



Report 09.221
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Committee Regulatory Committee
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Regional Council input into city and district council planning

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of Greater Wellington's input into the statutory resource management processes of territorial authorities in the region.

2. Resource Consents

Greater Wellington has received two notified resource consent applications from the region's city and district councils since the last committee report. One submission has been made and a summary of the submission points raised is outlined below. An update on three proposals is also provided below.

2.1 Carterton District Council – Wairarapa Aggregates gravel extraction adjacent to the Waingawa Wetland, Carterton

This land use application is for the extraction of 300,000 cubic metres of gravel from a site adjacent to the Waingawa wetland on the north-western boundary of the Waingawa Industrial Zone.

Greater Wellington's submission covers the Waingawa wetland ecology, geology and hydrology. In particular there was a lack of any assessment of effects on the Waingawa wetland and an inadequate assessment of the geology and hydrology of the site. Greater Wellington opposed the proposal, on the basis that there was insufficient information to determine what adverse effects may impact on the wetland from the activity.

2.2 Carterton District Council - Guinea Trust, forty-two (42) lot coastal subdivision, Flat Point

Regulatory Committee Report 09.15 provided a summary of the aspects raised in Greater Wellington's submission.

On the 18th and 19th of March, Greater Wellington staff attended the hearing which was also attended by many of the local residents and representatives of iwi. However, presentation of our evidence was adjourned to give time to assess the new data which was provided by the applicant on our main area of concern; ground water levels and environmental impacts of the proposed waste water systems. Review of the new data and our evidence is underway.

2.3 Porirua City Council - Thirty one (31) lot subdivision and associated earthworks at the southern end of Endeavour Drive, Whitby ('Silverwood Block')

Regulatory Committee Report 09.15 provided a summary of the aspects raised in Greater Wellington's submission.

On 3 March, 2009, Greater Wellington staff presented planning evidence at the hearing in support of our written submission. At the hearing, we reinforced the matters raised in the original written submission including the preparation and the implementation of a planting strategy and the management of run-off from land uses that contains contaminants to ensure that the natural character associated with Pauatahanui Stream or any nationally threatened species in the waterways is not compromised. These have been reflected in the council decision (issued on 6 April).

3. Designations

Greater Wellington has received a proposal to alter an existing Wellington City Council Designation from the Wellington City Council since the last committee report.

3.1 Wellington City Council – Alteration to Designation (number 134 “proposed new road”)

This designation provides for the construction of a connector road between Westchester Drive and Middleton Road. Greater Wellington made a submission pointing out that access should be provided for the ongoing maintenance of the works in the Greater Wellington's W4 designation (Flood Detention) at Stebbings Valley which adjoins the Wellington City Council's "proposed new road" designation.

We also highlighted that reasonable steps be taken to ensure that all works associated with the construction of the new connector road, including storage of plant and materials are undertaken fully within the new road designation to ensure that the functioning of the W4 (Flood Detention) is not compromised.

4. District Plans

Since the last committee report, Greater Wellington has received one plan change from Kapiti Coast District Council (plan change 64C – Miscellaneous changes), which we did not make a submission on.

An update on Greater Wellington's submissions to previously notified plan changes and ongoing matters is provided below.

4.1 Wellington City Council

4.1.1 Proposed District Plan Change 69 – Amendments to contaminated land provisions

Regulatory Committee Report 09.15 provided a summary of the aspects raised in Greater Wellington's submission.

Greater Wellington made a submission in support of the aim of the plan change which is intended to provide a more flexible regime for managing contaminated land while maintaining a level of control to ensure that any potential adverse environmental effects resulting from the use, development or subdivision of contaminated land are better managed. In particular, we support the proposed policy framework to manage the remediation, use, redevelopment, and subdivision of contaminated and potentially contaminated land.

4.1.2 Draft District Plan Change – Review of Residential Area and Suburban Centre Zones

Following on from several studies, including the Infill Housing Review, the draft Centres Policy, the Johnsonville Town Centre Draft Plan and the draft Adelaide Road Framework, Wellington City Council drafted new district plan chapters for residential and suburban centre areas. The council proposes to identify specific areas for intensification in residential areas and establish a hierarchy of suburban centres to limit activities to those compatible with the existing character and intensity of uses.

Greater Wellington's feedback confirmed consistency of new policies and rules with the proposed Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington region with regard to regional form, urban design, historic heritage, transport, and energy matters. Our feedback suggested that amendments be made to the policies and rules on coastal environment, natural hazards, fresh water, and indigenous ecosystems to better address these resource management issues.

4.1.3 District Plan Change 68 – Ngauranga Forest Rezoning, Homebush Road, Khandallah

On 3 April 2009, Greater Wellington staff presented planning evidence at the hearing in support of our written submission. At the hearing, we reinforced the matters raised in the original submission including the use of a clear policy framework to better protect the significant features of the Wellington landscape and indigenous ecosystems.

Greater Wellington staff reiterated the important point that the plan change process is the most effective means of delivering the key environmental results and that the resource consent process does not provide the level of certainty that these regionally significant matters would get considered at the application stage.

4.2 Kapiti Coast District Council

4.2.1 Proposed District Plan Change 79 – Waikanae North Urban Edge, Low Impact Urban and Eco-Hamlet Areas

Regulatory Committee Report 09.15 provided a summary of the aspects highlighted in Greater Wellington's Written Statement of Evidence which was tabled at the hearing held on 20 January 2009.

On the 19 February the Council adopted the plan change based on the recommendations of the Hearing Commissioners. Many of Greater Wellington's suggested changes to the specific wording of the policy framework are reflected in the decision, in particular the following:

- The use of renewable energy generation systems.
- The integration of stormwater management systems into the landscape to minimise additional storm-water runoff resulting from development.
- The maintenance and enhancement of the ecological health of water bodies, wetlands, and aquatic habitats.
- The use of soft engineering solutions to address the issue of flooding.

Three appeals have been lodged to the Environment court against the Council decision.

4.2.2 Proposed Private District Plan Change 81 – Otaki South Mixed Use Development Area

Regulatory Committee Report 09.15 provided a summary of the aspects highlighted in Greater Wellington's submission. We have since made a further submission in support of the request sought by New Zealand Transport Agency including confirmation that the Transportation Assessment's modelling assumptions and references are based on large scale retail/commercial activities and the inclusion of travel demand management plans as part of the plan change.

4.2.3 Proposed District Plan Change 80–Ngarara Settlement

Regulatory Committee Report 08.718 provided a summary of the aspects highlighted in Greater Wellington's submission.

On 13 March 2009, Greater Wellington staff presented planning evidence at the hearing in support of our written submission. In particular, we reinforced our support for the strengthening of the planning provisions in relation to the use of low impact urban design that achieves energy efficiency, minimises water usage, and reduces the effects of stormwater run-off.

Greater Wellington indicated support for the recognition given to the protection of ecological features, including the regionally significant wetlands of Kawakahia, and indigenous vegetation. We also highlighted that areas in the district that have significant ecological values should be included as an important consideration in formulating a structure plan.

Greater Wellington recommended that further consideration be given to the use of a lower density of development in three proposed neighbourhoods, on the basis that a lower residential density would better protect and manage ecosystems within rural areas. In particular, a lower density would help to minimise the loss of the number and total areas of indigenous forest and sand dune communities in the Wellington region.

4.3 Hutt City Council

4.3.1 Proposed District Plan Change 12 – Amendments to Residential provisions and Financial Contributions chapter

Greater Wellington made a submission in support of the primary objectives of this plan change which seeks to extend the existing Higher Density Residential areas to include residential areas around shopping centres and transport routes and amends the provisions relating to multi unit housing including the introduction of design guides.

Greater Wellington's submission supported the use of a minimum permeable surface area to assist with the sustainable management of stormwater. It was highlighted in our submission that there is a lack of recognition of the importance of connection to and integration with existing facilities and infrastructure, for higher density residential development in the district plan. Greater Wellington therefore sought that this be recognised by the plan change.

Greater Wellington recommended that the issue of hazard associated with building within the Waiwhetu/Awamutu floodplain and other areas susceptible to flood hazard events or stormwater flooding be better recognised. We also expressed our interest in working with Hutt City Council to determine the suitability of the areas identified for higher density residential development.

4.3.2 Hutt City Central Area District Plan Review

This review describes the council's understanding of the issues facing the Central Area and the options to address these through the District Plan.

Greater Wellington supported the intent of the review which sets a platform for the next ten years that will provide direction on how to better manage the Central Area in order to provide opportunities for growth that will benefit the city.

Greater Wellington's submission highlighted that, as the Central Area is directly affected by flooding from the Hutt River, undesirable land use activities adjacent to the river can worsen flood hazard risk. We expressed interest in working in partnership with Hutt City Council to investigate the impact of any proposed development on the Hutt River, to identify any locations where development may interfere with the existing stop banks, and to seek ways to better manage the potential impact of future development adjacent to the river.

4.4 Porirua City Council

4.4.1 Proposed Plan Change 8 – Recreation and Open Spaces Zones

Regulatory Committee Report 08.21 provided a summary of the matters raised in Greater Wellington's submission.

Greater Wellington made two further submissions, in support of the submissions made by Porirua City Council and Transit (New Zealand Transport Agency).

The parts in support include firstly the recommendation by Porirua City Council for a policy framework that gives consideration to the *Inventory of Ecological sites in Porirua City Council – July 2001*, when determining the appropriates of activities, such as the disturbance of vegetation and secondly proposed policy amendment by New Zealand Transport Agency to the need for strategic infrastructure including regionally significant infrastructure.

4.5 Wairarapa

4.5.1 Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan

Regulatory Committee Report 09.15 provided an update on environment court mediation for this Plan.

Greater Wellington is continuing to provide information back to the mediation process and liaises with other divisions of Council to work towards acceptable and practical outcomes for our issues. All parties to the contaminated sites appeal have now reached agreement on the changes.

The district councils, together with Greater Wellington and the Department of Conservation, are compiling statements of significance around those significant waterbodies identified in the proposed district plan. This will then be presented back to all parties to this appeal, which would provide sound reasoning for their inclusion with the intention of resolving this matter.

In regard to the matter of buildings and structures in the foreshore protection area, Greater Wellington has accepted that non-habitable dwellings of a limited height and gross floor area located within this area be made a permitted activity.

In terms of the matters regarding earthworks within the foreshore protection area, the coastal environment management area, outstanding landscapes areas and areas adjacent to significant waterbodies and other waterbodies, a resolution could not be reached at various mediation sessions and therefore these issues are scheduled to be heard by the Environment Court.

5. Other policies and plans

5.1 Hutt City Council – ‘Making Tracks’ a comprehensive ten year plan for managing and developing the Hutt City Council’s track network

Greater Wellington supported the aim of the draft plan which is to encourage an active population by developing tracks for a wide range of people.

The draft plan includes a number of objectives that are consistent with the Regional Parks Network Management Plan and the East Harbour Regional Park Management Plan (2007), as well as complementing the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington region, the Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy and the Regional Walking and Cycling Plans.

Greater Wellington also supported policies which foster inter-agency cooperation. In particular, the collaborative approach to the provision of tracks.

5.2 Porirua City Council - Draft Code of Land Development and Subdivision Engineering

Comments are currently being sought on this new Draft Code of Land Development and Subdivision Engineering. This document sets engineering parameters and standards for subdivisions and other development within the city that relate to all types of land modification; earthworks and significant landscape development. Staff is currently assessing the code and will be providing feedback.

5.3 Wellington City Council – Adelaide Road Framework, Planning for the Future

Regulatory Committee Report 08.840 provided a summary of the points raised in Greater Wellington’s submission. A final Adelaide Road Framework was approved in November 2008. It includes an action plan that outlines how the long-term vision for growth and development will be achieved and allows for coordination and partnership with other organisations. Funding for key actions through the Long Term Council Community Plan process is one of the key focus areas on carrying out the framework’s provisions.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report; and***
2. ***Notes the contents.***

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