

Topic: Energy Infrastructure, Transport and Designations

My wife, our 3 children and I reside and farm in the Oromahoe area. Our landholdings encompass 600 ha of freehold title plus adjacent leasehold land. My parents and I came to the district 45 years ago to farm and now my children are gradually taking over the tenure of the land. Some of the members of the Oromahoe Landowner's Collective that I am a part of, have been here longer, those being Oromahoe Trust, Errol McIntyre, S.W. Halliday and Garry Stanners. Some have been here a shorter time, namely S.J. And P.M. Boys and the Tapuaetuhi Incorporation. All of the named collective regard themselves to be Kaitiaki of the whenua including our descendants. We are all highly protective of it as it is our home and means of sustenance.

Top Energy have had 33Kv transmission lines in the Oromahoe area for as long as I have been here. In that time, they have requested to enter our property to conduct regular checks on the condition of the transmission structures, tree felling, trimming, repairs and upgrades. None of these requests have been denied by me or by my neighbours to the best of my knowledge.

The FNDC are required by law via the NRPS which is directed by the NZEPS 2016, to map and include necessary provisions to enable National Grid/Transpower to operate within the region. Transpower have stated in their original submission 21/10/2022 to the FNDC in regards to the PDP that the NZ Electricity Policy Statement 2016 is for the sole benefit of the National Grid/Transpower and not local distribution companies/networks.

The FNDC have notified a late inclusion to the PDP to have the 33 Kv transmission lines throughout the district to be mapped as CELs.

The mapping of 33 Kv lines is in my opinion based upon an assumption of them being a regionally significant infrastructure.

Top Energy have extensively submitted on this late inclusion and have submitted far beyond the statutory requirements for 33 Kv transmission structures owned by local distribution companies. It appears, they have taken an ad hoc approach to this by requesting the rights and privileges granted to Transpower through the NZEPS.

The legal requirements for 33 Kv lines are shown in a table presented as evidence by Andrew McPhee on the collective's behalf.

There is a suite of statutory law in place to protect 33Kv transmission lines, therefore what Top Energy is requesting via the PDP is far beyond what is required by law. If the requests were to be instituted, it would have detrimental effects upon the properties which these structures traverse. In our particular case, we have 2.1 Km of lines which are 33Kv. In one instance, when calculated at 32 mtrs both sides from the centre line, this equates to 13.5 ha of land which will have highly restrictive compliances put upon it.

This will inhibit our current operations and future developments and give Top Energy the power to conduct a scorched earth policy in my opinion.

These requested provisions will limit our income that we would be able to generate off the land by limiting our options as to its usage.

Upon examination of Top Energy's original submission, their map shows all of the main urban developments in the far north except Kawakawa are serviced by two 33Kv lines.

In our particular instance, Paihia/Haruru Falls/Opua are serviced by two 33 Kv lines which feed through the Oromahoe area in particular the Oromahoe Land Collective.

These lines are highly obtrusive.

On Errol McIntyre's and S.W. Halliday/Tairāre Farm Holdings Ltd two lines are running parallel to

form a network which appears to be resilient in design.

Top Energy, in their original submission to the FNDC have also provided a snapshot of line consenting issues, dated August 2019 – February 2021.

Once again, upon examination, it appears that a large majority of these issues are not within the CEL mapping.

It would have been helpful to have these issues highlighted on the map they provided to demonstrate true picture if they actually do effect the 33 Kv Lines.

This has led me to conclude that Top Energy have not supplied sufficient evidence to justify the mapping of CELs. A resilient electricity line system is in place and well maintained as I can testify to on our properties.

In conclusion A.W & D. M Simpson endorses Andrews Evidence in its entirety and his conclusions that:

a.He does not consider that there is a need to include provisions in the PDP that go over and above the thresholds set by national regulation. In principle, district plans should not be regulating something that is already regulated.

b.Top Energy already has the ability to access properties to undertake operational works including repair, maintenance and upgrades through the Electricity Act 1992.

The lay evidence raises points around the process of how the CEL Overlay found its way into the PDP, interpretations, notification and legislation

A.W & D. M Simpson also endorses those documents in their entirety, having played a key role in the preparation of the OLO lay evidence, and their conclusions that:

c.OLO firmly believes that the current legislation and standards, specifically the Electricity Act 1993, are adequate and that the CEL overlay represents an unnecessary overreach, imposing excessively difficult standards on landowners.

d.If Far North District Council (FNDC) insists on including a CEL overlay in the District Plan that encompasses 33kV lines, then we believe this decision should be deferred until a proper notification process has been carried out for all affected owners across the Far North District and consideration can be given to how affected owners might be duly compensated.

e.Otherwise, the status quo should remain whereby Top Energy and its lines are adequately protected under existing legislation, without imposing unfair burdens on private landowners

Regards A.W & D. M Simpson