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Construction to begin on new electricity generation plant

New Zealand's electricity grid will soon have back up supply from a new \$100 million natural gas fired electricity generation plant, capable of rapidly powering more than 70,000 homes when other forms of electricity generation are not available.

Todd Generation, a subsidiary of Todd Corporation, has this week confirmed plans to build a new 100 megawatt natural gas turbine power plant in Taranaki, with construction due to begin early next year.

“This project represents a significant investment in the security of New Zealand's future energy supply,” said Todd Generation General Manager Tim Cosgrove. “Fast start natural gas fired plants, known as peaking plants, provide a reliable source of power to back up intermittent renewable generation.”

Located about 7km south of New Plymouth, the Junction Road power plant will be supplied by natural gas from the First Gas pipeline, with a connection to the national electricity grid. The project was granted resource consent in 2013, and since then an access road and building platform for the plant have been constructed.

Mr Cosgrove said the plant will house two 50 megawatt GE gas turbines and it is expected to be commissioned in mid-2020. Detailed assessments of the plant's expected air emissions have also been completed, with modelling showing they would be well within the National Environmental Standards. Mr Cosgrove said significant efforts have been made to minimise any environmental effects, with areas of farmland retired and native bush planted to screen any visual effects.

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