

NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS / WHAREROA NORTH PLAN CHANGE

1 INTRODUCTION

Under Section 75(3)(a) of the Resource Management Act 1991 a District Plan (and by extension a change to a District Plan) must give effect to any National Policy Statement prepared under the Act. Further, under Section 74(1)(ea) of the Act a territorial authority must prepare and change its district plan in accordance with (among other matters) any national policy statement.

It is appropriate, therefore, to consider the relevance (if any) of current National Policy Statements in relation to the Whareroa North Plan Change request.

2 NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS

Under Section 45 of the Act, the purpose of national policy statements is to state objectives and policies for matters of national significance that are relevant to achieving the purpose of the Act. Currently there are five National Policy Statements (NPS):

Subject	NPS	Date
Electricity transmission	NPS on Electricity Transmission (NPS-ET)	2008
Coastal environment	New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS)	2010
Renewable electricity generation	NPS for Renewable Energy Generation (NPS-REG)	2011
Freshwater management	NPS for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM)	2014, amended 2017
Urban development capacity	NPS on Urban Development Capacity (NPS-UDC)	2016, updated 2017

3 RELEVANCE OF NPS'S TO WHAREROA NORTH PRIVATE PLAN CHANGE PROPOSAL

3.1 NPS on Electricity Transmission (NPS-ET)

The NPS-ET sets out the objective and policies for managing the electricity transmission network under the Resource Management Act 1991.

The Whareroa North Plan Change proposal does not affect, and is not affected by, electricity transmission matters addressed by the objectives and policies of this NPS.

3.2 New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS)

The NZCPS guides local authorities in their day to day management of the coastal environment.

The Whareroa North Plan Change proposal does not affect, and is not affected by, the coastal environment matters addressed by the objectives and policies of this NPS.

3.3 NPS for Renewable Energy Generation (NPS-REG)

The NPS-REG sets out the objective and policies for renewable electricity generation under the Resource Management Act 1991 (including clear government direction on the benefits of renewable electricity generation and requires that all councils make provision for it in their plans).

The Whareroa North Plan Change proposal does not affect, and is not affected by, renewable electricity generation matters addressed by the objectives and policies of this NPS.

3.4 NPS for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM)

The NPS-FM sets out objectives and policies for freshwater management under the Resource Management Act 1991 which direct that regional councils manage water in an integrated and sustainable way, while providing for economic growth within set water quantity and quality limits. The national policy statement is regarded as a first step to improve freshwater management at a national level. The NPS sets out two compulsory values that must be managed for – ecosystem health and human health, and a range of other values (including mahinga kai, fishing, irrigation and food production, animal drinking, water supply, etc). The NPS sets out a policy framework around water quality, water quantity, integrated management, tangata whenua roles and interests, and an approach to progressive implementation. The range of policies are to be given effect to by regional councils (through policies, plans, and resource consent conditions).

In the case of Whareroa North Plan (and as explained in detail in the Plan Change application):

- Water supply is proposed to be provided through community reticulated supply and resource consents already in place will accommodate growth at Whareroa North growth. The applicant has signalled *“that water conservation and the minimising of demand is a high priority when developing this land and so the water supply philosophy will incorporate mechanisms to minimise demand”*¹;
- Wastewater is proposed to be managed through a community system and the necessary resource consents are in place to service Whareroa north. It is understood that TDC has applied for a renewal with less onerous monitoring conditions, but either will cater for Whareroa North. The applicant Incorporation is also associated with the adjoining Whareroa Station where, over the past two years, 600 ha of land has been taken out of intensive livestock production and half a million manuka plants have been established. This has reduced nitrogen output (and potential adverse effects on the quality of the waters of Lake Taupo), and is reflective of the Incorporation’s role both as a prudent land manager and also as kaitiaki caring for the land and waterways for future generations;
- Stormwater management will be designed to meet regional council requirements and will address an existing area of erosion/scouring above the Whareroa Stream. The memorandum of Cheal Consultants dated 3rd October 2018 (Attachment 4 to the response for further information request) outlines the approach towards stormwater management. Further, *“The use of on-site rainwater tanks for “recycling” water for irrigation or washing purposes is also proposed as a mechanism for managing stormwater. The Owners are considering covenanting the up to 160 new titles to the effect that storage of roof/hardstand stormwater be required to offset some demand on the water supply. This will also have the beneficial effect of easing the loading on the on-site soakage systems so is considered a win/win proposal”*²

Because of this approach to the “three waters” it is considered that the Plan Change is reflective of the policy direction being pursued through the NPS-FM. It is not considered that the Plan Change proposal raises issues in terms of the NPS-FM and nor is it considered that the proposed Plan Change requires any amendment to give effect to the NPS-FM. The detailed design stage of the subdivision (including a low-impact approach to stormwater management as explained in the application document and referred to in the Cheal memorandum) and subsequent resource consent processes provide the appropriate pathway for the relevant matters to be considered.

¹ Section 4a “Whareroa North Infrastructure Report”, Appendix 3 of Private Plan Change application (Dec 2017)

² Section 6a “Whareroa North Infrastructure Report”, Appendix 3 of Private Plan Change application (Dec 2017)

3.5 NPS on Urban Development Capacity (NPS-UDC)

The NPS-UDC is about recognising the national significance of urban environments and the need to enable such environments to develop and change to meet residential and business growth demands. The NPS was developed from concern with rising house prices in larger urban areas such as Auckland.

It notes that “Competition is important for land and development markets because supply will meet demand at a lower price when there is competition. There are several key features of a competitive land and development market. These include providing plenty of opportunities for development. Planning can impact on the competitiveness of the market by reducing overall opportunities for development and restricting development rights to only a few landowners”.

The NPS is concerned only with “urban environments”. That term is specifically defined in the NPS-UDC as: “*Urban environment means an area of land containing, or intended to contain, a concentrated settlement of 10,000 people or more and any associated business land, irrespective of local authority or statistical boundaries.*”

At less than 20 resident households, Whareroa is not an “urban environment” coming under the jurisdiction of the NPS-UDC. The nearest settlement, Taumarunui (55 kilometres away from Whareroa) has a population less than 5,000 and is not an “urban environment” in terms of the NPS-UDC. Taupo (90 kilometres away from Whareroa) is an area of land that contains a concentrated settlement of more than 10,000 people and is therefore an “urban environment” under the NPS-UDC.

The objectives and policies contained in the NPS-UDC apply therefore to Taupo Urban Area but the NPS (which is concerned with driving national policy matters) does not apply to Whareroa and is not therefore relevant to the Whareroa North Plan Change proposal.



Joanne Lewis

**Lewis Consultancy Limited (Planning and Resource Management), Taupo
September 2018**

