

SUBMISSION ON PUBLICLY NOTIFIED REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT

Clause 6 of First Schedule, and Section 79 of the Resource Management Act 1991

To: Proposed Regional Policy Statement
Greater Wellington Regional Council
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1. Name of submitter:

Westfield (New Zealand) Limited ("Westfield").

2. This is a submission on the following proposed Regional Policy Statement:

Proposed Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington region, 2009 ("PRPS").

3. This submission relates to all of the PRPS.

4. General Submission and Relief Sought

4.1 The PRPS is generally supported by Westfield, particularly insofar as it promotes:

(a) Integrated planning between the territorial authorities within the Region.

(b) The efficient use of existing investment and infrastructure.

(c) The vibrancy and viability of regionally significant centres.

4.2 Westfield specifically supports the following provisions:

(a) Issues Section 3.3, pg 28-29, Objective 10 and Policies 6 and 7

Appropriate recognition is afforded to the fact that infrastructure, including the transport network, is a significant physical resource and enables communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing and health and safety. The corollary is also appropriately

recognised: infrastructure must be protected from the adverse effects of incompatible land uses.

(b) Issues Section 3.9, pg 57, 2nd Paragraph

Westfield supports the second paragraph's recognition that regionally significant centres are *'fundamental to a compact and well designed regional form'*.

(c) Issues Section 3.9, pg 57, 5th Paragraph

Westfield supports the 5th paragraph's recognition that growth pressures in parts of the region are resulting in a loss of compact form, transport efficiency and the ability of some centres to grow.

(d) Objective 10, Table 3, pg 31, Policy 6, pg 83 and Policy 7, pg 84

Westfield supports Objective 10 which seeks recognition and protection of regionally significant infrastructure, and the related Policies 6 and 7.

(e) Non regulatory methods 41 and 42

Westfield supports the development of visions for the regionally significant centres and principles to manage the location of retail activities. It is important that the vision and principles relating to these resources are refined through consultation involving key stakeholders.

4.3 Westfield seeks that the PRPS be approved as notified, subject to the specific amendments sought below.

5. Specific Submissions and Relief Sought

5.1 Although the PRPS is generally supported, in some instances greater direction and clarity could better secure the PRPS' objectives. The specific provisions, reasons for the submission, and amendments sought are addressed in turn below. Additions to the notified provisions are underlined and deletions are in strike-through.

5.2 Issues Section 2.3, pg 9-10, “Community Outcomes”

(a) Reasons for Submission

In order to achieve the goals of a prosperous community it is agreed that the strength and growth of the economy should be promoted along with the attraction and retention of a skilled workforce. Those goals are both assisted by promoting the vibrancy and viability of the Region's business and retail centres.

(b) Relief Sought

Community outcomes should be amended to include an additional sentence as follows (or words to like effect):

‘Prosperous community- all members of our community prosper from a strong and growing economy. A thriving business sector attracts and retains a skilled and productive workforce’. Existing centres of business and retail activity are sustained or enhanced.

5.3 Issues Section 2.5, pg 12, 5th Bullet Point

(a) Reasons for Submission

The fifth bullet point promotes an integrated and cross-boundary approach to managing resource consent applications where sites or effects cross district boundaries.

(b) Relief Sought

Westfield supports recognition of this issue, but recommends a minor amendment to change ‘and’ to ‘and/or’.

5.4 Section 3.9, pg 57, Introductory Paragraph

(a) Reasons for Submission

The introductory paragraph describes the benefits of a compact and well designed Regional form. Reference to the benefits of the use and development of existing centres of business activity would be

appropriate. Where business activities sprawl or locate in a haphazard fashion those benefits are lost.

(b) Relief Sought

A further sentence added to the introductory paragraph as follows (or words to like effect):

"Encouraging use and development of existing centres of business activity can also lead to social and economic benefits."

5.5 Section 3.9, pg 57, Second Paragraph

(a) Reasons for Submission

The second paragraph refers to the central business district for the region and the regionally significant centres. The text identifies 'the potential to support new development and increase the range and diversity of activities' in these locations. Such a statement should be qualified with reference to the regional demands for such development and the importance of sustaining existing centres and ensuring their continued viability and vibrancy.

(b) Relief Sought

Further wording added to the second paragraph as follows (or words to like effect):

"They also have the potential to support new development and increase the range and diversity of activities, where such development does not affect the viability and vibrancy of other centres in the Region."

5.6 Issues Section 3.9, pg 58, Issue 2(e)

(a) Reasons for Submission

Issue 2(e) provides that uncoordinated and sporadic development (including infrastructure) can adversely affect the region's compact form and can result in new infrastructure encouraging development in locations that undermine existing centres and industrial employment areas. Westfield supports recognition of this issue, but notes that it is

not new infrastructure that is usually the driver for inappropriate development (i.e. infrastructure usually follows development approval), and it is not only *industrial* employment areas that can be undermined as a result. Recognition should be given to this issue in wider terms.

(b) Relief Sought

Issue 2, '*sporadic and uncoordinated development*', should be amended to read (or words to like effect):

"(e) ~~new infrastructure that can encourage~~ development in locations that undermine existing centres and industrial employment areas."

5.7 Objective 21, Table 9, pg 59

(a) Reasons for Submission

- (i) Westfield supports the objective of a well designed and sustainable urban form. However, the proposed wording of Objective 21 potentially over emphasises the role of the transport network by placing it in the head paragraph, diminishing the objectives identified in the subparagraphs below. Westfield submits that the overall objective should simply be a "*well designed and sustainable urban form*", and that the other objectives should all be given equal emphasis.
- (ii) Westfield supports the tenor of Objective 21(b) but seeks to amend it in two ways. First, it is appropriate that the viability of regionally significant centres is promoted in order to ensure a compact, well designed and sustainable urban form. To this end Objective 21(b) should be amended to bring it in line with Objective 21(a) in relation to the Wellington CBD. Objective 21(d) should recognise existing centres and employment areas as part of the urban form. Second, it should be made clear that activities "*around*" regionally significant centres should support rather than detract from those centres.

(b) Relief Sought

Objective 21 should be amended as follows (or words to like effect):

"Objective 21

*A compact, well designed and sustainable regional form that has:
~~an integrated, safe and responsive transport network and:~~*

(aa) an integrated, safe and responsive transport network;

(a) a viable and vibrant regional central business district in Wellington city;

(b) regionally significant centres² which are viable and are supported by an increased range and diversity of activities in and around the regionally significant centres²;

(c) sufficient industrial-based employment locations or capacity to meet the region's needs;

(d) urban development in existing urban areas, or when beyond urban areas, development that reinforces the region's existing urban form including existing centres and employment areas;

(e) strategically planned rural development;

(f) a range of housing (including affordable housing);

(g) integrated public open spaces;

(h) integrated land use and transportation;

(i) improved east-west transport linkages; and

(j) efficient use of existing infrastructure (including transport network infrastructure"

5.8 Policy 29, pg 97

(a) Reasons for Submission

- (i) The title of Policy 29 refers to maintaining and enhancing the viability and vibrancy of regional centres, which Westfield strongly supports. However, the descriptive component of the Policy focuses on "*encouraging a range of land use activities*" as the only means of maintaining and enhancing the viability and vibrancy of centres. As the viability and vibrancy of regional centres are affected by a wider range of positive and negative factors, it would be appropriate to distinguish the desire to

“encourage a range of land use activities” from the desire to *“maintain and enhance the viability and vibrancy of centres”*. These should be presented as separate limbs of the Policy.

- (ii) Further to the above, in addition to noting the factors that contribute positively to the viability and vibrancy of regional centres, the explanatory text should be amended to recognise that negative external factors (such as out of centre development, sporadic or sprawling retail development, poor transport connectivity and so forth) can detract from the viability and vibrancy of regional centres.
- (iii) The Policy of *“encouraging a range of land use activities”* should be further refined so that it does not work against the overarching aim of promoting the viability and vibrancy of regional centres. Only *complementary* land use activities should be enabled, rather than encouraged, around regional centres.
- (iv) Westfield strongly supports the statement in the explanatory text that when maintaining and enhancing the regionally significant centres within a district, councils also need to consider the viability and vibrancy of the regionally significant centres outside their district. Wording to this effect should also be included within the body of Policy 29.
- (v) A minor amendment is also sought to reduce the PRPS’ reliance on the WRS (due to its non-statutory status).

(b) Relief Sought

Policy 29 should be amended as follows (or words to like effect):

“Policy 29: Maintaining and enhancing the viability and vibrancy of regionally significant centres – district plans

District plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods that:
encourage a range of land use activities

- *maintain and enhance the viability and vibrancy of the regionally significant centres; and*

- enable a range of complementary land use activities in and around regionally significant centres.

When implementing this policy for centres within their district, councils shall consider the viability and vibrancy of the regionally significant centres outside their district.

Regionally significant centres include the regional central business district in Wellington city and the following centres of regional significance:

(a) Upper Hutt city centre;

(b) Lower Hutt city centre...

(h) Johnsonville.

...Explanation

The region's central business district in Wellington city and the centres of regional significance identified in policy 29 were identified in the Wellington Regional Strategy as regionally significant centres for are of regional significance and the Wellington Regional Strategy has reiterated their importance in respect of economic development, transport movement, and civic and community investment.

The Wellington central business district is the regional central business district, with 73,000 people working there each day. The regionally significant centres are the civic centres of Upper Hutt city centre, Lower Hutt city centre, Porirua city centre, Paraparaumu town centre, Masterton town centre, and other major centres of Petone, Kilbirnie and Johnsonville. Maintaining and enhancing the viability and vibrancy of these centres is important in order to encourage investment and development that supports an increased range and diversity of activities. It is also important for their prosperity and resilience in the face of social and economic change. Accordingly, policy 29 requires the policies, rules and/or methods within district plans to respond to the positive and negative factors which can affect the viability and vibrancy of centres.

The range of appropriate land uses to be encouraged enabled through this policy will vary depending on the character and context of each centre. For this reason, policy 29 requires the region's district and city councils to determine the range of land uses to be encouraged enabled in order to maintain and enhance the viability and vibrancy of the relevant centre managed through its district plan. However, when maintaining and enhancing the regionally significant centres within a district, councils also need to consider the viability and vibrancy of the regionally significant centres outside their district."

5.9 Policy 30, pg 97-98

(a) Reasons for Submission

Westfield supports Policy 30 generally, but seeks that the explanation to the Policy express a general preference for higher density and mixed use development to occur at regionally significant centres. This preference will assist to maintain a compact, well designed urban form.

(b) Relief Sought

The explanation to Policy 30 should be amended to read as follows (or words to like effect):

"Key centres include the regionally significant centres identified in policy 29, as well as other significant local centres that a city or district council considers are integral to the functioning of the region's or a district's form. Generally, regionally significant centres are preferred for higher density and mixed use development, given their importance in respect of economic development, transport movement, and civic and community investment."

5.10 Policy 54, pg 118-119

(a) Reasons for Submission

- (i) Policy 54 requires consideration of particular matters where urban development is proposed beyond the region's urban area. Westfield especially supports the reference in Policy 54(a) to Objective 21. It is recommended that Policy 54(a) could be strengthened by expressly requiring that the most appropriate way to achieve Objective 21 be considered within the regional context.
- (ii) Unlike Policy 54(a), Policy 54(b) ends with an "and/or" phrase. This may lead to some confusion as to how Policies 54 (a), (b) and (c) are to be considered. Westfield seeks the deletion of the word "or" so that it is clear that (a), (b) and (c) should all be considered.

- (iii) The 5th paragraph of the explanation to Policy 54 (page 119) refers to related Policies in the PRPS that set out matters to be considered in order to manage effects on natural resources. It would be appropriate to also refer to the management of physical resources, as per section 5 of the Resource Management Act 1991.

(b) Relief Sought

- (i) Policy 54(a) should be amended by adding the words 'for the region' to the end.
- (ii) Policy 54(b) should be amended by deleting the reference to 'or' at the end of the sentence.
- (iii) The explanation to Policy 54 should be amended in the fifth paragraph starting '*Policies 53 and 55...*' to add the following words at the end of the last sentence: '*...on natural and physical resources*'.

5.11 Policy 56, pg 120

(a) Reasons for Submission

Policy 56 is concerned with integrating land use and transportation. It would be appropriate and consistent for the PRPS to promote connectivity between subdivision, use and development and key centres of employment or retail activity.

(b) Relief Sought

Policy 56(b) should be amended to read:

- '(b) *connectivity with, or provision of access to, public services or activities, key centres of employment or retail activity, open spaces, or recreational areas*'.

5.12 Policy 57, pg 121

(a) Reasons for Submission

Correction of typographical error.

(b) Relief Sought

The first sentence of the explanation to Policy 57 should read ‘...
decisions have a direct bearing upon...’.

5.13 Policy 58, pg 121

(a) Reasons for Submission

Policy 58 requires that “*when considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation, or a replacement to a district plan, for subdivision, use or development, particular regard shall be given to the management goals for the Regional Focus Areas described in the Wellington Regional Strategy*”. Whilst Westfield has no particular difficulty with the general direction for the Regional Focus Areas advanced in the Wellington Regional Strategy (“WRS”), if the management goals are to be referenced within policies within the PRPS, they should be defined specifically. The management goals contained within the descriptive text of pages 36-37 of the WRS are non-specific and generalised. This is reflected in section 4.4.11 of the section 32 assessment for the PRPS which acknowledges that “*the WRS does not clearly spell out what the required management should be [for the Regional Focus Areas]*”. Furthermore, the WRS itself notes on page 36 that: “*Decisions on the specifics for each [Regional Focus Area] will be the outcome of public processes under the Resource Management and Local Government Acts. In each case these will be informed by principles under the N.Z. Urban Design Protocol*”. In the absence of specific and clearly defined goals for the Regional Focus Areas within the body of Policy 58, this policy should be deleted.

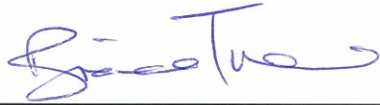
(b) Relief Sought

Policy 58 should be deleted.

6. Further Relief Sought

6.1 Such further and/or consequential relief as may be necessary to fully give effect to the general and specific relief sought in this submission.

7. Westfield wishes to be heard in support of this submission.



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