

RPS – EIT – Energy, infrastructure and transport

Scope and background

This chapter deals with how activities involving infrastructure, renewable energy, *waste**, *hazardous substances** and *contaminated land** will be addressed. In general, this chapter provides broad policy guidance for managing these activities. Where appropriate, specific policy relating to these activities is integrated into the resource-based chapters of this Plan.

Infrastructure and other physical resources of regional or national importance

The Regional Council recognises that some infrastructure and other physical resources are regionally or nationally important. The establishment, *operation**, *maintenance** and *upgrading** of infrastructure and infrastructure corridors is critical to the economic wellbeing of the Region and the nation. However, infrastructure can have adverse *effects** on the *environment** and other activities can have reverse sensitivity adverse *effects** on infrastructure.

There can be logistical or technical constraints on where infrastructure must be located to serve communities and operate efficiently. Urban growth should be integrated with infrastructure provision. The Regional Council wants to ensure the benefits of infrastructure are recognised and appropriately weighed along with other matters in decision-making processes.

Energy

Access to reliable and sustainable energy supplies is essential to the way society functions. People and communities rely on energy for transportation, and electricity for everyday activities at home and at work. A reliable and secure supply of energy, including electricity, is fundamental for economic and social wellbeing. Furthermore, the demand for electricity is increasing.

Government has developed energy strategies and made changes to the RMA to encourage *energy efficiency* and greater uptake of renewable energy over use of non-renewable resources. Renewable energy means energy produced from solar, wind, hydro, geothermal, biomass, tidal, wave and ocean current sources.

The Government has made a commitment to reduce New Zealand's greenhouse gas emissions and to achieve increasingly sustainable energy use. This commitment is expressed by the inclusion of sections 7(ba), 7(i) and 7(j) in the RMA in 2004 and in national strategy and policy documents dealing with energy, renewable energy, *energy efficiency* and conservation, and electricity transmission.

The electricity transmission network is recognised by a national policy statement as a matter of national significance.

As at 2009, the Government's target is for 90% of New Zealand's electricity generation to be from renewable energy resources by 2025. Collectively these Government policy instruments seek to achieve economy-wide improvements in the efficiency of energy use and an increase in the supply of energy from renewable energy resources.

Given these national policy instruments and the presence of significant renewable energy resources with potential for development in the Region, the Regional Council recognises that it needs to provide for the development of renewable energy resources and the use of renewable energy.

The Region has potential for the development of renewable energy facilities, given the areas with high wind speeds, the potential to develop hydroelectricity resources, and some potential for the use of wave energy around the coastline.

The development and use of renewable electricity generation facilities face a number of barriers that include the difficulty in securing access to natural resources as well as functional, operational and technical factors that constrain the location, layout, design and generation potential of renewable energy facilities. The adverse environmental *effects** of renewable electricity generation facilities can also be a barrier, if they are not appropriately avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Issues

EIT-I1: Infrastructure and other physical resources of regional or national importance

There is potential for concerns about local adverse *effects** to prevail over recognition of the regional and national benefits of establishing infrastructure and other physical resources of regional or national importance. There is also potential for other activities to constrain the *operation**, *maintenance** or *upgrading** of infrastructure and other physical resources of regional or national importance.

EIT-I2: Energy

Energy conservation and *energy efficiency** are important but on their own will not be sufficient to meet future energy demands. If consumption of non-renewable energy resources is to be reduced or avoided, there will need to be an increase in the use of *renewable energy*[^] resources. However, there are functional, operational and technical factors that constrain the location, layout, design and generation potential of *renewable energy*[^] facilities.

Objectives

EIT-O1: *Infrastructure*[^] and other physical resources of regional or national importance

Have regard to the benefits of *infrastructure*[^] and other physical resources of regional or national importance by recognising and providing for their establishment, *operation**, *maintenance** and *upgrading**.

EIT-O1: Ngā kaupapa o raro me ētahi atu rauemi ōkiko whakahirahira - rohe mai, motu mai rānei

Aro atu ki ngā painga o ngā kaupapa o raro me ētahi atu rauemi ōkiko whakahirahira – rohe mai, motu mai rānei mā te āhukahuka me te whakarato i te whakatū, te whakamahi, te tiaki me te whakapai ake i ērā.

EIT-O2: Energy

An improvement in the efficiency of the end use of energy and an increase in the use of *renewable energy*[^] resources within the Region.

EIT-O2: Pūngao

He whakapai ake i te kaha o te putanga whakamutunga o te pūngao, he whakarahi ake i te whakamahi i ngā rauemi pūngao whakahou i roto i te Rohe.

Policies

***Infrastructure*[^] and other physical resources of regional or national importance**

EIT-P1: Benefits of *infrastructure*[^] and other physical resources of regional or national importance

1. The Regional Council and *Territorial Authorities*^{*} must recognise the following *infrastructure*[^] as being physical resources of regional or national importance:
 - a. facilities for the generation of more than 1 MW of electricity and its supporting *infrastructure*[^] where the electricity generated is supplied to the electricity distribution and transmission networks
 - b. the National Grid and electricity distribution and transmission networks defined as the system of transmission lines, sub-transmission and distribution feeders (6.6kV and above) and all associated substations and other works to convey electricity
 - c. pipelines and gas facilities used for the transmission and distribution of natural and manufactured gas
 - d. the *road*^{*} and rail networks as mapped in the Regional Land Transport Strategy
 - e. the Palmerston North and Whanganui *airports*[^]
 - f. the RNZAF *airport*[^] at Ohakea
 - g. telecommunications and radiocommunications facilities
 - h. public or community *sewage*^{*} treatment plants and associated reticulation and disposal systems
 - i. *public water supply*^{*} intakes, treatment plants and distribution systems
 - j. public or community drainage systems, including stormwater systems
 - k. the Port of Whanganui.
2. The Regional Council and *Territorial Authorities*^{*} must recognise the following facilities and assets as being physical resources of regional or national importance:
 - a. solid *waste*^{*} facilities including transfer stations, resource recovery facilities that deal with municipal *waste*^{*} and *landfills*^{*} (excluding farm dumps)
 - b. existing flood protection schemes
 - c. New Zealand Defence Force facilities.
3. The Regional Council and *Territorial Authorities*^{*} must, in relation to the establishment, *operation*^{*}, *maintenance*^{*}, or *upgrading*^{*} of *infrastructure*[^] and other physical resources of regional or national importance, listed in (1) and (2), have regard to the benefits derived from those activities.
4. The Regional Council and *Territorial Authorities*^{*} must achieve as much consistency across *local authority*[^] boundaries as is reasonably possible with respect to policy and plan provisions and decision-making for existing and future *infrastructure*[^].

EIT-P2: Adverse *effects*^{*} of other activities on *infrastructure*[^] and other physical resources of regional or national importance

The Regional Council and *Territorial Authorities*^{*} must ensure that adverse *effects*^{*} on *infrastructure*[^] and other physical resources of regional or national importance from other activities are avoided as far as reasonably practicable, including by using the following mechanisms:

1. ensuring that current *infrastructure*[^], *infrastructure*[^] corridors and other physical resources of regional or national importance, are identified and had regard to in all

resource management decision-making, and any development that would adversely affect the *operation**, *maintenance** or *upgrading** of those activities is avoided as far as reasonably practicable,

2. ensuring that any new activities that would adversely affect the *operation**, *maintenance** or *upgrading** of *infrastructure^* and other physical resources of regional or national importance are not located near existing such resources or such resources allowed by unimplemented *resource consents^* or other RMA authorisations,
3. ensuring that there is no change to existing activities that increases their incompatibility with existing *infrastructure^* and other physical resources of regional or national importance, or such resources allowed by unimplemented *resource consents^* or other RMA authorisations,
4. notifying the owners or managers of *infrastructure^* and other physical resources of regional or national importance of consent applications that may adversely affect the resources that they own or manage,
5. ensuring safe separation distances are maintained when establishing *rules^* and considering applications for buildings, *structures** and other activities near overhead electric lines and conductors eg., giving effect to the New Zealand Code of Practice for Electrical Safe Distances (NZECP 34:2001), prepared under the Electricity Act 1992, and the Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulations 2003 prepared under the Electricity Act 1992,
6. ensuring safe separation distances are maintained when establishing *rules^* and considering applications for buildings, *structures** and other activities near transmission gas pipelines eg, giving effect to the Operating Code Standard for Pipelines - Gas and Liquid Petroleum (NZS/AS 2885) and the Gas Distribution Networks (NZS 5258:2003), the latter promulgated under the Gas Act 1992,
7. ensuring that any planting does not interfere with existing *infrastructure^*, eg., giving effect to the Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulations 2003 promulgated under the Electricity Act 1992 and Section 6.4.4 External Interference Prevention of the Operating Code Standard for Pipelines - Gas and Liquid Petroleum (NZS/AS 2885), and
8. ensuring effective integration of transport and *land** use planning and protecting the function of the strategic *road** and rail network as mapped in the Regional Land Transport Strategy.

EIT-P3: Adverse *effects of *infrastructure^* and other physical resources of regional or national importance on the environment***

In managing any adverse environmental *effects** arising from the establishment, *operation**, *maintenance** and *upgrading** of *infrastructure^* or other physical resources of regional or national importance, the Regional Council and *Territorial Authorities** must:

1. recognise and provide for the *operation**, *maintenance** and *upgrading** of all such activities once they have been established,
2. allow minor adverse *effects** arising from the establishment of new *infrastructure^* and physical resources of regional or national importance, and
3. avoid, remedy or mitigate more than minor adverse *effects** arising from the establishment of new *infrastructure^* and other physical resources of regional or national importance, taking into account:
 - a. the need for the *infrastructure^* or other physical resources of regional or national importance,

- b. any functional, operational or technical constraints that require *infrastructure*[^] or other physical resources of regional or national importance to be located or designed in the manner proposed,
- c. whether there are any reasonably practicable alternative locations or designs, and
- d. whether any more than minor adverse *effects*^{*} that cannot be adequately avoided, remedied or mitigated by services or works can be appropriately offset, including through the use of financial contributions.

Energy

EIT-P4: Renewable *energy*[^]

1. The Regional Council and *Territorial Authorities*^{*} must have particular regard to:
 - a. the benefits of the use and development of *renewable energy*[^] resources including:
 - i. contributing to reduction in greenhouse gases,
 - ii. reduced dependency on imported energy sources,
 - iii. reduced exposure to fossil fuel price volatility, and
 - iv. security of supply for current and future generations,
 - b. the Region's potential for the use and development of *renewable energy*[^] resources, and
 - c. the need for *renewable energy*[^] activities to locate where the *renewable energy*[^] resource is located, and
 - d. the benefits of enabling the increased generation capacity and efficiency of existing renewable electricity generation facilities, and
 - e. the logistical or technical practicalities associated with developing, upgrading, operating or maintaining an established renewable electricity generation activity¹.
2. The Regional Council and *Territorial Authorities*^{*} must generally not restrict the use of small domestic-scale *renewable energy*[^] production for individual domestic use.

EIT-P5: Energy *efficiency*^{*}

The Regional Council and *Territorial Authorities*^{*} must have particular regard to the efficient end use of energy in consent decision-making processes for large users of energy.

Principal reasons

EIT-PR1

RPS-EIT-O1 to RPS-EIT-O2 and RPS-EIT-P1 to RPS-EIT-P5 have been adopted to recognise the benefits of infrastructure and having it well integrated with other *land*^{*} uses, and to recognise and provide for renewable energy and *energy efficiency* measures. The policies on infrastructure aim to give guidance to decision-makers about how to weigh up the local adverse *effects*^{*} of infrastructure against the positive regional and national benefits. They also aim to provide guidance on how to avoid adverse

¹ In relation to the application of RPS-EIT-P4 (e) 'upgrading' has the ordinary meaning of the word, as used in the National Policy Statement on Renewable Electricity Generation 2011.

*effects** on important infrastructure through the inappropriate use of *land** near or adjoining important infrastructure. The policies regarding *energy efficiency** and renewable energy seek to recognise the benefits to be derived from the use and development of renewable energy, and the efficient use of energy and resources (both of which are matters to be had in particular regard in Part 2 of the RMA).

In relation to the application of RPS-EIT-P4 'upgrading' has the ordinary meaning of the word, as used in the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011.

Parts of RPS-EIT-P1, RPS-EIT-P2, RPS-UFD-P1 and RPS-EIT-P5 are included to give effect to parts of the Regional Land Transport Strategy, which seeks to protect the strategic transport network and create opportunity for the uptake of public transport options in the future.

Anticipated environmental results

Anticipated Environmental Result	Link to Policy	Indicator	Data Source
EIT-AER1 Increased efficiency of the end use of energy and increased generation of energy from renewable resources in the Region.	RPS-EIT-P4 and RPS-EIT-P5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient end use of energy in the Region • Amount of energy generated from renewable energy resources in the Region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) and <i>Territorial Authority</i>* monitoring of building and resource consent applications to improve <i>energy efficiency</i> • Monitoring of the quantity of installed generation capacity in the Region