

BEFORE THE BOARD OF INQUIRY

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management
Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of Applications by Transpower
New Zealand Limited for
resource consents and Notices
of Requirement for the Upper
North Island Grid Upgrade
Project between Whakamaru
and South Auckland

SUBMISSION FROM GEORGE WALTER HUGH VERCOE
Trustee of Parahiwi Farm, 544 Tauhei Road, Morrinsville

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My name is George Walter Hugh Vercoe QSM ED JP and I am a trustee of Hugh Vercoe Family Trust, the owners of the farm property known as Parahiwi Farm, 544 Tauhei Road, Morrinsville. The trust has owned this property since 1987.

My submission is:

The proposed route for the new 400kv transmission line generally follows the existing 110kv Ara-pak line and exactly in most of the line sections.

From Hangawera Road, north of Morrinsville the new line replaces the 100kv line on exactly the same alignment (sheet 33/66). This exact alignment continues until new pylon number 203 (sheet 32/66) when instead of taking a gentle 350ml angle the new line continues straight ahead to new pylon 200 and here the line takes a 700ml angle to rejoin the original alignment at pylon 195 (sheet 31/66) where it continues to follow the 100kv alignment.

This deviation from the existing 110kv route impacts on my farm property in the following way:

1. The existing alignment impacts visually on my property. The closest the line comes to my farm boundary is 1750m. The proposed new line is only 400m from my boundary and the pylon is considerably higher. Pylon 200 being the anchor for the 700ml re-direction requires major strengthening and size increased to anchor the line.
2. My farm property while relatively large in size only has a frontage adjacent to Tauhei Road of 1021m. The property has a small area of flat land by the road rising to steep sheep country thereafter. My daughter and son-in-law with their young family have surveyed a 30 acre block (refer to black thatched area on aerial plan) adjacent to the side boundary closest to the property transmission line. They currently farm this area and it is their intention to build a new home on this leased block. Thus would not be a problem if the new line followed the existing route but the change of alignment brings the line within 450m of the proposed building site, creating the following problems:
 - (a) there is a proven health issue living close to transmission lines. While the exact distance is debated I would not wish my children and grandchildren to live so close to the proposed line.

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- (b) Matamata-Piako District Council recently processed two subdivision consents, one at Hangawera Road, and one at Kuranui Road. Both developments were challenged by Transpower as potential reverse sensitivity to their transmission line some distance away. With this philosophy Transpower could challenge any development on my farm.
3. The pylons are enormous and the anchor pylon 200 is gigantic being required to anchor such a large change of direction in the proposed route. The visual impact of this dominates my property and no amount of landscaping can minimize the effects.
 4. Owing to the steep terrain of my property I apply fertilizer by topdressing aircraft. The airstrip is located at a high point in the front of the farm. The loaded planes take off in the direction of the transmission line and with the realignment they would not be able to apply fertilizer to the front corner of my property.
 5. Some of my neighbours use my airstrip to apply fertilizer to their properties. The new line is directly between the airstrip and these farms.

If a new or upgraded transmission line is required to secure the electrical network of the country then it has to go somewhere. If the new line replaces the Ara-pak line then this will visually impact on my property but this is something I will simply have to accept. I am not convinced that the line as proposed by Transpower is the best option for the nation at this point in time but I do not propose to elaborate on this.

The Ara-pak line has been in existence for many years. Property owners and neighbours have developed their operations around and taking account of this alignment. To make a change as now proposed by Transpower is totally unwarranted and impacts unnecessarily on neighbouring farming operations.

My neighbours property where the line transverses has recently been sold to another neighbour seeking to amalgamate this property with his existing land and thus expand his dairy operation.

The decision I wish from the Board is to retain the original Ara-pak alignment for the proposed 400kv transmission line.



G W H Vercoe QSM ED JP
Trustee, Hugh Vercoe Family Trust