

2. OUTER GREEN BELT DEFINITION

2.1 THE OUTER GREEN BELT CONCEPT AREA

This Plan defines an Outer Green Belt concept area. This is the proposed extent of the geographical feature we call the Outer Green Belt and includes both private and public lands.

The following principles or criteria support the vision and help define the actual extent of the Outer Green Belt concept. The resource information upon which these criteria are based is contained in Section 3 of the Plan.

- *Landscape and landform:* To recognise and protect natural landscape and landform characteristics of the ridge system on the western side of the city.
- *Indigenous ecosystems and important ecological features:* To recognise and protect indigenous ecosystems and important ecological features, and in particular the streams and significant areas of indigenous vegetation from which a more continuous band of vegetation will grow.
- *Recreational places and linkages:* To identify and protect important existing or potential recreational sites and linkages (entrance points, tracks, routes and destinations).
- *Cultural and historic places:* To recognise and protect important cultural and historic places and features identified within the Outer Green Belt.
- *Urban environment edge:* To provide a western edge to the urban environment and a buffer of mainly open lands between the city's urban areas and the rural areas of Makara and Ohariu valleys.
- *Continuity and integrity:* To achieve continuity and integrity in the definition and management of the Outer Green Belt.

The following statements indicate how these objectives were interpreted in defining the proposed concept area boundary. The key statements, in terms of mapping criteria, are in boxes.

2.1.1 LANDSCAPE AND LANDFORM

The Outer Green Belt is dominated by a ridgetop and hilltop environment and the continuous (apart from a break at South Karori Road) ridgeline is the main unifying feature. The concept area will reflect the analysis and mapping of ridgetop and hilltop values in the *Wellington Ridgetops and Hilltops* report⁶, and its subsequent refinement. Part of the aim of that report was to help the Council and the community identify the specific areas having ridgetop and hilltop values across the city.

⁶ Boffa Miskell 2001 (1)

The western extent of the Outer Green Belt concept is derived largely from this landscape analysis, whereas the eastern extent reflects a greater mix of values and influences.

Criteria:

All parts of the ridge system to the immediate west of the city that are within the ridgetop – hilltop values area derived from the Ridgetops and Hilltops report 2001 (and subsequent analysis) will be included in the Outer Green Belt concept area.

2.1.2 INDIGENOUS ECOSYSTEMS AND IMPORTANT ECOLOGICAL FEATURES

Indigenous ecosystems and important ecological features containing relatively high biodiversity, already exist within parts of the concept area. In particular, bush remnants and natural stream courses within or directly contiguous to the main ridgeline are included in the concept area. Bush remnants in Wellington City were identified in a Wellington City Council-funded study by Geoff Park in 1999⁷. They are defined as either primary remnants or secondary remnants (Refer Section 3.2.2 for more information).

Criteria:

Significant contiguous indigenous ecosystems and important ecological features or areas (including bush remnants and streams) that are not within the ridgetop and hilltop landscape area, but are likely to be key elements in achieving future ecological linkages, will be included in the Outer Green Belt concept area.

2.1.3 RECREATIONAL PLACES AND LINKAGES

Generally the important recreational sites and linkages that are associated with the Outer Green Belt will be encompassed by larger areas of landscape or ecological significance. However there will be instances at the periphery, particularly some existing entrance areas, which must be encompassed within the concept.

Criteria:

Significant recreational sites and linkages that are not within areas established by other criteria, but that are, or are likely to be key elements in facilitating the use of the Outer Green Belt, or for establishing the community's connection to the Outer Green Belt, will be included in the Outer Green Belt concept area.

2.1.4 CULTURAL AND HISTORIC PLACES

Cultural and historic values permeate the landscapes of the Outer Green Belt but are also found in particular places, some of which, despite being at the periphery of the Outer Green Belt, are important to its integrity.

Criteria:

Significant cultural and historic sites, access or features, associated and contiguous with the Outer Green Belt environment will be included in the Outer Green Belt concept area.

⁷ Park, G. E. 1999

2.1.5 URBAN ENVIRONMENT EDGE

An important function of the Outer Green Belt is helping define the extent of the urban environment and providing a buffer between the urban and rural parts of the city. A number of parcels of private land between the main ridge and the city are zoned Rural. The proposed concept line either encompasses all or part of these areas, according to their physical location and the values they contain (criteria 2.1.1 - 2.1.4). In making this determination, the location of nearby urban boundaries is taken into account.

Some areas of undeveloped Outer Residential land may be identified as having values associated with the Outer Green Belt. Some of these areas may become part of the Outer Green Belt as reserve contributions or as the result of other agreements.

Criteria:

Privately owned land zoned Outer Residential will be excluded from the concept unless the location, site and access values clearly make this unreasonable. Areas currently zoned Rural on the eastern side of the main ridge will be included or excluded according to their values and the relationships with adjoining open and built areas.

Defining the western edge of the built environment does not imply zero growth or intensification within the rural area but, if this happens, then maintaining the integrity of the western side of the Outer Green Belt will become increasingly important.

2.1.6 CONTINUITY AND INTEGRITY

Council property boundaries

In some cases the concept area boundary follows existing Wellington City Council property boundaries - simply because it would be illogical to leave out small pieces of land where most of the area fits properly within the concept.

Northern limits

Capital Spaces identifies Colonial Knob (part of Porirua City) as the logical northern extent of the Outer Green Belt. However, this Plan will only deal directly with Wellington City lands, and the northern limit of the Plan's coverage will be the common territorial boundary within Spicer Forest. Integration of the concept either side of the territorial boundary is being discussed with Porirua City Council.

Southern limits

In *Capital Spaces* the Outer Green Belt ends where the *Wild Coast* concept begins - at the top of the coastal escarpment. This is the basis for the southern limit of the concept as defined in this Plan. However, the catchments of Hape Stream (Spooky Gully) and Waipapa Stream (also known as Te Kopahau Stream) which flow directly to the South Coast, are managed under the *South Coast Management Plan*, 2002.

Best fit

In applying the above criteria, there are instances where, in some places, further adjustment seems logical in order to achieve the best overall fit, shape or meaningful width. Further adjustments of this type are anticipated during implementation of this Plan.