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**Committee** Environment Committee  
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## Regional Council input to statutory planning

### 1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of the Greater Wellington Regional Council's input into the statutory resource management processes of territorial authorities in the western part of the Region.

### 2. Overview

#### 2.1 Resource consents

Seven notified resource consent applications have been received since the last Committee Report. Three submissions were made.

##### 2.1.1 Newlands Baptist Church, Wellington City Council

Resource consent was sought by the Newlands Baptist Church for the removal of an existing kennel business and the construction and use of a church facility at 4 Westchester Drive East. The development would occur in two stages. Stage 1 consists of a 350 seat auditorium, auxiliary spaces and the formation of 120 car parks. Stage 2 is a 500 seat auditorium, auxiliary spaces and formation of a further 50 car parks.

Greater Wellington opposed the proposed development due to the adverse effects on the water quality of the Porirua Stream. Greater Wellington's submission sought that conditions be included on the land use consent to appropriately integrate low impact stormwater management techniques into the site design so as to reduce the quantities of sediment and other pollutants entering the Porirua Stream system.

##### 2.1.2 Winstone Aggregates Limited, Hutt City Council

Winstone Aggregates applied for a resource consent to upgrade the Petone Sand Plant. The proposal included the removal and/or repositioning of some existing plant, and the construction and placement of some new parts of equipment further inland to a slightly more elevated area.

Greater Wellington's Flood Protection Department supported the land use consent to upgrade the Petone Sand Plant to achieve:

- The relocation of equipment outside the Hutt River hydraulic line;
- A more efficient and compact gravel extraction operation; and
- The continuation of planned environmental enhancement.

Greater Wellington's Flood Protection Department sought that that the resource consent by Winstone Aggregates is granted.

Greater Wellington staff have been notified that all submissions received on the proposal were in support. A hearing is therefore not necessary and Greater Wellington has withdrawn its right to be heard. A decision on the application is anticipated in the next couple of weeks.

### 2.1.3 Tawanui Properties Limited, Kapiti Coast District Council

Tawanui Properties Limited have applied for a resource consent to create a 10 lot rural subdivision at 186 Sims Road, Te Horo. Nine of the proposed lots vary in size from 1.05 to 1.45 hectares. The balance lot is proposed to be 10 hectares.

Greater Wellington opposed the proposed subdivision due to the impacts on a regionally significant geological feature known as the "Otaki Beach Ridges". The Otaki Beach Ridges are listed in the Table 10 "Outstanding Natural Features, Landforms and Sites of Historic Importance" in Chapter 7 "Coastal Environment" of the Regional Policy Statement. Policy 1 in this Chapter seeks that the values associated with the site be protected. The Ridges are described as:

*Exceedingly localised gravel beach ridges demonstrating the influence of coarse sediment supplied by the Otaki River compared with the rivers further north. Coarse material affects the degree of dune development down the coast. Classified as an extremely well defined landform of scientific/educational value.*

Greater Wellington sought that the application be declined. If, however, the application is granted, Greater Wellington requested that the Kapiti Coast District Council include conditions with the resource consent to ensure that the values associated with the Ridges are appropriately protected.

## 2.2 District Plans

### 2.2.1 Proposed Plan Change 32 "Renewable Energy", Wellington City District Plan

The Wellington City Council notified Proposed Plan Change 32 "Renewable Energy" on 26 May 2004. Submissions closed on 14 July.

Key features of Plan Change 32 “Renewable Energy” are:

- Energy issues such as efficiency, conservation and the use of renewable energy are together identified as a specific resource management issue for Wellington;
- A new definition of ‘Wind Energy Facility’ is added to the Definitions in Chapter 3;
- Policies are introduced into Volume 1 to encourage energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy in the Residential Area, Suburban Centres, Institutional Precincts, Airport and Golf Course Recreational Precinct, Central Area and Rural Area; and
- New objectives, policies and rules are introduced (new Chapters 25 and 26) to establish an additional planning framework for assessing applications involving renewable energy on a Citywide basis, and specific rules for anemometers (wind measurement devices) and wind energy facilities in the Rural and Open Space B areas.

Greater Wellington made a submission in support of the proposed Plan Change, but sought minor amendments to the definition of “Wind Farm Facility” and some minor amendments to Chapter 25 to better recognise the national and regional policy framework. Proposed Plan Change 32 gives effect to the policy direction in Chapter 12 “Energy” in the Regional Policy Statement.

#### 2.2.2 Proposed Plan Change 33 “Ridgelines and Hilltops (Visual Amenity) & Rural Area”, Wellington City District Plan

The Wellington City Council notified Proposed Plan Changes 33 “Ridgelines and Hilltops (Visual Amenity) & Rural Area” on 26 May 2004. Submissions closed on 14 July.

Key features of Plan Change 33 “Ridgelines and Hilltops (Visual Amenity) & Rural Area” are:

- The definition of “Ridgelines and Hilltops” in Chapter 3 of the District Plan is amended to refer to “identified Ridgelines and Hilltops”. These are shown as an overlay on the planning maps.
- Changes to the policies and rules (particularly the assessment criteria for assessing resource consent applications) within the Residential, Rural, Open Space, Conservation Site and Utilities Chapters to support the intent to manage the visual effects of activities on identified ridgelines and hilltops;
- Changes to the introduction, policies and explanations in Chapter 14 (Rural Area) to clarify the intent in relation to rural subdivision and land use activities. A specific policy is introduced to demonstrate that the Council intends to manage the rate of subdivision in the rural area to

minimise land fragmentation. A policy in relation to esplanade land is also added;

- The introduction of a Rural Area Design Guide into Volume 2 (Design Guides) of the District Plan.
- A number of changes to the rules in Chapter 15 (Rural Area Rules) of the District Plan. The main changes relate to the provisions for subdivisions, and residential buildings and associated accessory buildings and residential structures. Of these the most significant changes are as follows:
  - provision is made for boundary adjustments as a Controlled Activity;
  - changes to the subdivision rules provide for a limited rate of subdivision across most of the rural area as a Discretionary Activity (Unrestricted);
  - some specific areas on the edge of the urban area that are zoned rural have been identified for higher density subdivision as a Discretionary Activity (Unrestricted);
  - new residential buildings and alterations and additions that create large dwellings require resource consent for a Discretionary Activity (Restricted); and
  - all subdivisions and residential buildings, and associated accessory buildings and residential structures, that require a resource consent will be assessed against the Rural Area Design Guide.
- Other changes to Chapter 15 relate to the provisions for site access and parking; accessory buildings and structures associated with rural activities; residential buildings and associated accessory buildings and residential structures on allotments under 1200m<sup>2</sup> in area in Makara Beach and Makara Village; management of residential buildings in a Hazard (Fault Line and Flooding) Area; septic tanks; proximity to high voltage transmission lines; factory farming; esplanade areas; earthworks; and non-notification and service.

Greater Wellington supported, in part, the inclusions of the proposed Rural Design Guide, and additional assessment criteria in a number of rules in relation to:

- Hazard (Flooding) Areas;
- Hazard (Fault Line) Areas; and
- Septic tanks.

Greater Wellington sought that the Rural Design Guide more effectively address:

- Natural Features, Ecosystems and Habitats;
- Planting; and
- Stormwater Management.

Greater Wellington sought minor amendments to the new assessment criteria relating to septic tanks to ensure consistency with Greater Wellington's "Guidelines for on-site sewage systems in the Wellington Region".

Greater Wellington opposed new Rule 15.4.6 "Any subdivision of land in Appendices 4,5,6 & 7" and the following policies setting policy direction for the management of the identified Ridgelines and Hilltops:

- Policy 4.2.5.2 in the Residential Area;
- Policy 14.2.2.2 and 14.2.5.2 in the Rural Area; and
- Policy 16.5.2.2 in the Open Space zone.

Greater Wellington expressed a concern about the proposed management regime for the rural areas identified in appendices 4, 5, 6 & 7 (Attachment 1 shows the location of the sites in appendices 4, 5, 6 & 7). Rule 15.4.6 modifies the management of subdivision for the sites identified in the appendices from non-complying activities, when subdivided below 50ha, to discretionary activities with no restriction on lot sizes or number of lots. Greater Wellington expressed concern that an assessment of potential impacts on water quality in rivers, streams and the Harbour, significant indigenous vegetation and ecosystems, had not been adequately undertaken. Greater Wellington sought that Rule 15.4.6 be deleted.

Greater Wellington also expressed concern over the proposed changes to the policies in the Residential Area, Rural Area and Open Space Zone in relation to the identified Hilltops and Ridgelines. The policy change includes limiting the scope of the policies from "landscape values" to "visual amenity".

Greater Wellington's submission noted that the identified Ridgelines and Hilltops can also be valued, not just for how they look, but also as natural and physical resources with intrinsic landform or features. Greater Wellington expressed particular concern that the proposed amendments excluded values associated with ridgelines and hilltops such as recreational values.

Greater Wellington sought that where identified Ridgelines or Hilltops are also regionally outstanding landscapes, that the policies appropriately reflect the protection of the "landscape values" in accordance with Part II of the Resource Management Act and the Regional Policy Statement. To assist with determining where the identified Ridgelines and Hilltops are also regionally outstanding landscapes, Greater Wellington provided a map showing the sites identified during the development of the proposed Regional Landscape Plan.

### **3. Communication**

The matters referred to in this report are part of an on-going statutory process, and these processes are the appropriate way of communicating the relevant information.

### **4. Recommendations**

*It is recommended that the Committee*

- 1. receive the report; and*
- 2. note the contents.*

Report prepared by:

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Attachment 1: Rule 15.4.6 sites