



ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE - Community Feedback

Issues

- A common theme from the community feedback was the need to provide a more comprehensive policy framework for renewable energy generation at various scales and also for associated transmission and distribution networks.
- Energy efficiency was highlighted as being very important and many people felt that it should be encouraged at all levels as it could play an important role in limiting the need for new generation capacity.
- There was general support for alternative energy options in the future, but this was tempered by recognition that alternatives needed to be managed appropriately.
- The potential for development of Southland's lignite resources was identified as a significant issue in a large number of comments. This was seen as the biggest energy and infrastructure issue facing the province in the foreseeable future and many made the point that planning documents must have adequate provisions to ensure effects on the environment are managed appropriately.
- There was both strong support for lignite development and strong opposition to it.

Options

- There was both support and opposition for a regional energy strategy.
- General support for council lead energy efficiency initiatives and education programmes was received.
- There was also support for councils to take a leadership role on small scale domestic generation.
- The Regional Policy Statement needs to reflect national energy objectives while addressing unique regional opportunities and future regional challenges.

Councils' Commentary

Environment Southland and the Southland District Council recognise the importance of energy resources and infrastructure to our region.

Given the general support for council-led energy efficiency initiatives, it is proposed to bring this through as a priority to the Regional Policy Statement for Southland.

Because of the potential effects of large scale lignite mining and the potential development of additional renewable energy generation in the region, it is proposed to provide some additional guidance around the development of energy resources in both the Regional Policy Statement and the Southland District Plan, the details of which will be developed after further consultation with key stakeholders.

Both councils are supportive of adopting an advocating role for Southland energy needs, in particular around robust electricity distribution networks.

