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14 September 2023

For the Attention of the Greater Wellington Regional Council Proposed Change 1 to the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region – Freshwater Hearings Panel and P1S1 Panel

Hearing Stream Four: Urban Development - Statement by Transpower New Zealand Ltd (submitter reference S10 and FS23)

Transpower New Zealand Limited (“**Transpower**”) writes in relation to Hearing Stream 4 Urban Development, commencing on 2 October 2023, on the Greater Wellington Regional Council Proposed Change 1 (“**PC1**”) to the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region.

Transpower lodged five submission points specific to Hearing Stream 4 (two original and three further), the main purpose of which was to appropriately recognise and give effect to the National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission 2008, within context of the PC1, and specific to Hearing Stream 4, Urban Development in context of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD).

The majority of the submission points related to Policy 55 ‘*Providing for appropriate urban expansion – consideration*’ to protect regionally significant infrastructure in the context of urban expansion. The officer recommendation for amendment to the notified policy is accepted.

In response to the officer recommended new policy UD.5 (which submitters did not have an opportunity to submit on), Transpower supports the recommended policy (and specifically clauses d) and f)) but would support refinement to the policy to recognise that protection to regionally significant infrastructure should not be afforded to only reverse sensitivity effects, but instead include other effects (e.g. direct effects). Such an amendment would give effect to NPSET policies 10 and 11, and be consistent with Policies 8 and 55 of the Regional Policy Statement. Amendment is sought as follows:

... (f) protecting the operation and safety of regionally significant infrastructure, including from potential reverse sensitivity effects.

For completeness, Attachment A contains a table outlining the individual submission points and Transpower’s response to the Section 42A Report recommendations.

Transpower respectfully requests that this letter be tabled for the Panel’s consideration, to confirm its position in relation to its submission points and the Section 42A Report recommendations.

Should the Panel require clarification on any matter, please contact Rebecca Eng at Transpower (09 590 7072), or on the following email: environment.policy@transpower.co.nz.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RENG', with a small flourish at the end.

Rebecca Eng
Technical Lead – Policy, Transpower New Zealand Limited

Attachment A. Transpower New Zealand Limited – Response to GWRC Plan Change 1: Hearing 4 Urban Development

Sub No / Point No	Plan Part / Sub-part / Chapter / Provision	Position	Summary of Submission	Decisions Requested	S42A response	Transpower's response to S42A recommendation
Urban Development						
S10.005 Transpower NZ Ltd	Policy 55: Providing for appropriate urban expansion - consideration	Support	Transpower supports the inclusion of Rule 55 clause (a)(ii)(h) "Protecting Regionally Significant Infrastructure as identified by Policy 8", noting the importance of protecting regionally significant infrastructure from reverse sensitivity effects and that the NPS-UD 3.32(1)(c) and RMA Section 77I(e) identify any "matter required for the purpose of ensuring the safe or efficient operation of nationally significant infrastructure" as a 'qualifying matter'.	Retain Policy 55(a)(ii)(h).	Accept	Transpower supports the retention (with amendment) of clause (a)(ii)(h) (renumbering in the S42A Report as clause (a)4.viii)) <i>Protecting Regionally significant infrastructure <u>consistent with as identified by Policy 8</u></i> ¹ .
S137.042 GWRC	Policy 55: Providing for appropriate urban expansion - consideration	Support in part	Amendments are also required to align with the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land 2022. NPS-HPL Policy 2 requires that the identification and management of highly productive land is undertaken in an integrated way, considering interactions with freshwater and urban development.	Disallow	Accept	Transpower supports the recommendation on the basis the NPS-HPL is not addressed through the plan change. Transpower agrees with the S42A Report (Para 266) that " <i>The NPS-HPL warrants consideration through a full plan change process, to ensure the RPS is appropriately amended as a whole to fully give effect to it.</i> "
FS23.007 and FS23.010 Transpower NZ Ltd		Oppose	While Transpower does not oppose the intent of the policy addition to give effect to the NPS-HPL, it questions the appropriateness of giving effect to the NPS-HPL through Plan Change 1 as opposed to a comprehensive plan change that considers the entire context of the RPS and is accompanied by a s32 evaluation.	Disallow	Accept	

¹ Policy 8: Protecting regionally significant infrastructure – regional and district plans

District and regional plans shall include policies and rules that protect regionally significant infrastructure from incompatible new subdivision, use and development occurring under, over, or adjacent to the infrastructure.

Explanation

Regionally significant infrastructure is an important physical resource that enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing, and their health and safety.

Regionally significant infrastructure is defined in Appendix 3.

Incompatible subdivisions, land uses or activities are those which adversely affect the efficient operation of infrastructure, its ability to give full effect to any consent or other authorisation, restrict its ability to be maintained, or restrict the ability to upgrade where the effects of the upgrade are the same or similar in character, intensity, and scale. It may also include new land uses that are sensitive to activities associated with infrastructure.

Protecting regionally significant infrastructure does not mean that all land uses or activities under, over, or adjacent are prevented. The Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils will need to ensure that activities provided for in a district or regional plan are compatible with the efficient operation, maintenance, and upgrading (where effects are the same or similar in character, intensity, and scale) of the infrastructure and any effects that may be associated with that infrastructure. Competing considerations need to be weighed on a case by case basis to determine what is appropriate in the circumstances.

Policy 11 of the National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission requires that, in achieving protection for the transmission network, consultation occurs with the operator of the national grid to identify appropriate buffer corridors.

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Sub No / Point No	Plan Part / Sub-part / Chapter / Provision	Position	Summary of Submission	Decisions Requested	S42A response	Transpower's response to S42A recommendation
S148.051 Wellington International Airport Ltd (WIAL)	Policy 55: Providing for appropriate urban expansion - consideration	Oppose in part	<p>WIAL submits that in considering urban development particular regard should also be had to whether it is compatible with and does not adversely affect or constrain the ability to operate existing regionally significant infrastructure.</p> <p>The following text(or with similar effect) is sought: <i>avoids adverse reverse sensitivity effects on the operation and safety of regionally significant infrastructure.</i></p>	Amend the policy to include (or with similar effect): <i>avoids adverse reverse sensitivity effects on the operation and safety of regionally significant infrastructure.</i>	Accept in part	<p>Transpower accepts the officer recommendation to include reference to reverse sensitivity within officer recommended policy UD.5. (as opposed to Policy 55) <i>When considering applications for a resource consent, or a change, variation or review of a district plan for urban development, including housing and supporting infrastructure, seek to achieve well-functioning urban areas by:</i></p> <p><i>... (d) avoiding or mitigating potential adverse effects, including cumulative effects, of urban development on the natural environment and the ability to</i></p>
FS23.011 Transpower NZ Ltd		Support	Notwithstanding the relief sought in its original submission, Transpower supports the recognition within the policy for regionally significant infrastructure.	Allow	Accept in part	<p><i>manage, use, and operate existing infrastructure, and</i></p> <p><i>... (f) protecting the operation and safety of regionally significant infrastructure from potential reverse sensitivity effects.</i></p> <p>Specific to clause (f), while the effects on the National Grid extend beyond reverse sensitivity effects, Transpower acknowledges Policy 8 and Policy 55 provide for the protection of regionally significant infrastructure. However, given Policy UD.5 was not notified and has instead been recommended by the reporting officer, Transpower would support refinement to the policy to recognise that protection should not be afforded to only reverse sensitivity</p>

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Sub No / Point No	Plan Part / Sub-part / Chapter / Provision	Position	Summary of Submission	Decisions Requested	S42A response	Transpower's response to S42A recommendation
						<p>effects. Such an amendment would give effect to the NPSET policy 10 and policy 11, and be consistent with RPS polices 8 and 55. Amendment is sought as follows:</p> <p><i>... (f) protecting the operation and safety of regionally significant infrastructure, including from potential reverse sensitivity effects.</i></p>
<p>S10.006 Transpower NZ Ltd</p>	<p>Policy 58: Co-ordinating land use with development and operation of infrastructure -</p>	<p>Support in part</p>	<p>Transpower considers that it is important to provide policy direction to enable the infrastructure to support the urban development. The RPS would benefit from policy supporting the regionally significant infrastructure that is required to support urban development. Transpower considers that this would be best achieved by amending Policy 7 as requested elsewhere in this submission (specifically to provide direction supporting the regionally significant infrastructure that is required to support urban development).</p>	<p>Retain Policy 58, but amend Policy 7 as sought in other submission points.</p>	<p>Reject</p>	<p>On the basis of recommended changes to Policy 7 (Hearing Stream 3), the recommendation on Policy 58 is supported, noting Policy 58 is not specifically relevant to the National Grid.</p>