



Report 07.233
Date 23 April 2007
File X/08/05/01

Committee Regional Land Transport Committee
Author Tami Woods
Project Manager - Regional Policy Statement Review

Regional Policy Statement review

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) review and the “regional form” and “energy” components that relate to the Regional Land Transport Strategy.

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 2002.

3. Background - Regional Policy Statement review

Regional Policy Statements (RPS) are required by the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and are prepared and reviewed by regional councils. The statutory purpose of the RPS is to achieve integrated and sustainable management of the region’s natural and physical resources. It does this by identifying the significant resource management issues of the region, the objectives to be achieved to address those issues, the policies that describe the courses of action to be taken to achieve the objectives, and the methods that describe what will be done to implement the policies.

Regional and district plans are required to **give effect** to the RPS, while the Regional Land Transport Strategy must **not be inconsistent** with the RPS. When resource consent applications and notices of requirements are considered by local authorities, they must **have regard to** the objectives, policies and methods of the RPS.

Greater Wellington began the review of the current Regional Policy Statement, as required by the RMA, at the beginning of 2005. The first stage of the review was to prepare our state of the environment report *Measuring up, 2005* which reported on the extent to which the objectives in the RPS had been achieved since it was adopted in 1995. *Measuring up, 2005* was published in December

2005. In May 2006, we released a discussion document *Our region – their future* seeking comment on the issues that the RPS should address, and how, in the next RPS.

Using the results of *Measuring up, 2005* and feedback from *Our region – their future* objectives, policies and methods for the next RPS have been developed. The draft objectives, policies and methods prepared to date address the topic areas of fresh water, ecosystems, energy, soils, minerals, waste, public access (to the coast and waterways), coastal environment, natural hazards, landscape, historic heritage, iwi and regional form.

In preparing objectives, policies and methods, Greater Wellington has worked closely with city and district council staff through a number of different forums. Greater Wellington will also continue to work with city and district council staff on the development of content. There has also been continued discussion between Greater Wellington staff preparing the Regional Policy Statement and those working on the RLTS.

At this stage it is anticipated that the RPS will then be ready for public notification in September 2007.

4. Regional Policy Statement and the Regional Land Transport Strategy

A number of topic areas covered by the RPS have a direct relationship with the Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS). Two key topics are “regional form” and “energy”.

4.1 Regional Form

In 2006 a working group of Greater Wellington and city and district council staff was established to look at the Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS) “Investment in good regional form” focus area and assess what would be appropriate to reflect in the RPS. The working group members comprised members of WRS Project Executive Group or their delegates.

In developing the draft objectives, policies and methods for the RPS, staff involved in the workshops have tried to find an appropriate balance between reflecting the intent of the WRS “Investment in good regional form” into resource management policy for the region, while recognising that specific decision making and implementation needs to be left to city and district councils. Considerable effort was also made to integrate this with the Regional Land Transport Strategy.

The resulting “Regional form” draft objectives, policies and methods strongly reflect the Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS) focus area “Investment in good regional form”. These themes include a strong CDB and regional centres, quality urban design, integration of transport with urban and rural needs, land for business growth, housing close to work and transport, affordable housing, rural lifestyle, open spaces and change areas.

Policies of particular relevance to the RLTS include:

- that the RLTS promote consistency with a set of “regional” urban design principles for upgrades to existing, and development of new, infrastructure;
- that district plans encourage higher density development at key centres and public transport nodes;
- that resource management decisions recognise the WRS “change areas”, including the proposed transport link between Grenada to Gracefield and the need to integrate land use with the proposed Transmission Gully Motorway; and
- the need for district plans to recognise the social and economic benefits of regionally significant infrastructure, including the Strategic Transport Network defined in the RLTS, and provide for efficient operation, maintenance and upgrade of this infrastructure.

4.2 Energy

The draft objectives, policies and methods on energy focus on three particular aspects where the RPS is considered to have a particular role in achieving energy management outcomes. This topic also considers greenhouse gas emissions from the generation and use of energy. The three aspects are renewable energy promotion, transport energy use and CO₂ emissions, and energy efficient subdivision design.

The policies on transport energy use and CO₂ emissions seek that the RLTS include objectives, policies and outcomes, etc, that recognise the need to reduce the consumption of non-renewable transport fuels and the emission of CO₂ from transportation. The RPS also requires particular regard to be given to the use of travel demand management mechanisms. Both district plans and the RLTS are identified as key mechanisms to advance the use of travel demand management mechanisms.

5. Communications

External communication on draft content of the Regional Policy Statement will occur between 1 June and 6 July 2007 in accordance with the RPS review communication plan. This includes a second RPS review newsletter which will summarise of the draft objectives, policies and methods that have been developed. Full copies will be available on Greater Wellington's website. Greater Wellington will also visit each city and district council in the region, along with other interested parties, to discuss and gather feedback on the draft content.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that that the Committee:

1. **Receive the report; and**
2. **Note the contents.**

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Report approved by:

Tami Woods
Project Manager – regional
Policy Statement Review

Nigel Corry
Divisional Manager,
Environment Management

Jane Davis
Divisional Manager Transport
Policy & Strategy

Attachment 1: Regional form draft provisions for the Regional Policy Statement
Attachment 2: Energy draft provisions for the Regional Policy Statement