

**BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT HEARING PANEL FOR THE  
PROPOSED PORIRUA DISTRICT PLAN**

**UNDER** of the Resource Management Act 1991  
**IN THE MATTER OF** Proposed Porirua District Plan  
**AND**  
**IN THE MATTER OF** Submitter (84) and Further Submitter (63) by  
Firstgas Limited

---

**WRITTEN STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF NATALIE JADE WEBB (PLANNING)**

**Hearing Stream 7:**

**Variation 1**

**Plan Change 19**

**Residential Zones**

**Commercial and Mixed-Use Zones**

**Evidence date: 24 February 2023**

Hearing Commencement date: 13 March 2023

---

## INTRODUCTION

### Qualifications and Experience

1. My name is Natalie Jade Webb.
2. I am employed by the consultancy firm Beca Ltd and my role with the company is a Senior Planner.
3. I hold a Bachelor of Resource and Environmental Planning from Massey University, Palmerston North.
4. I am an Intermediate member of the New Zealand Planning Institute.
5. I have nine years of experience in the planning profession working for both local government as well as the private sector. I have worked providing consultancy services and processing consents for a wide range of clients around New Zealand including local authorities, land developers, and the infrastructure and transport sectors.
6. I am familiar with the approach that Firstgas Limited (Firstgas) adopt in relation to Resource Management Act related frameworks and processes, and in particular where seeking to provide for the ongoing operation and maintenance (including access) to their network as well as providing for community health and safety and well-being through plan review processes.
7. I have prepared submissions on behalf of Firstgas in relation to the National Policy Statement – Urban Development and a Private Plan Change in Oakura and prepared evidence for the Waikato District Plan and the Wellington City District Plan. I have also prepared and lodged resource consent applications on behalf of Firstgas.

**Code of Conduct**

- 8. I confirm that I have read the ‘Code of Conduct’ for expert witnesses contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2014 and my evidence has been prepared in compliance with that Code. Unless I state otherwise this evidence is within my sphere of expertise and I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I express.

**Scope of Evidence**

- 9. My written evidence covers the submission points lodged by Firstgas in relation to the Residential Zone and District Wide chapters. I have read the following relevant s42A Reports as they relates to Firstgas’ submissions (and others where relevant), and my evidence responds to the commentary and recommendations in those Reports where necessary to do so:
  - (a) Proposed Porirua District Plan: Officer’s Report: Part B – Residential Zones, Planning Maps and General Topics – Michael David Rachlin, dated 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023.
  - (b) Proposed Porirua District Plan: Officer’s Report: Part B – District-Wide Matters – Rory Smeaton, dated 10 February 2023
- 10. My written evidence will briefly address the following:
  - (a) The planning background for Firstgas’ submissions and an outline of the need to provide sufficient recognition and protection of the high-pressure gas transmission network in the District as directed by higher order planning documents / frameworks.
  - (b) My responses to the recommendations made in the Section 42A Reports on Firstgas’ submissions and designation conditions.

**PLANNING BACKGROUND AND HIGHER ORDER PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

- 11. I have set out the Higher Order Planning Documents in my previous evidence within Paragraphs 11 – 17 of Hearing Stream 5.

- 12. The Firstgas gas network is appropriately recognised in the Strategic Directions of the Proposed District Plan, thereby acknowledging its strategic importance to the district in terms of its economic and social wellbeing. The following Strategic Objectives provide recognition and protection of infrastructure providing for the effective, efficient, safe and resilient functioning of the city.

<b>FC-01 Infrastructure</b>
<p>Effective, efficient, resilient and safe infrastructure throughout the City that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides essential, reliable and secure services, including in emergencies;</li> <li>2. Facilitates local, regional and national connectivity;</li> <li>3. Contributes to the economy and supports a high standard of living;</li> <li>4. Has sufficient capacity to accommodate existing and planned growth;</li> <li>5. Integrates with development; and</li> <li>6. Enables people and communities to provide for their health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>

**SECTION 42A REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 13. I concur with the recommendations made by the s42A Officer as they relate to Firstgas’ submissions, with justification provided below.

**Residential Zone**

- 14. Following a review of the Section 42A Report, while noting the intent of Firstgas’ submission is upheld, I understand the reasons in that Report to essentially reject Firstgas’ submission, which seeks that Rule GRZ-R15 is retained as proposed given the deletion of the General Residential Zone. Rule GRZ-R15 provided for activities within the Gas Transmission Pipeline Corridor as a Permitted Activity where they are not a ‘Sensitive Activity’ and provides for Sensitive Activities within the Gas Transmission Pipeline Corridor as a Restricted Discretionary Activity.
- 15. The Section 42A Report states that the submissions made on the rules within the General Residential Zone (which has now been deleted and replaced with the Medium Density Residential Zone and High Residential Zone to allow for more

intensive development) can be considered to have been carried across to either the Medium Density Residential Zone and the High Density Residential Zone.

16. As Rule GRZ-R15 has been carried over to the Medium Residential Zone as Rule MRZ-R18 and is drafted as it was within the Residential Zone, Firstgas is supportive of the s42A recommendation to carry over this rule. The gas transmission pipeline passes through the Medium Density Zone and therefore it is important that there is provision within this zone for Firstgas to appropriately manage third party activity within close proximity to the gas transmission pipeline corridor.
17. Rule MRZ-R18 requires that a resource consent is sought for sensitive activities within close proximity to the gas transmission pipeline corridor and as part of this, Council are required to give specific consideration to any adverse effects on Firstgas. This is essential to ensure that sensitive activities in the vicinity of the gas transmission pipeline corridor are carried out in a way which does not compromise the safe and efficient operation of the network, inclusive of maintaining access. This is also essential to ensure that any potential risks to the health and safety and well-being of the community are minimised and appropriately managed.
18. With the recommendation to delete the General Residential Zone and replace it with zones which allow for higher intensification of residential development to align with the recent changes to the National Policy Statement for Urban Development, it is even more critical for Firstgas that this provision is in place.
19. I therefore agree with the recommendation of the s42A Report to reject Firstgas' submission to the retain Rule GRZ-R15, as this rule has been carried over to the Medium Density Residential Zone.

**District Wide Matters**

20. Following a review of the Section 42A Report, although Firstgas were not seeking a new definition of geotechnical bore, but rather that a geotechnical bore was excluded from the definition of 'earthworks', I understand the recommendation made in the Report to reject Firstgas' submission in relation to this matter.

- 21. The s42A Reporting Officer states that this matter has been addressed within Hearing Stream 4. The reporting officer recommended within Hearing Stream 4 an exemption from Earthworks standard EW-S2, including earthworks associated with a geotechnical bore be included as follows:

*Earthworks for the construction, alteration or decommissioning of bores, including geotechnical investigation and monitoring bores, undertaken in accordance with NZS 4411:2001 Environmental Standard for Drilling of Soil and Rock*

- 22. Firstgas agree that this matter has been addressed within Hearing Stream 4 and the outcomes Firstgas sought within the original submission are achieved through this recommendation. This exemption will allow Firstgas to undertake earthworks associated with geotechnical bores without resource consent where all other relevant provisions within the plan are achieved. This is the most efficient and effective method of enabling temporary earthwork related activities for Firstgas.
- 23. Although this provision is not specific to earthworks undertaken by a network utility operator, the designation will ensure that written approval is sought from Firstgas for any other parties undertaking earthworks associated with a geotechnical bore within the gas transmission pipeline corridor.
- 24. I therefore agree with s42A Reporting Officer that the recommendation within Hearing Stream 4 to include earthworks associated with geotechnical bores as an exemption from Standard EW-S2, will achieve the outcome sought by Firstgas.

**CONCLUSION**

- 25. In summary, my view is that the gas transmission network provides for peoples' and communities' well-being and health and safety. These matters are at the heart of sustainable management as defined by Section 5 of the RMA.
- 26. I consider the relevant provisions as recommended in the Section 42A reports will assist with:

- (a) recognising Firstgas' transmission network and pipeline by providing the appropriate provisions throughout the plan and set a platform to recognise the strategic importance of this network to the Porirua District; and
- (b) providing for the safe, efficient and effective operation, maintenance, replacement, upgrade, removal and/ or development of the network.
- (c) Providing for the health and safety and well-being of the community.
- (d) giving effect to the relevant policies of the GWRPS and Strategic Objective FC-01 of the Proposed plan. The recommended provisions ensure that the Regionally Significant Infrastructure is protected from subdivision, use and development through the consenting process and allows the Firstgas Gas Transmission Network to operate efficiently and safely.