



## Ruakākā Energy Park

December 2024 | EDITION #2

Kia ora koutou,

Welcome to our second newsletter for the Ruakākā Energy Park project.

This edition contains an update on construction of the battery storage system, resource consents for the solar farm, our new project manager and another renewable energy project we recently completed in Hawke's Bay.

### Construction update: battery energy storage system (BESS)

As I mentioned in the last update, stage 1 of the Ruakākā Energy Park project is the construction of BESS that will store up to 100MW/200MWh of electricity – enough to power around 60,000 average households during winter, for up to two hours.

This is moving ahead quickly, with all equipment now installed, and the first building – an electrical building – complete. A second building, for operations and maintenance, is being constructed and will be complete in early 2025. Ground finishing works are underway around the site, including perimeter planting with natives.

Testing of the equipment and preparations for bringing the BESS into operation are underway. A key milestone was achieved last month when the site was connected to the grid for the first time.

Operations will commence in early 2025 and in preparation for this we now have a site manager on site full time.

View a video we created recently about the project: [Building NZ's biggest battery \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)



Ruakākā BESS development taken from a drone.

### Working with hapū on planting

We've had the pleasure of working with Patuharakeke on planting the perimeter of the BESS site to screen it from the adjoining roads.

The team have planted a screen of eco-sourced cabbage trees, kōwhai, harakeke (flax), coprosma, pittosporums and other natives on the road boundary. We have used biodegradable hemp/wool matting to keep moisture in and will be irrigating the plants, if needed, for the first two years from a local bore (consent dependent).

### Solar farm update

We recently obtained Northland Regional Council resource consent to construct a 120MW solar farm and enhance the resilience of Northland's energy system. This resource consent has been appealed and is before the Environment Court. We are hopeful of a positive outcome.

The solar farm will be capable of producing 150 to 200GWh of electricity per year – enough to power more than half the homes in Northland.



Planting on the road boundary at the Ruakākā BESS site.



Ruakākā Energy Park site map.

### Introducing Robert Batters

Robert Batters (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Pāhauwera) has joined the team as project manager for the construction of the solar farm.

Robert has a long career in the electricity industry, supplemented by governance roles for Māori and non-Māori organisations.

He has recently joined the Ruakākā Energy Park team after leading the construction of Meridian's new Harapaki Wind Farm in Hawke's Bay, overseeing its delivery on schedule and with strong community involvement in employment and procurement. See the story below for more information.

Robert has a connection with the Northland region through his Ngāpuhi whakapapa and is looking forward to engaging with the local community and working with the team on a project that delivers tangible benefits for the region and Aotearoa New Zealand.



Robert Batters

## Villy Day Out

Our local staff loved being out in the community to support the Villy Day Out in Ruakākā on 23 November and got to sling a few sausage sizzles while they were at it. Congratulations to Bobby and the other organisers on a fantastic event.



Ruakākā BESS site manager Bradley Stuart at Villy Day Out.

## Harapaki Wind Farm fully operational

We have recently completed New Zealand's second largest wind farm – Harapaki Wind Farm – in northern Hawke's Bay.

Meridian shares New Zealand's goal of transitioning to a net-zero economy and strengthening our electricity supply, and we have our own aspiration to deliver seven new renewable electricity projects in seven years. Harapaki is the first of these to be completed.

Harapaki will strengthen the resilience of the region's electricity supply. Like Northland, Hawke's Bay has seen the need for this following major weather events over recent years.

We introduced a number of sustainability initiatives at Harapaki to lower our impact on the environment. On average, around 75% of the waste that would once have gone to landfill is instead being recycled or reused within the local community.

Everything we learned from Harapaki will be carried across to the Ruakākā Energy Park solar project.

Watch: [Harapaki Wind Farm is all go, and delivering for NZ \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

## Any questions?

If you have questions about the project, check out our website at [www.meridianenergy.co.nz/ruakaka-energy-park](http://www.meridianenergy.co.nz/ruakaka-energy-park), or email us at [ruakaka@meridian.co.nz](mailto:ruakaka@meridian.co.nz).

If you know of anyone who would be interested in the progress of our Ruakākā Energy Park, please ask them to subscribe to this newsletter by emailing us at [ruakaka@meridian.co.nz](mailto:ruakaka@meridian.co.nz).

Ngā mihi,

### Alan de Lima

Project Director  
Ruakākā BESS



View of the Harapaki Wind Farm.