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Commerce Commission  
44 The Terrace  
Wellington, 6140

By email: [infrastructure.regulation@comcom.govt.nz](mailto:infrastructure.regulation@comcom.govt.nz)

## **Horizon Energy Distribution Limited (Horizon Networks) summary of 2026 stakeholder engagement on 10-year investment plan, relevant to the 2025 Ōpōtiki reopener**

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### **Horizon Networks engagement on its 10-year investment plan**

Between March and May 2026, Horizon Networks undertook a series of stakeholder engagements on its 10-year plan covering the total investment, in particular, significant projects and programmes of work, that Horizon Networks is planning to make over the next decade and the key inputs and drivers that inform the long-term plan. As part of this engagement Horizon Networks discussed the investment it has been making in the Ōpōtiki region, which is the subject of a reopener application.

The engagement utilised a multi-channel approach, combining targeted face-to-face meetings with iwi, councils, businesses and energy retailers, supported by a digital and media campaign<sup>1</sup> aimed at broad community awareness. Technical investment information was translated into plain-language narrative focused on:

- Horizon Networks' role and responsibilities as the local electricity distributor;
- The anticipated drivers and scope of network investment over the next 10 years;
- The long-term value to the Eastern Bay of Plenty community, including resilience and economic development; and
- The estimated pricing impacts of these investment decisions

### **Key themes**

Overall feedback across engagements was positive, with broad recognition that targeted network investment is needed to support the economic growth and development of the region, as well as to maintain a resilient, secure, and reliable network.

Feedback that supported the direction of the 10-year plan included:

- Broad alignment with regional growth aspirations;
- Recognition of the role that reliable and secure electricity supply plays in supporting economic development,
- Acknowledgement of increased network vulnerability to severe weather events;
- Interest in region-specific issues such as new developments and growths; and
- Recognition and support for forward planning;
- Support for the focus on climate resilience within the investment approach.
- Acknowledgement of the critical role that the business plays in supporting the energy transition.

Local councils and other stakeholders also expressed an interest in earlier and more coordinated engagements, better alignment with district planning processes, improved data sharing and strategic collaboration on climate change and adaption projects.

There was broad support for the investment plan including the Ōpōtiki sub-transmission upgrade. While Horizon Networks communicated the costs and impact on consumers, the feedback from stakeholders focused the benefits the investments provide for the Eastern Bay of Plenty region. Some individuals and electricity retailers raised concerns regarding cost-of-

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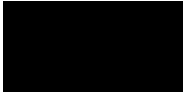
<sup>1</sup> Campaign channels include social media, radio, newspapers, geotargeted advertising, and Horizon Networks website: <https://horizonnetworks.nz/powering-the-eastern-bay/>

living pressures, consumer rate shocks and the need to consider non-network solutions. A small number of individuals expressed the view that these types of upgrades should be funded out of existing revenues.

**Impact on the Ōpōtiki reopener application**

Having considered the feedback, Horizon Networks remains of the view that the Ōpōtiki sub-transmission upgrade, and as a result the Ōpōtiki reopener application is necessary to address forecast capacity constraints and support the long-term interests of consumers in the Eastern Bay of Plenty. While support was not unanimous, the engagement indicates broad support and recognition (particularly among iwi, councils and the business community) that access to reliable and secure electricity supply is a critical enabler of economic development and community resilience in the Ōpōtiki area.

Yours Sincerely



Feng Wu  
General Manager Network



**HORIZON ENERGY DISTRIBUTION LIMITED**