

**BOARD OF INQUIRY  
HAUAURU MA RAKI WIND FARM PROPOSAL**

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**In the matter of the Resource Management Act 1991**

**And**

**In the matter of resource consent applications by Contact Wind Limited in respect of the Hauauru ma raki Wind Farm Proposal**

**And**

**In the matter of notices of requirement and a resource consent application by Contact Energy Limited for transmission infrastructure related to the Hauauru ma raki Wind Farm Proposal**

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**BRIEF OF EVIDENCE IN CHIEF OF JULIAN ROBIN HUGH AUSTIN**

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## **Introduction**

- 1. My name is Julian Robin Hugh Austin.**
- 2. My wife Beverley and I own the lifestyle block at 1113 Churchill Road.**
- 3. I am employed as an accountant for Gitmans Knitwear Limited in Onehunga.**

## **Personal background**

- 4. Our lifestyle block is made up of 2.2 hectares and is adjacent to the existing HLY-OTA line.**
- 5. My wife and I have owned and lived at the property since July 2008.**
- 6. Our intention is to establish a riding centre on the property and we presently have three horses grazing on the land.**
- 7. I am giving evidence to explain the impact of the proposed Orton substation and the HLY-OTA transmission line deviation on our property.**

## **Scope of Evidence**

- 8. My evidence will cover the following matters:**
  - a) The effect on the water supply for the Punga Punga Drainage scheme.**
  - b) The visual impact of the Orton Substation and the deviation of the HLY-OTA transmission line.**

## **Water Supply**

- 9. I have concerns that due to the positioning of the Orton Substation in the catchment area of the Punga Punga Drainage scheme, the water supply will be affected. I have an easement to take water from the scheme, from a creek located adjacent to my northern boundary (see exhibit 1)**
- 10. The access road to 1127 Churchill Rd (N733) runs besides this creek and also crosses over my land at its connection to Churchill Road.**
- 11. I expect there will need to be an upgrade of this access road to allow for construction of the Orton substation and the deviation of the HLY-OTA line.**
- 12. Both the Orton substation and access road upgrade will have a detrimental effect on the water quality due to run off from the construction sites.**
- 13. In Mr W Mill's evidence (paragraph 149) it is stated that 'Contact Energy would be agreeable to a condition in its Notice of Requirement that provides the necessary assurance that the water supply will be maintained in the event the Punga Punga scheme is adversely affected by the proposed works'**
- 14. My concern is how the water supply will be maintained (eg) testing, and if it is found that there has been an effect on water quality what remedial work will be done and when.**

**15. It is for this reason that in my submission I suggested a water bore established on my property to mitigate any concerns.**

### **Visual Impact**

- 16. Presently we have a tower (HLY-OTA A 65) on the boundary of our property.**
- 17. It is proposed to replace this tower with a heavy strain tower and position it northeast from the present towers location.**
- 18. The location of the new tower will be in the view of the main living area of the house.**
- 19. The house is only two years old and was positioned to lessen the visual impact of tower (HLY-OTA A 65).**
- 20. The use of heavy strain towers, which I believe will be taller than the existing towers of the HLY-OTA line, will further increase the visual impact. (refer paragraph 240 – Mr Lister’s evidence)**
- 21. I agree with Mr Lister’s evidence (refer paragraph 241) that the switching station and the deviation of the line, will have cumulative adverse visual effects.**
- 22. I refute Mr Lister’s evidence (refer paragraph 242) ‘that no submissions were raised re the switching station or connection deviation as an issue’. As I raised the issue in my submission.**
- 23. I also note that in (paragraph 250) of Mr Lister’s evidence that our house (N559) has been classified as having ‘moderate’ visual amenity effects.**
- 24. I find this hard to believe, when in correspondence with Contact Energy (refer letter 24<sup>th</sup> November – exhibit 2), they detail that the closest tower will be approximately 150 meters away and not the 700 metres mentioned in (paragraph 250).**
- 25. It appears that there may be more than one tower closer than 700 metres - (DEV6) – 150 meters and the other towers DEV 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 ranging between 450 metres and one kilometres away.**
- 26. I would like to refer to Mr Crighton’s evidence about ‘injurious affection’, namely paragraphs (70 & 73). I feel that our property should be upgraded from ‘moderate’ to ‘high’ and thus treated accordingly in compensation negotiations.**
- 27. I would like to draw attention to Mr Crighton’s evidence ‘Loss of Value to Land Adjoining the Easement Strip’ (paragraphs 75, 79 , 80 & 130) As this is applicable to my property.**
- 28. With the visual amenity effects moderate to high it seems logical to straighten the transmission line thus removing the need for heavy strain towers.**
- 29. If done there would still be ‘moderate’ visual impact from the Orton substation and towers, this could be partially mitigated by ‘a landscape plan’ (refer Mr Lister’s evidence paragraph 255 & 256).**
- 30. Unfortunately it takes time for trees to grow and thus the visual impact will take a long time to disappear (if indeed at all).**

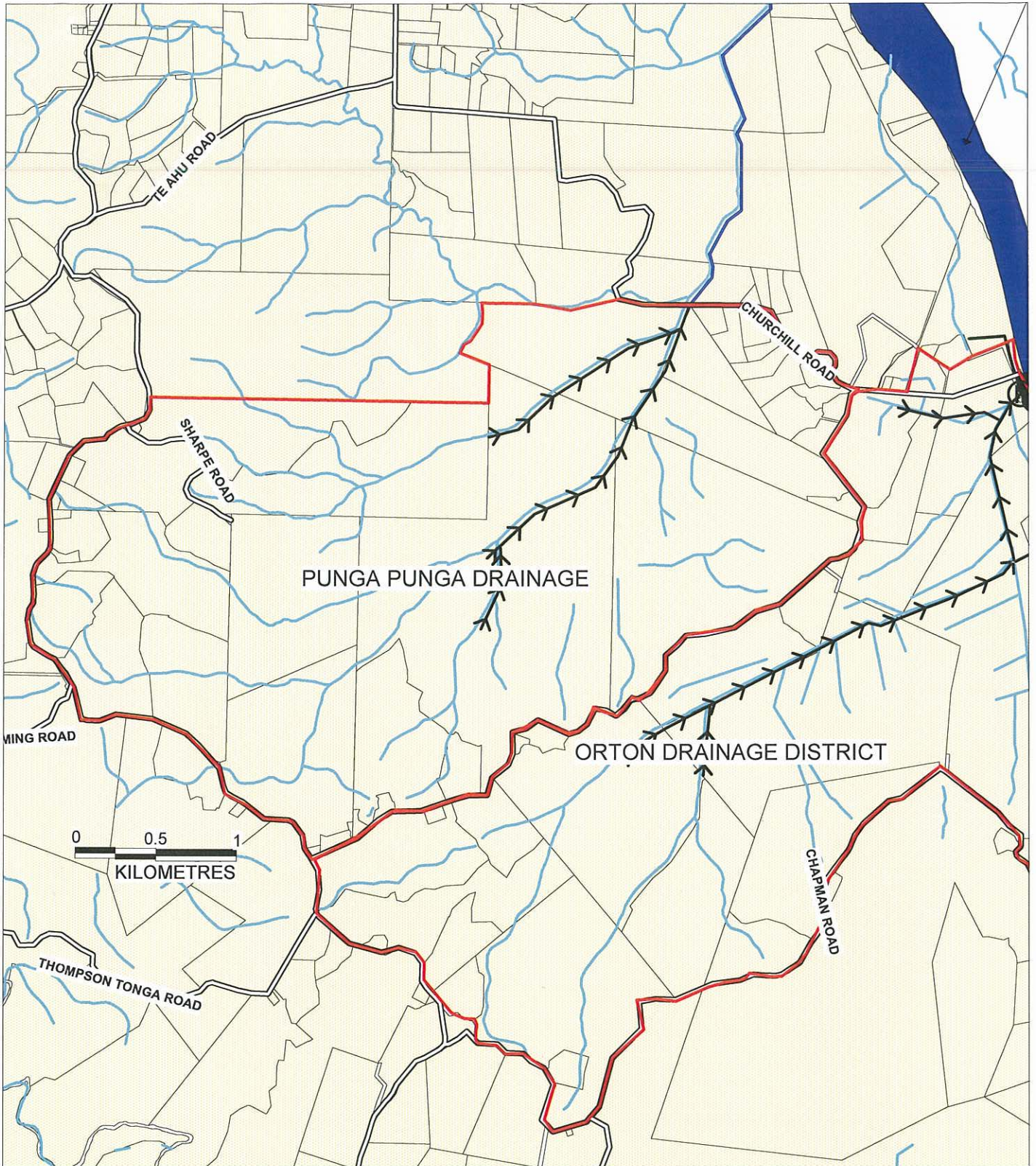
- 31. I am also concerned that there may be a delay in dismantling the old towers and therefore becoming an ongoing eyesore.**
- 32. I believe a site visit would highlight the visual impact concerns that we have.**

**In Summary**

- 33. Due to the lack of consultation with Contact Energy (refer to their letter 24<sup>th</sup> November 2008 – Exhibit 2). My wife & I have had no input into the initial submission process and we feel that we should not be disadvantaged because of this reason (refer our letter 9<sup>th</sup> December 2008 – Exhibit 3).**
- 34. We want to be guaranteed a continued water supply of the same quality or better as currently exists.**
- 35. We believe that we should be treated as T1 and not T2 with regards to visual impact and appropriate measures taken.**

**JRH Austin**

EXHIBIT (1)



## PUNGA PUNGA LAND DRAINAGE AREA

Area = 1134.01ha

### LEGEND:

- |   |                     |   |                     |   |         |   |         |
|---|---------------------|---|---------------------|---|---------|---|---------|
| ● | FLOODGATE           | Ⓟ | PUMPSTATION         | ≡ | CULVERT | — | CHANNEL |
| → | DRAIN               | — | STOPBANKS           | — | STREAMS | — | ROADS   |
| □ | DRAINAGE BOUNDARIES | □ | PROPERTY BOUNDARIES |   |         |   |         |

November 24, 2008

Julian and Beverley Austin  
1113 Churchill Rd  
RD1 Pukekawa  
Pukekohe



Dear Julian and Beverley

**Information about Contact's Proposed Wind Farm Development – Hauāuru mā raki**

We note from the RMA submission received on the above project that you are the owners of the property at 1113 Churchill Rd, The landowners we have in our database, and with whom we have been consulting and providing windfarm updates for this property have, in the past, been Mr and Mrs Vanhoovel. As we were unaware of the change of property ownership, unfortunately we have not been able to provide you with further information prior to submissions closing. The last letter sent to your address, to the Vanhoovels, on October 13<sup>th</sup> 2008 was returned.

You obviously received advice from the Franklin District Council that the company has applied for resource consents for both the wind farm project and an associated Notice of Requirement to designate a certain corridor for the transmission line. The application will be heard by a Board of Inquiry under a call-in process that has been convened by the Minister for the Environment. However it is still possible that the corridor may continue to be fine-tuned in future months as negotiations with landowners continue.

Submissions on our application closed on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, and, prior to that date, we had sent to the Vanhoovels at your address an updated "line-of-sight" modeling, and how we think your property might be affected from a visual perspective.

The plan is to locate the main switchyard on the Hewitt property and a number of existing towers on the main Otahuhu transmission line will need to be relocated to connect to that switchyard. As a result, some properties on the main grid side of the switchyard will be aware of the deviation of existing transmission towers and / or the erection of new ones to connect to the new switchyard.

We have attached an aerial map which shows the existing line (in grey) and the planned new deviation (in red) to the new switchyard, and then back out to the main Otahuhu line. This deviation starts at the tower that is referred to on the map as T61, and returns to the main line at the tower referred to as T66. The intervening towers (T62, T63, T64 and T65) would all be dismantled.

We have modeled the proposed wind farm transmission route and the deviation of the existing north-south transmission line to determine if there may be any visual impact on your dwelling.

To do this, we have had to make a number of assumptions from aerial maps as to where your dwelling is located, and to analyse contour maps for the area. (A full list of other modeling assumptions is on the information sheet attached)

As we see it, your dwelling currently has a line of sight to all the existing towers that are to be dismantled – T62, T63, T64 and T65. The closest of these appear to be T64 and T65 which are 340 and 120 meters away respectively. The planned deviation of the line as shown in the map by the new towers marked DEV 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 should mean that all these towers will be further away by line of sight from your dwelling than the present ones. The closest will be DEV6 which will be about 150 meters, with the rest ranging between 450 and one kilometer away.

On our height contour modeling, we calculate that the new switchyard to be built on the Hewitt property will be visible from your dwelling at about 650 meters away. We note that under our Notice of Requirement application we have given an undertaking to carry out landscaping work that includes plantings that will minimize the visual impact of the switchyard.

There is also a transmission tower (marked as 83 L-O) coming into the switchyard from the windfarm that our contour modeling suggests will be visible from your dwelling at about 800 meters distance.

Our visual and landscape experts have advised us that a direct line of sight of between 500 meters and one kilometre is likely to make transmission towers “moderately” visible. The extent of visibility depends upon how the towers merge with the general landscape. In order to reduce visibility, the proposed transmission line will be sited below hill lines where possible and has been designed to merge with the background landscape. Some of the other factors impacting upon visibility are set out in the “assumptions list” attached.

We note from your RMA submission that you have expressed concern about the fact that your water supply could be compromised by the upgrade of the access road to the proposed substation. We have asked our consulting engineers to consider this issue and we will report back to you when we have their response.

We hope this information will assist you in your understanding of the transmission aspects of the wind farm project. Should you require any further information you should also feel free to call our dedicated project telephone line 0800 000 458.

Kind regards



Robyn Orchard  
Consultation Coordinator  
Contact Energy  
0800 000 458

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### **Further assumptions used to determine visibility of transmission structures from your dwelling**

- Based on a line of sight from the dwelling to the top of the transmission structure of 45 meters.
- A transmission structure height of 45 meters has been used. The likely structure heights are 32 meters to 48 meters.
- The land contour data used is 5 meters for the transmission route and 20 meters outside this. The actual contouring present may alter the visibility of the transmission structure
- Dwelling coordinates are estimated to be within +/- 20 meters.
- Trees and vegetation, which could provide screening, are not taken into account.
- The orientation of the dwelling, which could limit the visibility of transmission structures, has not been taken into account

EXHIBIT (3)

Robyn Orchard  
Contact Energy Limited  
Private Bag 2001  
TAUPO

9<sup>th</sup> December 2008

Dear Robyn,

Thankyou for your letter of 24<sup>th</sup> November 2008.  
Although Contact Energy was unaware of the change of property ownership we feel it would be unfair of you not to consider our submission.

Now that we have seen the aerial map we are concerned that the tower T65 is moving into our direct line of sight and will become visible from our main living area.

The house was positioned on the site purposefully to avoid this very situation. We think it would be better to straighten up the line of towers which would mean we'd be unable to see it from our main living area.

Thankyou for considering the effect the substation will have on our water supply. We look forward to the engineers report on this matter.

Kind Regards



Julian Austin  
1113 Churchill Rd  
RD1 Tuakau 2696