



TAHEKE 8C

The Proprietors of Taheke 8C and Adjoining Blocks (Inc)
Toitu te whenua he oranga whakatupuranga

1 October 2021

Transpower
By email

Tena koutou,

Transpower Long List Consultation and non- transmission solution for request for information

1. Purpose

1.1. The Proprietors of Taheke 8C & Adjoining Blocks Incorporation (**Taheke**) are a Māori landowner with Transpower assets placed upon its land. The purpose of this document is to respond to the consultation document setting out Taheke's position.

2. Executive Summary

2.1. Our comments are simply summarized:

- a. While not subject to the same obligations owed by the public service, Transpower Board is expected under its Charter *"to actively turn its mind to, and seek to practice, good governance that aligns with concepts of manaakitanga and recognises mana whenua."*
- b. Further Transpower has had the ownership and control of land on Taheke rent free to allow their "backbone" of assets to operate. Given this history Transpower should support Taheke as it seeks to develop its geothermal resources and ultimately connect to the grid;
- c. Transpower should therefore ensure that its criteria for determining:
 - i. The priority of upgrading lines and projects will place Taheke and Māori land owners at the forefront of upgrade criteria;
 - ii. Where alternative corridors are considered that Māori land will not be the easy option for the taking of land through the Public Works Act or any alternative. Māori land should be the last option; and
 - iii. Where land such as Taheke's is not needed any longer for transmission that it will be returned to the Māori owners who have had no income from the land used by Transpower without requiring compensation.

3. Ko Taheke tēnei

- 3.1. Taheke was incorporated in 1954 by Order of Incorporation issued by the Māori Land Court pursuant to the Māori Land Act 1931.
- 3.2. Taheke is located approximately 20 minutes north east of Rotorua on State Highway 33. The area is known as Okere Falls and Incorporation's lands lie adjacent to Te Awa Okere also known as the Upper Catchment of the Kaituna River. The total land administered by Taheke is approximately 1214ha and the legal description is "The Proprietors of Taheke 8C & Adjoining Blocks Incorporation".
- 3.3. Taheke maintains a register of shareholders names and their shares in accordance with the requirements of Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993 (TTWMA) and the Māori Land Court. There are currently 1328 shareholders holding 50,611 shares in total.
- 3.4. Taheke has been investigating the geothermal resource under its land. In December 2019 Taheke signed a project development agreement with experienced geothermal developer Eastland Generation Limited (Eastland). Taheke and Eastland will be seeking to consent a geothermal power plant on Taheke land. This is the first of a number of intended activities on Taheke land. With partners, including Eastland, Taheke will be developing a range of geothermal related activities utilizing the resource under Taheke land and the land of the neighbouring Māori trust, the Whangamoa Trust.
- 3.5. Most will involve renewable energy development and use, including a proposed project intended to increase domestic food certainty and consistency through vertical vegetable growth in hothouses. Other projects include an eco-tourism venture and wellness centre on Taheke land. In April 2020 we put our geothermal project forward as a shovel ready option for government funding. Our project was accepted and PDU funding was announced and is intended to assist with investigative drilling later this year.
- 3.6. Taheke will always defend its right as mana whenua, ahi kā and kaitiaki of the whenua, the geothermal taonga and of the awa. That includes its right to self determination and to provide for the betterment of the whanau who have placed their trust in Taheke to care for and develop the land and its taonga.

4. He aha ai? Why are we here?

- 4.1. For many years Transpower and its predecessors have retained control; of a corridor through Taheke land. Taheke is within the Taupo Volcanic Zone and it seems the Wairakei ring as defined in the Transpower consultation document. Part of the Edgecumbe – Tarukenga A (EDG-TRK A) 220kv transmission line is on Taheke land. Taheke has never been compensated for the use and loss of that land. Table 1 identifies the land affected.

Table 1

Towers	Legal Description	CFR reference
110	ML 14444 Pt Ruahine 1B	438880
11,112,113	ML 13250 Okere 1C3D	SA 18B/1385
114	ML 408447 Okere 1A2	509150

4.2. A map of the assets is **attached** to this response.

4.3. A 24-27MW first stage development is currently contemplated by Taheke in partnership with Eastland. Subsequent developments and projects are intended to come on line after as the field is proven up and developed sustainably in line with Taheke's principle of kaitiakitanga.

4.4. Determination of the appropriate site for the station will firm up the anticipated upgrading of the towers to enable generation to the grid from Taheke. At this stage it is anticipated that this would likely involve works on the towers on Taheke land.

4.5. Were that work to be undertaken then there would unlikely be any route specific injurious affection considerations. Towers 110-114 traverse remote grazing lands set well back from State Highway 33. Access is readily avoidable and there are no dwellings within close proximity.

5. Response to Consultation Questions

5.1. We do not propose to comment on all the consultation questions. Those we wish to provide feedback on are discussed below.

Questions 1 & 2

5.2. We consider that upgrading of the towers on Taheke land should occur to support new generation by Taheke and on Taheke land. It should be one of the *"individual parts of the existing grid"* to be upgraded and we agree with the report suggestion that upgrading individual parts versus the entire grid will be the most beneficial.¹

5.3. We consider that Transpower's Board should enable and prioritise this work as a basis for meeting their obligations under the Transpower Charter and to in good faith acknowledge the many years of rent-free use and access to Taheke land.

5.4. Priority should be placed on this upgrade given Taheke intends to file and complete consenting for the first-generation project on its land within the next 2 years. A clear statement of intention by Transpower to prioritise this upgrade will be a significant first step for the project². The projects completion will provide much needed economic

¹ Transpower Consultation Document page 3

² Transpower Consultation Document at page 7acknowledges that relieving constraints within the Wairakei ring would provide surety for generation investors that new generation could be economically dispatched and ensure competition in the generation market.

benefits to Taheke whanau, employment within the community and electricity security for the region.

Questions 10, 11 & 12 & 14

- 5.5. The consultation repeats a common presumption that geothermal is and will remain bad for carbon emissions. It states that its preferred scenario incorporates:

Peaking and dry year reserve options:

o South Island (Onslow) – small (5 TWh), medium (8-10 TWh) and large (12 TWh) are 3 variants worth considering

o North Island (with gas peaking allowed)

o North Island (100% renewables with a combination of generation overbuild, batteries, demand response and perhaps pumped hydro or hydrogen)³

- 5.6. We consider that Transpower's commentary and proposals relating to geothermal energy, effectively marginalize it as the lesser of the group of renewable resources for power and thermal use. This is rather than acknowledging that geothermal is a sustainable consistent resource with the obvious potential to provide baseload generation for New Zealand. Providing security of supply whether there are droughts or no wind. Replacing current thermal generation including the Huntly plant and industrial pollutant processes.
- 5.7. It is acknowledged that there are some fields which have or have the potential of high emissions if tapped. Rather than discounting geothermal as a whole we recommend that Transpower factors in and acknowledges the work and field testing already underway to identify and develop technology which will significantly reduce or remove emissions from geothermal developments. We suggest that Transpower engage and support positive options and opportunities rather than discounting them across the board. Opportunities that will allow fields like Taheke 8C's to proceed for the betterment of the nation and region.
- 5.8. We therefore do not agree with Transpower's stated bias within its scenarios for wind and solar. We do consider that North Island generation should be 100% renewable we do not however consider that geothermal should be excluded or marginalized as an option for renewable generation. We do consider that geothermal generation should be included in any sensitivity scenarios and a real option for meeting off and peak demand.
- 5.9. When Transpower says one of its principles for identifying appropriate generation scenarios is to allow for all generation which might require significant different transmission options to be included⁴, this must include geothermal and specifically

³ Transpower Consultation Document at p44

⁴ Transpower Consultation Document at page 52

Taheke. Further while the minimum scenarios may be 5 at least some should include geothermal if not all. We note subsequent discussion of a geothermal scenario later in the report. Were there to be a reduction from 10 to 5 we would strongly recommend that geothermal be retained in the mix.

Question 13

- 5.10. We do not think that Transpower's choice of scenarios affecting Region 2 is reasonable. Again, as stated above a bias towards wind and solar in Region 2 is unreasonable when significant renewable resource in that region is geothermal. Nor if we take a future forward view does geothermal have to be considered wholly disruptive. Fields vary and not all will create carbon emissions higher than other proposed renewables. Further technology exists to reduce or remove carbon emissions for smaller scale developments. That technology is in place in New Zealand now.

Question 15 & 16

- 5.11. Any weighting should in our view include recognition of the Treaty and the stated objective within Transpower's Charter to manaaki and to recognize mana whenua. We repeat again Taheke and its Committee of Management is the mandated ahi kaa and mana whenua for Taheke land and the taonga beneath. Support of development of Māori land for the betterment of Māori whanau and protection of Taheke's right to develop⁵ should be an acknowledged weighting within this framework.
- 5.12. We note that the determination of weighting will be the subject of future consultation. Taheke would like to participate in that process including kanohi ki te kanohi.
- 5.13. We reiterate with respect to the Investment Test Analysis the benefit of a project on Taheke utilizing Māori land is significant; for Taheke, for the local economy and for the region. That value is and will be in large part localized in an area that needs that support post covid. It will acknowledge the generations of Taheke whanau and committee who have strived to bring development on Taheke land to fruition. There are significant economic and social benefits to supporting projects of Taheke's size and potential within the regions for Transpower and for the nation.

6. Transpower as a leader for good

- 6.1. We propose that Transpower with its considerable market power and influence as the controller of the national grid be a leader for sustainable change not a follower of groups intent on marginalizing geothermal, to maximise their own preferred generation. Frankly there is no need for this approach rather the emphasis should be on a renewables-based system which meets the nations needs at all times.

⁵ A right which is enshrined in the Declaration of the 1986 UN Declaration on the Right to Development and the UN Declaration on Indigenous Rights passed in 2007.

- 6.2. We propose that Transpower support and encourage innovation in geothermal including the removal and reduction of carbon emissions through existing technologies in place on generation plants already and research that needs only financial support and engagement to move forward.
- 6.3. We propose that Transpower engage directly with mana whenua, with Taheke and consider how Transpower can support the aspirations of Māori land owners who have fought for generations to have the opportunity to realise geothermal electricity generation on Taheke whenua. In doing so they will meaningfully be acknowledging the Treaty of Waitangi and their mandate to support mana whenua.
- 6.4. Further with a view to meeting their obligations under the Treaty and a philosophy of do no further harm Transpower should be a leader for change of habit and presumption. That being that Māori land because of its multiply owned nature is less valuable or more easily taken as part of developing more transmission routes or upgrading existing ones. Where Māori land owners agree to upgrades this is one thing, where they do not or decisions are made over Māori land owner's objections this is not appropriate and does not meet the threshold of the Treaty and the protection of taonga under its Articles.
- 6.5. Finally, if lines are to be removed or moved Transpower should lead the acknowledgement of historical wrongs. Of whenua taken for the "national good" to the detriment of the few. The few being Māori land owners whose land was already devalued on the basis that Māori land tenure was somehow inferior and was further devalued and unusable because of Transpower's assets and controls. Where Māori land is no longer needed return it and don't force Māori who have never been compensated to await a long drawn-out process, incur costs participating in that process and then potentially having to pay the market value or a price at least for that land.

7. Nga kupu whakamutunga

- 7.1. We repeat Taheke will always defend its right as mana whenua, ahi kā and kaitiaki of the whenua, the geothermal taonga and of the awa. That includes its right to self-determination and to provide for the betterment of the whanau who have placed their trust in Taheke to care for and develop the land and its taonga. We believe Transpower has the opportunity to support Taheke not create barriers. We submit that this is an opportunity for Transpower to engage with mana whenua and to work with Taheke to join the renewables economy and to support our rohe and region as it recovers from covid.
- 7.2. We invite Transpower to meet with Taheke kanohi ki te kanohi. Our contacts are:

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Map of transmission lines on Taheke land

