

National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011

The NPS-REG provides for the for the development, operation, maintenance and upgrading of new and existing renewable electricity generation activities, such that the proportion of New Zealand's electricity generated from renewable energy sources increases to a level that meets or exceeds the New Zealand Government's national target for renewable electricity generation.

Of particular relevance to this proposal, the policies seek that decision-makers recognise the benefits of renewable electricity generation including increasing electricity generation capacity while avoiding, reducing or displacing greenhouse gas emissions, and increasing local supplies through diversification of type and location of generation. The policies also seek that regard is had to meeting or exceeding the New Zealand Government's national target for the generation of electricity from renewable resources.

There is also clear direction to have 'particular regard' to the need to locate renewable electricity generation facilities where the renewable energy resource is available, and the location of the existing distribution network with regard to connecting to the national grid. The NPS-REG also enables the use of offsetting measures or environmental compensation to address residual environmental effects of establishing the renewable electricity facility.

The policies also clearly set out matters that district councils must address objectives, policies and methods including:

- providing for the development, operation, maintenance, and upgrading of new and existing renewable electricity generation activities using solar, biomass, tidal, wave and ocean current energy resources to the extent applicable to the region or district.
- Providing for the development, operation, maintenance and upgrading of small and community-scale distributed renewable electricity generation from any renewable energy source to the extent applicable to the region or district.

Small and community-scale distributed electricity generation means renewable electricity generation for the purpose of using electricity on a particular site, or supplying an immediate community, or connecting into the distribution network.

National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management

2.1 Objective

(1) The objective of this National Policy Statement is to ensure that natural and physical resources are managed in a way that prioritises:

(a) first, the health and well-being of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems

(b) second, the health needs of people (such as drinking water)

(c) third, the ability of people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being, now and in the future.

Policy 1: Freshwater is managed in a way that gives effect to Te Mana o te Wai..

Policy 2: Tangata whenua are actively involved in freshwater management (including decision making processes), and Māori freshwater values are identified and provided for.

Policy 3: Freshwater is managed in an integrated way that considers the effects of the use and development of land on a whole-of-catchment basis, including the effects on receiving environments.

Policy 4: Freshwater is managed as part of New Zealand's integrated response to climate change.

Policy 5: Freshwater is managed through a National Objectives Framework to ensure that the health and well-being of degraded water bodies and freshwater ecosystems is improved, and the health and well-being of all other water bodies and freshwater ecosystems is maintained and (if communities choose) improved.

Policy 6: There is no further loss of extent of natural inland wetlands, their values are protected, and their restoration is promoted.

Policy 7: The loss of river extent and values is avoided to the extent practicable.

Policy 8: The significant values of outstanding water bodies are protected.

Policy 9: The habitats of indigenous freshwater species are protected.

Policy 10: The habitat of trout and salmon is protected, insofar as this is consistent with Policy 9.

Policy 11: Freshwater is allocated and used efficiently, all existing over-allocation is phased out, and future over-allocation is avoided.

Policy 12: The national target (as set out in Appendix 3) for water quality improvement is achieved.

Policy 12 relates to national targets for water quality improvements and is not relevant to this proposal as it is for an ephemeral stream.

Policy 13: The condition of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems is systematically monitored over time, and action is taken where freshwater is degraded, and to reverse deteriorating trends.

Policy 14: Information (including monitoring data) about the state of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems, and the challenges to their health and well-being, is regularly reported on and published.

Policy 15: Communities are enabled to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing in a way that is consistent with this National Policy Statement.

Canterbury Regional Policy Statement

Relevant objectives and policies

Chapter 5 – Land Use and Infrastructure

Objective 5.2.2 Integration of land-use and regionally significant infrastructure (Wider Region)

In relation to the integration of land use and regionally significant infrastructure:

1. To recognise the benefits of enabling people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural well-being and health and safety and to provide for infrastructure that is regionally significant to the extent that it promotes sustainable management in accordance with the RMA.
2. To achieve patterns and sequencing of land-use with regionally significant infrastructure in the wider region so that:
 - (a) development does not result in adverse effects on the operation, use and development of regionally significant infrastructure.
 - (b) adverse effects resulting from the development or operation of regionally significant infrastructure are avoided, remedied or mitigated as fully as practicable.
 - (c) there is increased sustainability, efficiency and liveability.

Policy 5.3.2 Development conditions (Wider Region)

To enable development including regionally significant infrastructure which:

1. ensure that adverse effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated, including where these would compromise or foreclose:
 - (a) existing or consented regionally significant infrastructure;
 - (b) options for accommodating the consolidated growth and development of existing urban areas;
 - (c) the productivity of the region's soil resources, without regard to the need to make appropriate use of soil which is valued for existing or foreseeable future primary production, or through further fragmentation of rural land;
 - (d) the protection of sources of water for community supplies;
 - (e) significant natural and physical resources;
2. avoid or mitigate:
 - (a) natural and other hazards, or land uses that would likely result in increases in the frequency and/or severity of hazards;
 - (b) reverse sensitivity effects and conflicts between incompatible activities, including identified mineral extraction areas; and
3. integrate with:
 - (a) the efficient and effective provision, maintenance or upgrade of infrastructure; and
 - (b) transport networks, connections and modes so as to provide for the sustainable and efficient movement of people, goods and services, and a logical, permeable and safe transport system.

5.3.9 Regionally significant infrastructure (Wider Region)

In relation to regionally significant infrastructure (including transport hubs):

1. avoid development which constrains the ability of this infrastructure to be developed and used without time or other operational constraints that may arise from adverse effects relating to reverse sensitivity or safety;
2. provide for the continuation of existing infrastructure, including its maintenance and operation, without prejudice to any future decision that may be required for the ongoing operation or expansion of that infrastructure; and
3. provide for the expansion of existing infrastructure and development of new infrastructure, while:
 - (a) recognising the logistical, technical or operational constraints of this infrastructure and any need to locate activities where a natural or physical resource base exists;
 - (b) avoiding any adverse effects on significant natural and physical resources and cultural values and where this is not practicable, remedying or mitigating them, and appropriately controlling other adverse effects on the environment; and
 - (c) when determining any proposal within a sensitive environment (including any environment the subject of section 6 of the RMA), requiring that alternative sites, routes, methods and design of all components and associated structures are considered so that the proposal satisfies sections 5(2)(a) – (c) as fully as is practicable.

5.3.12 Rural production (Wider Region)

Maintain and enhance natural and physical resources contributing to Canterbury's overall rural productive economy in areas which are valued for existing or foreseeable future primary production, by:

1. avoiding development, and/or fragmentation which;
 - a. forecloses the ability to make appropriate use of that land for primary production; and/or
 - b. results in reverse sensitivity effects that limit or precludes primary production.
2. enabling tourism, employment and recreational development in rural areas, provided that it:
 - a. is consistent and compatible with rural character, activities, and an open rural environment;
 - b. has a direct relationship with or is dependent upon rural activities, rural resources or raw material inputs sourced from within the rural area;
 - c. is not likely to result in proliferation of employment (including that associated with industrial activities) that is not linked to activities or raw material inputs sourced from within the rural areas; and
 - d. is of a scale that would not compromise the primary focus for accommodating growth in consolidate, well designed and more sustainable development patterns. and;
3. ensuring that rural land use intensification does not contributed to significant cumulative adverse effects on water quality and quantity.

Chapter 9 - Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity

Objective 9.2.1 Halting the decline of Canterbury's ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity.

The decline in the quality and quantity of Canterbury's ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity is halted and their life-supporting capacity and mauri safeguarded.

9.3.5 Wetland protection and enhancement

In relation to wetlands:

1. To assess an ecologically significant wetland against the matters set out in Policy 9.3.1 and the national priorities listed in Policy 9.3.2 For the purposes of this policy, ecologically significant wetlands do not include areas that are predominantly pasture and dominated by exotic plant species and where they are not significant habits of indigenous fauna.
2. To ensure that the natural, physical, cultural, amenity, recreational and historic heritage values of Canterbury's ecologically significant wetlands are protected.
3. To generally promote the protection, enhancement and restoration of all of Canterbury's remaining wetlands.
4. To encourage the formation of created wetlands that contribute to the restoration of indigenous biodiversity.
5. To protect adjoining areas of indigenous and other vegetation which extend outside an ecologically significant wetland and are necessary for the ecological functioning of the wetland.

Chapter 15 – Soils

15.2.1 Maintenance of soil quality

Maintenance and improvement of the quality of Canterbury's soil to safeguard their mauri, their life supporting capacity, their health and their productive capacity.

Policies

15.3.1 Avoid remedy or mitigate soil degradation

In relation to soil:

1. to ensure that land-uses and land management practices avoid significant long-term adverse effects on soil quality, and to remedy or mitigate significant soil degradation where it has occurred, or is occurring; and
2. to promote land-use practices that maintain and improve soil quality.

Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan

Section 3 Objectives

- 3.1 Land and water are managed as integrated natural resources to recognise and enable Ngāi Tahu culture, traditions, customary uses and relationships with land and water.
- 3.2 Water management applies the ethic of ki uta ki tai – from the mountains to the sea – and land and water are managed as integrated natural resources recognising the connectivity between surface water and groundwater, and between fresh water, land and the coast.
- 3.3 Nationally and regionally significant infrastructure is enabled and is resilient and positively contributes to economic, cultural and social wellbeing through its efficient and effective operation, on-going maintenance, repair, development and upgrading.
- 3.5 Land uses continue to develop and change in response to socio-economic and community demand.
- 3.8 The quality and quantity of water in fresh water bodies and their catchments is managed to safeguard the life-supporting capacity of ecosystems and ecosystem processes, including ensuring sufficient flow and quality of water to support the habitat and feeding, breeding, migratory and other behavioural requirements of indigenous species, nesting birds and, where appropriate, trout and salmon.
- 3.13 Groundwater resources remain a sustainable source of high quality water which is available for abstraction while supporting base flows or levels in surface water bodies, springs and wetlands and avoiding salt-water intrusion.
- 3.23 Soils are healthy and productive, and human-induced erosion and contamination are minimised.
- 3.24 All activities operate at good environmental practice or better to optimise efficient resource use and protect the region's fresh water resources from quality and quantity degradation.

Strategic Policies

- 4.5 Water is managed through the setting of limits to safeguard the life-supporting capacity of ecosystems, support customary uses, and provide for community drinking-water supplies and stock water, as a first priority and to meet the needs of people and communities for water for irrigation, hydro-electricity generation and other economic activities and to maintain river flows and lake levels needed for recreational activities, as a second priority.

Activity and Resource Policies

Earthworks, land excavation and deposition of material into land over aquifers

- 4.18 The loss or discharge of sediment or sediment-laden water and other contaminants to surface water from earthworks, including roading, works in the bed of a river or lake, land development or construction, is avoided, and if this is not achievable, the best practicable option is used to minimise the loss or discharge to water.
- 4.19 The discharge of contaminants to groundwater from earthworks, excavation, waste collection or disposal sites and contaminated land is avoided or minimised by ensuring that:
 - (a) activities are sited, designed and managed to avoid the contamination of groundwater;

- (b) existing or closed landfills and contaminated land are managed and monitored where appropriate to minimise any contamination of groundwater; and
- (c) there is sufficient thickness of undisturbed sediment in the confining layer over the Coastal Confined Aquifer System to prevent the entry of contaminants into the aquifer or an upward hydraulic gradient is present which would prevent aquifer contamination.

4.22 Sedimentation of water bodies as a result of land clearance, earthworks and cultivation is avoided or minimised by the adoption of control methods and technologies, such as maintaining continuous vegetation cover adjacent to water bodies, or capturing surface run-off to remove sediment and other contaminants or by methods such as direct drilling crops and cultivation that follows the contours of a paddock.