

## Grid New Zealand Website

Transpower launched its new project website recently, Grid New Zealand [www.gridnewzealand.co.nz](http://www.gridnewzealand.co.nz), which provides easily accessible information on all Transpower's proposed and committed projects. This website incorporates and therefore replaces the North Island Grid Upgrade website, [www.gridupgrade.co.nz](http://www.gridupgrade.co.nz), which focused solely on the Whakamaru to South Auckland project.

This is the first in a number of initiatives being undertaken by Transpower to make our online communication more comprehensive for our stakeholders, customers and the public.

The Grid New Zealand website mirrors the proposed and committed project information set out in Transpower's Annual Planning Report (APR) which signals proposed and possible transmission investments within a 10-year horizon. This allows access to a greater degree of information about Transpower's plans.

### KEY FEATURES OF GRID NEW ZEALAND

#### Interactive map

One of the key features of the new Grid New Zealand website is an interactive map accessible from the home page which allows users to search for Transpower projects by region. By scrolling over the map, users will find lists of projects being undertaken in specific regions and can click straight through to those projects for more information.

#### Get in touch with us

You can call us free on 0800 33 88 66 between 8am and 6pm on weekdays. Your letters and comments are also welcome. You can write to us at:

National Grid Upgrade Project  
Transpower NZ Ltd  
Freepost 182915  
PO Box 1021  
Wellington

Or a feedback form is available on the project website [www.gridnewzealand.co.nz](http://www.gridnewzealand.co.nz)

Click on "Contact Us"

Unlike the Annual Planning Report which can only be updated each year, the Grid New Zealand site will be regularly updated to provide a constant and current snapshot of any transmission project proposed or underway in New Zealand.

Grid New Zealand is an important resource for communities and landowners who require further information regarding transmission developments in their area. Landowners will be able to search for information by project, region or status.

Sources of information specifically relevant to landowners and communities are also available such as: factsheets on consultation, negotiating easements and electric and magnetic fields; handbooks such as

the landowner booklet which provides information on living and working near transmission lines; and newsletters.

This website initiative reflects Transpower's 'open book' approach to transmission planning. We think this is appropriate for a regulated entity with such an important role to play in the economic and social wellbeing of New Zealanders.



#### Advanced search

For those who are looking for something specific, an advanced search has been developed which offers four search criteria, so that you can find exactly the information you are looking for quickly.

#### Instant updates of project news

As we know more information, so will you. The website allows instant updates of information so that you are reassured that any information on the website is up-to-date and current. The home page will offer all the latest news at a glance.

#### Subscriptions

Subscribe to any of our projects and receive news updates. By subscribing to the website and selecting the information you would like to regularly receive, we can notify you when new information is uploaded.

#### One stop shop

Grid New Zealand is a one stop shop for transmission project information, with easy navigation so you can find specific information as quickly as possible. Each project page allows access to all the information pertinent to that project, including newsletters, media releases and presentations. "Parent" project pages contain all information needed to understand the project in its entirety, while sub-project "children" have the specific detail of that sub-project and its relationship to other sub-projects.

When you get the opportunity, check out [www.gridnewzealand.co.nz](http://www.gridnewzealand.co.nz). If you have any feedback on our new website, we would really like to hear it. Use the Contact Us form to let us know what you think.

## The North Island Grid Upgrade Project

News and information on the North Island Grid Upgrade Project

TRANSPOWER

KEEPING THE ENERGY FLOWING

Issue 6: May 2007

## THE NORTH ISLAND GRID UPGRADE PROJECT

### What's been happening?

In October 2006 Transpower submitted an Amended Proposal to the Electricity Commission which detailed a preferred solution to maintain reliable bulk electricity supply for the upper North Island.

The Amended Proposal includes:

- an overhead transmission line from Whakamaru to Brownhill Road (in south east Auckland);
- a transition station (and eventual substation) at Brownhill Road to connect the overhead line with underground cables;
- an underground 220 kV cable section from Brownhill Road to Pakuranga;
- a second underground 220 kV cable section from Brownhill Road to Otahuhu at a future date;
- an increase in the voltage of the overhead transmission line from 220 kV to 400 kV at a future date; and
- additions to the existing substation at Whakamaru and a new substation at Whakamaru North.

On 31 January 2007, the Electricity Commission issued a Notice of Intention to approve this proposal, and it is now consulting on this decision.

Transpower has been consulting on the changes in the amended proposal, which include:

- a transition station and eventually 400/220 kV substation at Brownhill Road;
- a new cable route from this transition station to Pakuranga substation; and
- a replacement 220 kV substation at Pakuranga.

Transpower's consultation has been completed except for the two options for

cable routes in the Brownhill Road area. This consultation is scheduled to close shortly. Issues raised during consultation have been considered by Transpower and amendments made or original proposals confirmed.

The next stage is to commence formal proceedings under the Resource Management Act 1991, and to do this Transpower lodged "Notices of Requirement" with all affected Councils on 28 May 2007.

Between October 2006 and May 2007, Transpower has also continued good faith negotiations with directly affected landowners on the transmission line route, and commenced similar discussions with directly affected landowners on the new cable route.

## Resource Management Act Process Underway

Transpower's North Island Grid Upgrade Project must go through two separate legal processes. One is approval from the Electricity Commission to make the investment. The second is formal proceedings under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) to get the line, substations and cables incorporated into the District Plans of the councils along the route.

Transpower submitted its Amended Proposal to the Electricity Commission on 24th October 2006. On 31st January

2007 the Commission issued a "Notice of Intention to Approve" the project. Consultation on this notice is underway.

Transpower has now started the RMA proceedings by lodging "Notices of Requirement" with the seven councils along the transmission line route. This begins a formal process in which the councils will publicly advertise these notices and call for submissions. Anyone can make a submission, and have their submission heard.

### THE RMA PROCESS

The RMA recognises that major projects like Transpower's new transmission line from Whakamaru to South Auckland need a different process for assessing environmental effects from the resource consent process. They are dealt with through the designation process.

As a "Requiring Authority" under the RMA, Transpower can "designate" the land required for the new transmission line, cable routes and substations, and set out the terms and conditions under which it can build, operate and maintain

**THE RMA PROCESS CONT'D**

the new transmission line. In the overhead section, for instance, the land covered by the easement agreements will be designated.

Once finalised, the designation becomes part of the district plan of each of the councils along the route and is shown on their plan maps. It overrides other provisions related to the designated land

in the district plans. Any person seeking to undertake a new activity (including building or subdivision) within the designation will require Transpower's written approval.

The designation process provides for the new transmission line only in terms of the district plans. A range of other approvals will also be required. These

could include resource consents for activities like excavations (such as the platform and footings for towers) and disturbance to watercourses for access tracks. Special approvals will also be required where the line crosses Crown or Department of Conservation land, or where archaeological sites may be affected by construction activities.

**WHAT IS A NOTICE OF REQUIREMENT FOR A DESIGNATION?**

The Notices of Requirement (NoRs) for the designation formally notify the six affected district councils and Manukau City Council that land is required for the new substations, cable and transmission line.

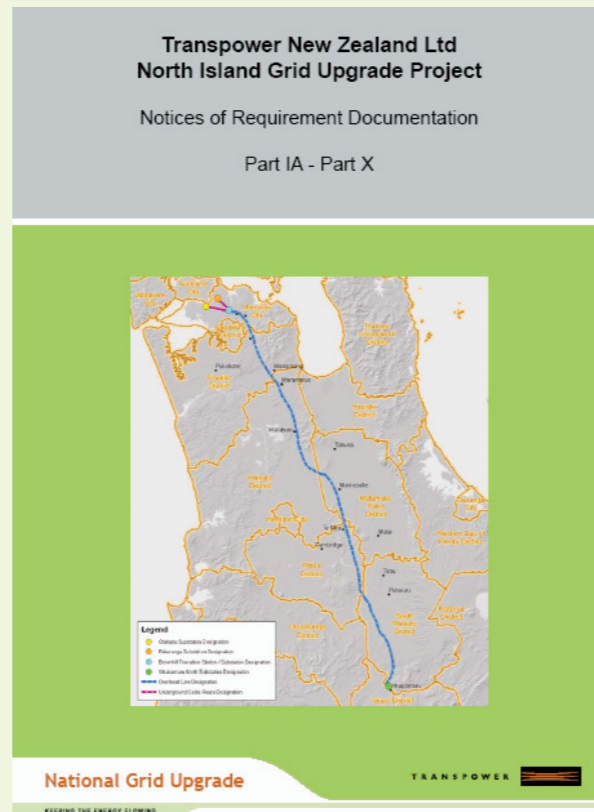
*The NoRs contain information on:*

- the details of the proposal and the reasons the designation is needed;
- the environmental effects of the new substations, cables and transmission line and the measures proposed to address adverse effects;
- alternative sites, routes and methods that were considered;
- consultation undertaken; and
- other resource consents that are needed.

joint panel of independent commissioners to hear submissions and assess the proposal.

The commissioners will report back to the councils with a recommendation on whether to approve, decline or modify Transpower's designation. Transpower will carefully consider this recommendation and make a decision to accept or reject the recommendation in whole or in part. Any submitter can appeal Transpower's decision to the Environment Court. The decision of the Environment Court is final, unless there is a challenge to the High Court on points of law.

While this is the expected process, there is provision under the RMA for the NoRs to be "called in" by the Government as a project of national importance. In this case, submissions would be heard by a Government-appointed panel. If the NoRs are "called in", the decision of the panel cannot be appealed to the Environment Court.



Under the RMA, once a NoR is lodged (in this case 28 May 2007), it has an immediate effect under Section 178 of the RMA. This means that no changes can be made on designated land that could prevent or hinder the project (such as putting up a building, or subdividing the land) without Transpower's written permission.

**Property Easement and Access**

Where possible, Transpower has discussed appropriate tower locations with affected landowners to minimise the impact on the works on their properties. The Notices of Requirement have been submitted with tower locations that incorporate these discussions where possible.

Now Transpower will seek to negotiate easements with landowners that provide for access to:

- complete investigations;
- carry out construction activities; and
- inspect, operate and maintain the line over its life.

Transpower has commenced easement negotiations with many landowners, and will now formally approach all landowners to progress these negotiations. If negotiations fail, the Public Works Acts provides a mechanism for both Transpower and the landowner to present

their positions and for a decision to be made.

The easement agreement will contain an access agreement covering the investigation and construction phases and ongoing access over the life of the works.

Specifically, the access agreement will cover:

- access routes including their construction;
- any fence relocation;
- tower construction areas;
- construction equipment used and land impacts;
- tree removal, and any services that may need relocating;
- site specific issues, such as access timing and stock management; and
- notice periods.

This agreement will form the basis of the disturbance component of any compensation package.

Transpower is committed to open negotiations with landowners to agree these issues and to fairly compensate for losses. Any compensation will cover:

- consideration for the "land taken";
- "injurious affect" to the balance of the land;
- loss of value for continuing disturbance associated with the transmission line; and
- possible additional compensation due to one-off disturbance during construction, valuation and other professional costs.

Transpower will instruct expert valuers and farm advisors to ascertain the compensation to be paid, and landowners are entitled to instruct their own valuer.

More detail is available in a Property Fact sheet entitled "Access to Land".

**HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?**

Transpower hopes to complete the RMA process in a timely manner that will allow contracts to be let and the new transmission line to be built and connected to the National Grid in 2011. The Amended Proposal presented to the Electricity Commission by Transpower in October 2006 included a range of measures to reduce the risk of supply disruptions while the new transmission line goes through the approval processes and is then built. It is prudent to start the Resource Management Act proceedings as soon as possible, as these proceedings can be lengthy.

**WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

Transpower has now formally completed its consultation, and both the Electricity Commission and RMA processes are moving forward in parallel. The councils will now advertise their receipt of the NoRs and start the council RMA proceedings. The final decision of the Electricity Commission on Transpower's Amended Proposal is expected in June 2007.

At the same time negotiations with directly affected landowners are continuing.

**How to find out more**

A range of materials is available to ensure that all affected and interested parties have adequate information to understand how they might be affected by the proposal.

This includes regular newsletters, information sheets, fact sheets and reports.

Information and fact sheets available include:

- The Need
- Access to land
- Resource Management Act Processes
- Electric and Magnetic fields
- Audible Noise
- Property Matters and Compensation
- Deciding where to put the proposed transmission line
- Are there alternatives?