

WEL Networks Limited
Hearing Evidence
Proposed Waikato District Plan - Introduction

1. Introduction

- 1.1 My name is Sara Brown and I am a Consultant Environmental Planner for WEL Networks Limited (“WEL”). I hold a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Waikato.
- 1.2 I have worked as a planner for 11 years in local authorities, the electricity distribution sector and as a consultant.

2. WEL Networks Limited

- 2.1 WEL an electricity distributor operating under the Electricity Act 1992, who owns, operates and develops electricity distribution infrastructure in the Waikato Region to provide line function services to approximately 91,000 installation connection points. This includes the distribution of electricity to residences and businesses within the Waikato District.
- 2.2 WEL, as a network utility operator under the Resource Management Act 1991 (“RMA”), has the responsibility of providing a secure and efficient supply of electricity to the community within WEL’s distribution network area. WEL is also an approved requiring authority pursuant to section 167 of the RMA for its lines network functions.

3. WEL’s overall position on the Proposed Waikato District Plan

- 3.1 WEL’s electricity and telecommunication infrastructure supports the sustainable management and efficient use of natural and physical resources as promoted in Part 2 of the RMA.
- 3.2 A fundamental part of enabling people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing under section 5 of the RMA, is the provision of a secure and efficient supply of electricity and telecommunications.
- 3.3 The benefits of WEL’s electricity and telecommunication infrastructure in achieving sustainable management are also enshrined in the RMA through section 7(b) and 7(ba) that, in achieving the purpose of the RMA, requires particular regard be given to “the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources” and “the efficiency of the end use of energy”.
- 3.4 WEL is generally supportive of the approach and overall content of the Proposed District Plan. However, WEL submits that amendments are required to enhance the provisions within the Proposed District Plan to provide for the importance of electricity and telecommunication infrastructure as provided in Part 2 of the RMA.

4. Specific Provisions Supported by WEL

4.1 WEL supports the amended Introduction of the Proposed Waikato District Plan (Proposed District Plan) as recommended in the planner's submissions and further submissions report, and as set out in the table below.

Submission Point	Provision
1.5.7.7 Energy	
692.32	Regionally-significant infrastructure

4.2 WEL requested an amendment to point 1.5.7.7(a) to include electricity distribution infrastructure. Electricity distribution infrastructure is included as regionally significant in the Waikato Regional Policy Statement ("WRPS") therefore the proposed amendment would be consistent with the WRPS. The section 42A report recommend that WEL's submission (692.32) be accepted and therefore WEL would support this recommendation.

5. Conclusion

5.1 WEL generally supports the planner's report to the Proposed District Plan as outlined in Section 4 of my evidence.

5.2 Overall, the Proposed District Plan, subject to WEL's amendments, reflects sound resource management principle and practice, and will achieve the purpose of the RMA.

Sara Brown
Consultant for WEL Networks Limited
3 October 2019