attributes for a successful solar development, including: proximity to transmission infrastructure, the ability to pair with the BESS at Ruakākā, a reliable solar resource, and a suitable power system location. The Proposal will add resilience to the electricity system in an area that is notably supply short.
- 7 Ultimately, the Proposal is an exciting high-quality project that will deliver substantial benefits for the Northland region and for New Zealand. It responds to the increasing need for renewable electricity in the future and is aligned with a number of Government policies. It is viewed by MEL as a positive, viable, and imminent project.

5 August 2024

Grant Telfar