

IN THE ENVIRONMENT COURT  
AT CHRISTCHURCH

I TE KŌTI TAIAO O AOTEAROA  
KI ŌTAUTAHI

**ENV-2024-CHC-40**

**UNDER**

The Resource Management Act 1991  
(the **Act**)

**IN THE MATTER**

of an appeal pursuant to clause 14 of  
Schedule 1 of the Act

**BETWEEN**

**QUEENSTOWN AIRPORT  
CORPORATION LIMITED**

**Appellant**

**AND**

**OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Respondent**

**AND**

**AURORA ENERGY LIMITED,  
NETWORK WAITAKI LIMITED AND  
POWERNET LIMITED**

**Section 274 Party**

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**NOTICE OF WISH TO BE PARTY TO PROCEEDING PURSUANT TO  
SECTION 274 OF THE ACT**

**7 JUNE 2024**

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**NOTICE OF WISH TO BE PARTY TO PROCEEDING PURSUANT TO  
SECTION 274 OF THE ACT**

To: Registrar

Environment Court

Christchurch

1. Aurora Energy Limited (**Aurora Energy**), Network Waitaki Limited (**Network Waitaki**) and PowerNet Limited (**PowerNet**) (together **EDBs**) wish to be a party to the following proceeding: *Queenstown Airport Corporation Limited v Otago Regional Council*, ENV-2024-CHC-40.
2. The proceeding relates to an appeal to the Environment Court on a decision on the Proposed Otago Regional Policy Statement (**PORPS**) made by the Otago Regional Council.
3. The EDBs submitted on the PORPS, including on matters subject to the proceeding:
  - (a) Aurora Energy Original Submission 0315 and Further Submission FS003153.
  - (b) Network Waitaki Original Submission 0320 and Further Submission FS003203.
  - (c) PowerNet Original Submission 0511.
4. The EDBs also have an interest in the proceedings that is greater than the public generally as jointly they supply electricity to all the homes, communities, business and emergency services in Otago:
  - (a) Aurora Energy is the largest network operating in Otago and supplies approximately 92,000 customers across two non-contiguous networks in Dunedin, Central Otago and the Queenstown Lakes District.
  - (b) PowerNet is a network management company which is contracted by OtagoNet Joint Venture to maintain and operate its network. That network is largely to the north and south of Dunedin, servicing

towns south from Waihola, Balclutha, Lawrence and Clinton, and towns to the north of Dunedin including Waitati, Palmerston, Macrae Mine and Ranfurly.

- (c) Network Waitaki serves customers in north Otago and parts of the Canterbury region with the network extending from the Mackenzie Basin around Omarama and Ōhau to Oamaru.
5. The EDBs are not a trade competitor for the purposes of section 308D of the Resource Management Act 1991.
  6. The EDBs are interested in all of the proceeding.
  7. Without limiting the generality of the EDBs interest, they have a particular interest in the following issues:
    - (a) Energy, Infrastructure and Transport
      - (i) Proposed new objective EIT-INF-OX.
      - (ii) Proposed new objective EIT-INF-OXX.
      - (iii) EIT-INF-O5 – Integration.
      - (iv) EIT-INF-P13 - Locating and managing effects of infrastructure, nationally significant infrastructure and regionally significant infrastructure outside the coastal environment.
      - (v) EIT-INF-P15 - Protecting nationally significant infrastructure and regionally significant infrastructure.
    - (b) Urban form and development
      - (i) UFD-O1 – Development of urban areas.
      - (ii) UFD-P3 – Urban intensification.
  8. The EDBs supports and/or oppose the relief sought for the following reasons:

- (a) The EDBs perform a critical function through the operation, maintenance, upgrade and development of the electricity distribution network. These networks provide the link between the National Grid and electricity consumers.
- (b) Parts of the EDBs networks have been recognised as regionally significant infrastructure and all of the network is a lifeline utility for the purpose of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002. Given the importance of this infrastructure, it is imperative that the PORPS recognise and provide for the ongoing operation, maintenance development and upgrade of the network.
- (c) The purpose of the PORPS is to achieve the purpose of the Act through issues, policies and methods which achieve integrated management of natural and physical resources of the whole region. As a consequence, it is important that regionally significant infrastructure and lifeline utilities be recognised as an activity which can occur be located in a range of environments.
- (d) Activities seeking to locate near the existing electricity distribution network have the potential to compromise the function of the network, foreclose opportunities to upgrade the network for the benefit of the wider community, as well as to create risks to the health and safety of people in close proximity to the network. The relief sought recognises this and seeks to protect regionally significant infrastructure, which is supported.
- (e) The EDBs seek to ensure that the relief sought by the Appellant does not give rise to unintended consequences for the management of their networks in the region.
- (f) Electricity is essential for modern life. The PORPS does not adequately recognise the benefits of the electricity network to the environment, including the ability for people and communities to provide for their social, cultural and economic health and wellbeing. The relief sought goes towards recognising those benefits.

- (g) The EDBs support new objectives to EIT-INF which fills an existing gap in the policy framework regarding managing the effects of regionally significant infrastructure and its protection from incompatible uses. Both of these outcomes are provided for by way of policies, but not reflected in objectives.
- (h) The EDBs seek greater protection of its existing infrastructure from urban intensification and expansion in the UFD Chapter. The relief sought with respect to UFD-O1 and UFD-P3 is largely aligned with the interests and outcomes of the EDBs in that respect, and is supported.
- (i) The EDBs oppose the relief sought to delete EIT-INF-O5 on the basis that this policy recognises those parts of the electricity distribution network which do not otherwise qualify as regionally significant. This includes a large part of the electricity connections in urban settings, which are often at risk from the effects of incompatible
9. The EDBs agree to participate in mediation or other alternative dispute resolution of the proceedings.



S R Peirce

Solicitor for Aurora Energy, Network Waitaki and PowerNet

Dated 7 June 2024

Service details for the EDBs

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*Advice*

If you have any questions about this notice, contact the Environment Court in Auckland, Wellington, or Christchurch.