

## REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT ASSESSMENT

It is considered that the following Otago Regional Policy Statement objectives and policies are of relevance to the proposed Mount Stuart wind farm:

### Chapter 4 – Manawhenua Perspective

- **Objective 4.4.1 Waahi Tapu (Sacred places)**  
*To recognize the spiritual and customary importance of waahi tapu (such as burial places) to Kai Tahu and to recognize and provide for the protection of waahi tapu from physical disturbance, erosion, pollution and inappropriate landuse.*
- **Objective 4.4.2 Waahi Taoka (Treasured Resources)**  
*To recognize and provide for the special significance that all taoka play in the culture of Kai Tahu.*
- **Objective 4.4.5 Kaitiakitanga (Guardianship)**  
*To incorporate the concept and spirit of kaitiakitanga in the management of Otago's natural and physical resources in a way consistent with the values of Kai Tahu.*

Both Kai Tahu ki Otago and the Hokonui Runanga have been consulted throughout the course of the planning and development process. Both organisations have given an indication that the proposed Mount Stuart wind farm development will not detract from the cultural significance and values associated with the area. Nor will the development have adverse effects on the Waahi Tapu, Waahi Taoka or Kaitiakitanga of the area. As such it can be considered that the proposal will be consistent with the above objectives.

### Chapter 5 – Land

- **Objective 5.4.1**  
*To promote the sustainable management of Otago's land resources in order:*
  - *To maintain and enhance the primary productive capacity and life-supporting capacity of land resources; and*
  - *To meet the present and reasonably foreseeable needs of Otago's peoples and communities.*
- **Objective 5.4.2**  
*To avoid, remedy or mitigate degradation of Otago's natural and physical resources resulting from activities utilising the land resource.*
- **Policy 5.5.1**  
*To recognise and provide for the relationship Kai Tahu have with Otago's land resources through:*
  - *Establishing processes that allow the existence of heritage sites, waahi tapu, waahi taoka to be taken into account when considering the subdivision, use and development of Otago's land resources; and*
  - *Protecting, where practicable, archeological sites from disturbance; and*

- *Notifying the appropriate runanga of the disturbance of any archeological site and avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any effect of further disturbance until consultation with the kaitiaki runanga has occurred.*
- **Policy 5.5.3**  
*To maintain and enhance Otago's land resource through avoiding, remedying or mitigating the adverse effects which have the potential to, among other adverse effects;*
  - *Reduce the soil's life supporting capacity*
  - *Reduce healthy vegetative cover*
  - *Cause soil loss*
  - *Contaminate soils*
  - *Reduce soil productivity*
  - *Compact soils*
  - *Reduce soil moisture holding capacity*
- **Policy 5.5.4**  
*To promote the diversification and use of Otago's land resource to achieve sustainable landuse and management systems for future generations.*
- **Policy 5.5.5**  
*To minimise the adverse effects of landuse activities on the quality and quantity of Otago's water resource through promoting and encouraging the:*
  - *Avoiding, remedying or mitigating the degradation of groundwater and surface water resources caused by the introduction of contaminants in the form of chemicals, nutrients and sediments resulting from landuse activities.*

It is evident that the proposal will represent a sustainable land use that will be consistent with the above objectives and policies that seek to ensure the sustainable development of Otago's land resources. Additionally, it is evident that the proposal will work towards meeting the present and reasonably foreseeable needs of Otago's peoples and communities through the use of extensively modified land to produce renewable generation for the local distribution network.

It is considered that the potential adverse effects arising from the proposal can either, be avoided, remedied or mitigated. The assessments related to potential effects have shown that the effects are considered to be less than minor and will therefore be consistent with the objectives, policies under Section 5.

## **Chapter 6 – Water**

*Objective 6.4.2 To maintain and enhance the ecological, intrinsic, amenity and cultural values of Otago's water resources.*

*Objective 6.4.8 To protect areas of natural character, outstanding natural features and landscapes and the associated values of Otago's wetlands, lakes, rivers and their margins.*

It is evident that given the scale and location of the proposal any adverse effects on the region's water resources will be avoided, remedied or mitigated. The Mount Stuart wind farm and its associated infrastructure will represent less than 1 percent of the 980 hectares of area associated with the farm. The associated adverse effects are considered to be minor and the proposed mitigation measures will be outlined in the Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.

## **Chapter 9 – Built Environment**

- **Objective 9.4.1**  
*To promote the sustainable management of Otago's built environment in order to:*
  - *Meet the present and reasonably foreseeable needs of Otago's people and communities..."*
- **Objective 9.4.2**  
*To promote the sustainable management of Otago's built environment in order to:*
  - *Meet the present and reasonably foreseeable needs of Otago's people and communities..."*
- **Policy 9.5.2**  
*To promote and encourage efficiency in the development and use of Otago's infrastructure through: ...*
  - *Encouraging a reduction in the use of non-renewable resources while promoting the use of renewable resources in the construction, development and use of infrastructure;*

"Built Environment" under the RPS means, "Those man-made facilities and structures, including urban environments and their associated amenity values, that are utilised by Otago's communities for their social, economic and cultural well being and the relationships that exist between them." The proposal is concerned with a sustainably generated energy aimed at meeting the energy needs of the regions people and communities.

## **Chapter 10 – Biota**

- **Objective 10.4.1**  
*To maintain and enhance the life-supporting capacity and diversity of Otago's biota.*
- **Objective 10.4.2**  
*To protect Otago's natural ecosystems and primary production from significant biological and natural threats.*
- **Objective 10.4.3**  
*To maintain and enhance the natural character of areas with significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.*
- **Policy 10.5.2**  
*To maintain and where practicable enhance the diversity of Otago's significant indigenous vegetation and the significant habitat of indigenous fauna, trout and salmon which are:*
  - *Covered under a statute or covenant for protection: or*

- *Habitat or vegetation that support the maintenance or recovery of indigenous species that are uncommon or threatened with extinction (rare, vulnerable or endangered) regionally or nationally; or*
  - *Vegetation that contains associations of indigenous species which are rare or representative regionally or nationally; or*
  - *Vegetation that contains a substantially intact, uninterrupted ecological sequence of indigenous species which are rare or representative regionally or nationally; or*
  - *Important for soil and water values or have functions in natural hazard mitigation:*
  - *and to promote and encourage, where practicable, the retention, enhancement and re-establishment of indigenous ecosystems within Otago.*
- **Policy 10.5.3**  
*To reduce and where practicable eliminate the adverse effects of plant and animal pests on Otago's communities and natural and physical resources through:*
    - *Developing strategies to effectively manage Otago's plant and animal pests; and*
    - *Educating about the responsibilities of all parties in the management of Otago's plant and animal pests; and*
    - *Adopting the most practicable method of pest control while safeguarding the environment.*

“Biota” is defined under the RPS as all living components of the living environment, excluding humans.

Although it is generally accepted that the subject site is not of high ecological value and is made up predominantly of extensively modified pastoral land, the ecological protection of the site and surrounding area is still of high importance. The assessment of the wind farm proposal has shown that potential adverse impacts are mainly associated with the construction phase of the wind farm. As such, it is anticipated that with careful design and mitigation measures including erosion and sediment controls, any potential adverse effects can be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

As such, it is considered that the proposal is consistent with the above objectives and policies relating to Biota.

## **Chapter 12 – Energy**

- **Objective 12.4.1**  
*To avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects on Otago's communities and environment resulting from the production and use of energy.*
- **Objective 12.4.2**  
*To sustainably and efficiently produce and use energy taking into account community values and expectations*
- **Objective 12.4.3**  
*To encourage use of renewable resources to produce energy.*

- **Policy 12.5.2**

*To promote the sustainable management and use of energy through:*

- *Encouraging energy production facilities that draw on the region's renewable energy resources; and*
- *Encouraging the use of renewable energy resources, in a way that safeguards the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems and avoids, remedies and mitigates adverse effects on the environment, as a replacement for non-renewable energy resources; and*
- *Encouraging the sustainable development of Otago's renewable energy resources.*

- **Policy 12.5.3**

*To promote improved energy efficiency within Otago through:*

- *Encouraging the use of energy efficient technology and architecture...*

- **Policy 12.5.4**

*To promote the securing of appropriate benefits for Otago's communities from any energy developments within the region.*

The proposed Mount Stuart wind farm is about providing locally generated renewable energy. The local generation avoids the need for electricity to be transported from distant external sources which represents improved energy efficiency through reduced transmission voltage loss.

In generating this energy it is recognized that there are adverse effects associated with the proposal. These adverse effects, mainly associated with the construction phase of the proposal, are generally of limited duration and effect and are able to be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

It is considered that the proposal accords with *Section 12 – Energy* objectives and policies of the RPS.