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Committee Wellington Regional Strategy Committee
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 Regional Strategy

Wellington region urban design initiatives and action plan

1. Purpose

To provide an overview of one of the “Good Regional Form” projects that is being led by the Wellington Regional Strategy office – Regional Urban Design, and to seek endorsement of the “Wellington regional urban design action plan and stocktake 2009”.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act (LGA) 2002.

3. Background

The Wellington Regional Strategy document identifies that investment in good regional form is fundamental to successful and sustainable economic growth of the Wellington region.

Good urban design is important to the success of the regional focus areas identified in the strategy.

Good urban design in its broadest context is significant to all of the “good regional form” projects identified in the WRS including:

- centres – retail
- industrial land
- intensification
- rural residential development
- affordable housing

- integration of landuse and transport needs
- open space

The main Wellington Regional Strategy actions on urban design are:

3.1 All councils are signed up to the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol (NZUDP)

- All but two councils are signed up. The WRS office and Ministry for the Environment have been working with both South Wairarapa District Council and Masterton District Council to support them as they consider signing up to the protocol.

3.2 The development and implementation of a regional action plan for urban design

- Led by WRS office and urban design working group

3.3 Review of subdivision design guides

- Kapiti Coast District Council is leading this project (to be presented to the WRS Committee in October 2009).

The Proposed Wellington Regional Policy Statement 2009(RPS) identifies poor urban design as a regionally significant issue.

“Poor quality urban design can adversely affect public health, social equity, land values, the vibrancy of local centres and economies, and the provision of, and access to, civic services. It can also increase the use of non-renewable resources and vehicle emissions in the region.”

Objective 21 of the Proposed RPS recognises the importance of compact, well designed and sustainable regional form. Policy 53 recognises the importance of good regional urban design and seeks that the region’s urban design principles are considered when designing developments, including infrastructure.

4. Urban design working group and SORT¹ workshop

An urban design working group was set up to assist with the WRS actions. This group is being led by the Wellington Regional Strategy office. Members of this group have a particular interest in urban design within their own councils and there are also some university and central government partners.

A Wellington Regional Strategy SORT workshop was held on 19 August 2008 with the purpose of:

¹ SORT = Senior Officers Resource Team

- Discussing how we best proceed with a regional approach to urban design
- To share information on how councils are addressing and adopting urban design principles
- To understand the constraints that councils are facing in addressing and adopting urban design principles
- To confirm the SORT Urban Design working group's initial assessment of urban design issues across the region

The option of a regional peer review panel was discussed at the SORT workshop, however it was decided not to proceed at this stage. This will be further investigated.

The outcome of this workshop was to prepare a draft regional urban design action plan.

The SORT team endorsed the draft action plan and stocktake at their 14 April 2009 meeting, and the Chief Executives' Group endorsed the draft action plan and stocktake at their 24 April 2009 meeting.

5. Regional urban design action plan

The regional urban design action plan 2009 was produced through collaboration by the local authorities in the region (Greater Wellington Regional Council, Wellington City, Hutt City, Upper Hutt City, Porirua City, Kapiti Coast District, South Wairarapa District, Carterton District, and Masterton District Councils) and in liaison with Ministry of the Environment and Victoria University Wellington. The action plan is in **Attachment 1**.

Actions, milestones and responsibilities have been allocated in the regional urban design action plan covering the following areas:

- New Zealand urban design protocol
- education / training
- urban design information hub
- best practice
- register of urban design practitioners
- peer review panel
- subdivision design guidelines review
- annual regional urban design summit

The regional urban design action plan 2009 will be implemented through voluntary participation of the partner organisations named above.

The WRS Committee will be responsible for the implementation of this plan through the coordination of the Wellington regional urban design working group.

The regional urban design action plan will become operative on the date that the Wellington Regional Strategy Committee adopts the plan.

The regional urban design action plan will be reviewed by the regional urban design working group on an annual basis and updated accordingly, in conjunction with the outcomes of an annual regional urban design summit.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report***
3. ***Adopts the Wellington regional urban design action plan and stocktake 2009.***

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Attachment 1: Wellington Regional urban design action plan and stocktake