



Harapaki Wind Farm Development, Hawke's Bay

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Kia ora koutou

Since our last update, a considerable amount of progress has been made on site despite the challenges that COVID-19 and the weather has thrown at us. Notwithstanding this, the team are committed to maintaining the construction programme.

Weather disruption

During November, the site received over 350 millimetres of rain which was well above normal for Northern Hawke's Bay. Unfortunately, this continued into December and wet ground conditions made earthworks very challenging. A continued spell of mostly good weather just before Christmas and into the New Year has enabled our civil contractor, Hick Bros Spartan Joint Venture, to make some great progress. The forming of the first 3km of access road and associated completion of bank stabilisation works in this section is now complete.



COVID-19 impacts

It's hard to believe that we are entering the third year of dealing with COVID-19. The challenges it has presented to everyone across Aotearoa and the world have been immense. Like many companies, we have had to adapt the way we operate.

For a number of people working on the project, the impacts have been harder felt than others. We have many workers who have had to remain away from home for lengthy periods due to lockdowns so they can continue to work and support their whānau. We acknowledge the difficulties and challenges this has created for them and their whānau and thank them for their commitment and support.

Working under the red setting level has meant we've had to shift to working in smaller teams or bubbles. Teams work independently of another team to reduce the risk for all working on the project. Access to the site is restricted to essential works as we continue to minimise the risk to the health of all those working on the project and the local community.

Procurement and employment

Building Aotearoa's second largest wind farm requires a large number of people during the construction phase. So far, we've inducted over 700 people onto site and we're really delighted that 54% of those are from the Hawke's Bay region. Ensuring economic benefits flow to the local community is one of the major objectives for the project and we're very pleased with how it's tracking so far.

Manufacturing and shipping delays worldwide have also challenged us to adapt. We've identified some items that would usually be manufactured overseas and shipped to New Zealand, and had these manufactured in the Hawke's Bay.

Our strategy is to procure goods and services locally where practical and provide value to the wider Hawke's Bay community, while also reducing our supply risk. Sourcing as much as we can locally often has the added benefit of lowering the carbon footprint of the project.

Discoveries on site

Since starting works, we have discovered a small number of animal bones, a tool shaped stone and broken bottles. The discovery protocol agreed with Heritage New Zealand and iwi was implemented on discovery of the items. Works in the vicinity were immediately stopped until our cultural monitors and the project archaeologist inspected and confirmed the items were not of archaeological interest or significance.

Recycling of fencing material

We are operating on a large site and have several kilometres of old farm fencing to remove and dispose of. As part of our commitment to sustainability, we are recycling the timber and wire where practical to minimise the amount of material going to landfill.

If you have any queries about the project, please email us at harapaki@meridianenergy.co.nz.

Ngā mihi

Robert Batters

Project Manager Harapaki Wind Farm

