



30 May 2023

WEL Networks Limited - Summary of Evidence - Hamilton City Council's PC9 - Historic Heritage and Natural Environment

1. Good Morning, my name is Sara Brown, and I am a planner for WEL Networks Limited. As outlined in the Commissioners directions I will summarise the evidence submitted to Council for circulation in early May. I will talk only to clause 4 of my evidence as the other item raised relates to Archaeological Sites, which I understand the hearing to be later this year.
2. As discussed in my evidence, WEL requested amendments to the District Plan to amend the requirement for a specific Heritage Impact Assessment for development in Historical Heritage Areas. Instead WEL requested the wording be amended to enable an equivalent report by a suitably qualified person.
3. The section 42A report did not provide reasoning for rejecting WEL's submission and it remains unclear why other suitably qualified persons are unable to provide an assessment of the proposal against the information requirements and assessment criteria.
4. WEL considers it is unreasonable to require a Heritage Impact Assessment for development, when other specialist reports already required for some developments can at the same time consider the compatibility of development with identified heritage values of an area. WEL also argues that this assessment could be completed by experts such as planners given the very detailed informational requirements and assessment criteria contained within the Plan Change.
5. By way of background, last year when the overlay was notified, WEL commissioned a Landscape Effects Assessment as part of a resource consent for a site within a Historical Heritage Area. Part of this assessment gave consideration to the proposed informational requirements and assessment criteria. This assessment was accepted by Council even though it was not a Heritage Impact Assessment.
6. While in this instance a Landscape Effects Assessment was accepted by Council, this approach may not be applied the next time WEL completes works in a Historical Heritage Area, unless the District Plan specifically states that this is able to be accepted.
7. To conclude, WEL does not request the removal of an assessment against informational requirements and assessment criteria. But instead requests that Council be flexible with their approach for these assessments.

Sara Brown
Senior Planner for WEL Networks Limited

