

PDP HEARING STREAM 5 – Summary notes - John Tiley

1. It is my contention that Wellington residents need the city's ridgelines to remain untouched by housing development. The ridgelines are an extraordinary and valuable asset for everyone, bringing a sense of community and mental release. Few other cities in NZ have the opportunity to use a ridgeline landscape for the public good. The PDP provisions should have due regard for the benefits and leave a legacy for future generations, building on the vision of those who created the Town Belt.
2. The PDP should have regard for other Council plans, respecting the value placed on ridgelines and hilltops by Council planners. As an example, the Suburban Reserves Management Plan (2015) states: **“Many of the significant landscape features that characterise Wellington City are largely undeveloped (often but not always held as public reserve) such as the ridgelines and hilltops,etc.”** These “significant landscape features” should remain protected by the PDP.
3. Placing houses on ridgelines gives such a small gain in numbers it is difficult to accept that the NPS intended such development to be permitted. Such houses would most likely be without reasonable access to public transport.
4. By not being named in the PDP, Marshall Ridge has been treated differently to other city ridgelines. That omission should be remedied to give this ridgeline protection by name, noting that:
 - The present District Plan, Vol 3, map 57, shows Marshall Ridge front and centre, and designates the side slope areas of visual significance.
 - The amendment shown in the Hearing 5 document Appendix A, SUB-P17 refers to ridgelines around Upper Stebbings Valley but is silent on those around Stebbings Valley, which include Marshall Ridge. I propose revised wording that should omit the word “Upper”, and add “Marshall Ridge”, to give a consistent approach for the entire ridgeline.
 - To achieve effective ridgeline protection, the wording in SUB-P17 should also be amended to provide for inclusion of slopes immediately adjacent to a ridgeline in a manner that assures unimpeded views of the ridgeline from adjacent communities.
 - WCC wind mapping classifies part of Marshall Ridge as an extreme wind zone. Would placing houses there be compatible with NPS provisions?
5. The Northern Reserves Management Plan (2008) references the District Plan, stating the District Plan has been prepared in accordance with the RMA and is based on seven principles of sustainability. These include:
 - Irreversibility: some actions can result in permanent loss of species, landforms and heritage
 - A precautionary approach should be taken where there is uncertainty and potential for significant harm.

I wish to put to the Commissioners that the WCC commitment to those principles remains in place and, if there is any doubt whether the NPS allows or permits development on ridgelines, then any decision should be made in accordance with those established principles.

6. Referring now to the two photographs with my notes:

- Photo 1 shows Marshall Ridge, viewed from the SW, as a prominent landscape feature.
- Photo 2, looking east, shows the contrast between Marshall Ridge and the housing dominating the ridgeline at Woodridge.

(Photos taken from a new WCC track, 2 mins walk up from Erlestoke Crescent, Churton Park, between Nos. 52 and 60)

Site Visit?

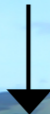
Photo 1 - JRT

Marshall Ridge



Photo 2 - JRT

Marshall Ridge



Woodridge

