

**Environmental Reference Group Meeting**  
**12 June 2006**  
**Minutes**

**Present:**

Councillor Celia Wade-Brown (Chair)  
Debbie Firestone  
Liz Hibbs  
Chris Horne  
Ian Hunter  
Tushara Kodikara  
Stephen Sargent  
Ian Shearer  
Nicola Shorten (GWRC)

**Apologies:**

Ralph Chapman  
Mike Ennis  
Jennie Francke  
Dave Kettell  
Fiona McNamara  
Ruth Paul  
Charity Stuart

**WCC Officers:**

Amber Bill (Open Space Planning)  
Jim Ebenhoh (Strategic Advisor)  
Jack Morris (Treaty Relations)  
Mike Oates (Parks and Gardens)

**Introductions**

New members Liz Hibbs and Stephen Sargent introduced themselves to the group. Liz is a screenprinter studying environmental science, and Stephen is an architect working for BRANZ. The rest of the group introduced themselves and their backgrounds.

**Update on 16 May Report-Back to Council**

Jim, Ian Hunter, and Debbie summarised their experience reporting back to Councillors on 16 May. They agreed it was a worthwhile exercise, and that Councillors seemed appreciative of the work of the ERG.

**Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan Review**

Amber Bill (WCC Open Space and Recreation Planning) said that the Plan was developed in 1996, and that submissions close on the review document on 23 June. It will be a 10-year-plan, and it will build on the more recent frameworks of the Outer Green Belt Management Plan and the Environmental Strategy. It proposes that Otari will be a National Plant Museum.

Comments from the group included:

- Ian H said that pest control needs to be increased to protect specimens, and pointed out potential conflict between use and protection.
- Tushara asked how *tangata whenua* are involved, and Jack Morris (WCC Treaty Relations) explained how that involvement is occurring.

- Chris suggested that areas should be added to the north and northeast, and Amber said decisions on additions need to take account of the role of those land areas.
- Ian S suggested that tracks could link Otari through Trelissick Park to the Kaiwharawhara outlet. He also said innovative solutions are needed to add warmth to the existing public buildings at Otari.

### **Biodiversity Action Plan**

Amber gave a brief update on the Action Plan. The first meeting of the Steering Group was held, including ten Council and non-Council representatives. The next meeting will be 27 June. Chris and Jennie are the ERG's representatives on the Steering Group.

### **Open Space Access (Tracks) Implementation Plan**

Amber briefly summarised that this plan is being developed to implement the 2004 Open Space Access Plan, which the ERG was involved in.

### **Review of Subdivision Design Guide and Code of Practice for Land Devt.**

Jim told the group that the Subdivision Design Guide (SDG) is being reviewed as part of a set of District Plan changes to implement the Northern Growth Framework in greenfield areas north of Churton Park and Newlands. The draft revised SDG will be released for public comment in August after Council approval. A parallel review is occurring of the Code of Practice for Land Development (CoPLD), which provides detailed design specifications and engineering criteria for various types of infrastructure.

Jim explained that both these documents have important implications for environmental issues such as landscape/landform (via earthworks), streams, bush and other vegetation, and walking / cycling options.

Jim asked for comments from the group. These comments included the following:

- Debbie suggested that developers be given a hint on energy issues, and that adequate lot sizes should be provided to encourage composting. She also suggested the promotion of on-site stormwater treatment / retention and greywater re-use.
- Tushara mentioned construction waste, building design to minimise energy use, and whether extra storeys could be prevented on buildings.
- Stephen suggested that the District Plan (including the SDG) could be more onerous than the Building Code, contrary to some members' understanding. He said that natural ventilation and acoustics are pressing building issues for Wellington. He also said the requirements for turning circles should be looked at.
- Ian H said enforceability is the problem, and that Council has to demonstrate political will.
- Councillor Wade-Brown agreed that Councillors need to know what's in these documents. She also highlighted the important of structure plans for large

greenfield sites, to identify areas for development and protection, roading and infrastructure networks, etc.

Jim said some of these issues are about buildings themselves, not just subdivision and infrastructure, so these will be incorporated into the Sustainable Building Guidelines that WCC will be producing by June 2007.

In addition, the Department of Building and Housing is reviewing the Building Code and has just released a discussion document, which can be found at <http://www.building.govt.nz/publish/subjects/code/bcreview-news.php>. Submissions close 31 August.

### **Other issues**

Tushara said that the Victoria University Student Environmental Association is having an environmental week 17-21 July.

### **Next Meeting**

The group discussed potential topics for the next meeting, and agreed to meet on Monday, 31 July, from 5:30-7:30 pm at the WCC offices at 101 Wakefield Street (Committee Room Two, Ground Floor).