



## Topic 9: Utilities and Infrastructure

November 2016

### Introduction

As part of the District Plan Review, Timaru District Council has commissioned a Discussion Document on utilities and infrastructure to stimulate discussion and form a basis for public consultation. This can be found at [www.timaru.govt.nz/dpr](http://www.timaru.govt.nz/dpr).

It identifies four main issues with how the current District Plan manages utilities and infrastructure, establishes potential options to address these issues and discusses the associated strengths and weaknesses. We seek your feedback on the issues and options.

### Issues and Options

#### Issue 1

The need for the strategic integration of infrastructure and land use.

The current approach to the provision of utilities and infrastructure in the District Plan has not always resulted in the strategic integration of land use change and infrastructure provision. This has resulted in infrastructure provisions to accommodate growth occurring in an ad-hoc and inconsistent manner, sometimes due to unclear standards. An example of this is a narrow road being laid out by a developer complying with roading standards that does not have adequate space within it for the necessary utilities (water, stormwater, wastewater, electricity). Providing clear guidance on infrastructure standards coupled with a stronger policy framework can ensure the District Plan provides for the provision of infrastructure in an effective manner.

The options for addressing this issue are to (i) retain the current District Plan provisions; or (ii) provide clear infrastructure standards that require strategic integration of infrastructure with land use.

This summary outlines the issues our district faces in relation to utilities and infrastructure.

We welcome your feedback on this topic.

**Kerry Stevens**  
Geraldine Ward Councillor





### Issue 2

Should all new powerlines, and renewals, replacement and upgrading of over 50 metres in length of overhead lines be installed underground?

The current District Plan requires all new powerlines in a number of zones to be located underground. In addition, when (for example) renewal, replacement or upgrading of existing overhead services (other than transmission lines) of more than 50 metres is undertaken in length the District Plan requires these to be relocated underground.

This means for lines companies some renewal works of overhead lines require undergrounding which brings with it a cost.

An additional issue is that if lines companies renew the overhead lines one component at a time the activity is not captured by the rule. The alternative is to seek resource consent to retain the lines above ground. Retaining existing overhead lines, or establishing new ones, does bring visual effects which may not be tolerable to the community.

The options for addressing this issue are to (i) retain the current District Plan provisions; (ii) increase the length of renewal undertaken before undergrounding is required; or (iii) remove the requirement all together.

### Issue 3

Should the maximum permitted height for telecommunications installations in the Rural 1 Zone be increased?

Currently the height limit in the Rural 1 Zone is 15 metres. A number of telecommunications installations (such as masts) that have been installed of late have required resource consent to breach this rule. Due to operational requirements these telecommunications masts need to be greater than 15 metres to gain sufficient height to project above obstacles (such as shelter belts) to signal.

Increasing the height however would bring with it an increased level of effects on visual amenity and the rural landscape.

The options for addressing this issue are to (i) retain the current District Plan provisions; (ii) increase the maximum permitted height in the Rural 1 Zone; or (iii) increase the maximum permitted height for telecommunications / utility structures in the Rural 1 Zone.

### Issue 4

Should the District Plan encourage water conservation and water efficiency through collection, use and reuse of water and retention and treatment of stormwater?

The need for water conservation and efficient use of water are matters that could be addressed through design requirements in the District Plan, such as a requirement for onsite collection of rainwater for new dwellings to be used for watering lawns and gardens. Likewise onsite retention and treatment of stormwater could be required to reduce the loading on stormwater networks and to assist with compliance with the water quality provisions of the Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan.

The options for addressing this issue are to (i) retain the current District Plan provisions; or (ii) include District Plan provisions encouraging collection, use and reuse of water and the retention and treatment of stormwater.