

Te Uku Wind Farm Dispatch

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On the beautiful morning of March 7, 2023, the gang headed out from Raglan to tour the Te Uku wind farm. Upon arrival, we drove on the stone access road where all of the wind turbine components were transported through. After a short drive, we arrived at one of Te Uku's 26 turbines. This particular farm has 2.3 MW turbines made by Siemens Gamesa which stand approximately 80 meters tall with blades measuring about 49.5 meters in radius. The day we visited was windy (a rather unsurprising feature of a wind farm) and hearing the blades cut gracefully through the air was mesmerizing. An interesting feature of the wind turbine we had the privilege of standing under was a whistling of one of the turbine blades. This was caused by an imperfection in the blade; however, we were assured that this presented no structural issues. Meridian energy is the company which owns the 2 km² farm as well as four other wind farms. The farm was constructed in 2010 and will last approximately until 2030. Routine maintenance is required every 6 months to keep the turbines running but very little is required to maintain the farm day to day.

The wind farm is received quite well by the local community as their local approval was above 80% compared to when the project started, at roughly 60%. Other than the small amount of noise generated, wind farms are quite benign and their normal operations generally do not affect the local people. Some sheep were spotted grazing the fields around the turbines, however there was very little activity around the farm besides them.



