

Item 6

Note from the following Section 274 Parties to the appeal

1. Brooklyn Residents Association
2. Friends of Owhiro Stream
3. Southern Environmental Association

4. Trevor Bradley
5. Geoff Melvin
6. Bob Waters

We commend the approach taken by Wellington City Council Planners as a means of finding negotiated settlement between all parties to the appeal. However, we still have strong concerns about the ability of proposed draft Plan Change and Outer Residential zoning provisions to provide the certainty required under the RMA for the city and the local community. We would be unable to support the proposed plan change in its current form. The following points summarise our concerns.

1. **Strategically senseless time for changing the District Plan:** Why is the appellant pursuing this appeal at this stage? The original applicant (Lance James, Brooklyn Properties Ltd) has on-sold; the present developer is in receivership and the properties are currently on the market. They include the unfinished 282 Ohiro Road project – an environmental disaster, an eyesore for the suburb and an embarrassment for all parties. The receiver has control of only 40% (not contiguous) of the area for which the plan change is sought.
2. **Draft plan change ignores the Council's original decision:** The council's 2004 decision on DPC 30 was detailed and rational. An observation was made that some increase in housing density was likely in the future and considered guidelines were outline, providing a framework for future development. These guidelines have been largely ignored in the current draft.
3. **Land is too steep and ecologically important for intensive development:** The land is exceptionally steep. It contains advanced regeneration and recognised ecological corridors for the southern suburbs. Birdlife is proliferating. The Owhiro Stream is one of the city's most important remaining streams, on which restoration is supported by WCC and GWRC. All these ecological values would be threatened by residential development.
4. **Current rural zoning is appropriate:** The block of land and runs for nearly 1 km up Ohiro Road. The nature of the land is a visual amenity enjoyed by thousands of residents, visitors and commuters each week. Over 400 houses overlook the block and the whole community treasures the outlook of hills, bush and stream. The current rural zoning allows 1 dwelling per block, and has enabled vegetation to flourish, creating this important amenity. Council studies indicate that only a low intensification of residential development would be compatible with the District Plan.
5. **Any change requires very careful control and strategic process guided by concept plan:** Residential development on the site would have to be of limited scope. For example:
 - Requires some certainty over final density of development
 - Significant areas are too steep for any earthworks and must be left in native bush.
 - Buffer strips on all streams required
 - Roading to council standards will be a major constraint
 - Likewise traffic density at key Brooklyn and Willis Street intersections
 - Requires control over scale and control of cuts and fills, runoff and impermeable surfaces
 - Requires provisions for open space and good urban form

Although the current draft has made some advances over the original entirely inadequate proposals, it does not give Council or the community anything like the degree of certainty over environmental outcomes that they require.