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17 April 2015

Upper Hutt City Council
Private Bag 907
UPPER HUTT

Submission to Upper Hutt City Council on the proposed Plan Change 40 Wallaceville from Forest and Bird Upper Hutt branch, 17 April 2015

We refer to the proposed Plan Change 40 Wallaceville notified in the UH Leader, and published on the UHCC web site at <http://consultation.upperhuttcity.com/plan-changes/private-plan-change-40/>.

This private Plan Change was submitted to UHCC by Harrison Grierson Consultants Limited on behalf of Wallaceville Developments Limited (WDL). The change has been accepted by UHCC for public notification and possible District Plan change. Submissions are due by 17 April 2015.

Forest and Bird cannot gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission.

We wish to be heard in support of this submission.

This submission is on behalf of the Upper Hutt branch of Forest & Bird. Our branch of over 300 members has existed for many decades and is consistently active in protecting the native flora and fauna of Upper Hutt. Much of our activity has been and continues to be restoring bush near our waterways and pest control in forest remnants. However, as housing developments in Upper Hutt start to encroach on our zoned open spaces we are becoming more active in protecting these for future generations so they can enjoy what we have taken for granted up to now.

Yours faithfully



Pat van Berkel

On behalf of the Forest & Bird Upper Hutt branch committee

Contact person: Kathryn Hicks, Secretary, Upper Hutt Forest and Bird (contact details at top)

Submission from Forest & Bird Upper Hutt, April 2015

We note the following:

1. Upper Hutt has a wonderful natural environment with the Hutt River, forested hills and lifestyle rural properties. Vision and Effort are needed to keep these amenities. Appropriate planning decisions need to be made. One of the planning decisions is for Upper Hutt main valley to move to higher density housing.
2. So we are generally supportive of the subdivision (on the north side of Alexander Road) subject to the comments made in this submission. The subdivision is near the city centre, near two railway stations, and is medium-density housing.
3. There is confusion in the Proposed Plan Change as it refers to the zoning south of Alexander Road as being Rural Hill (20ha min size) in the Public Notification but Rural Lifestyle (1ha min size) on the Structure Plan.

The UHCC Xplorer web-based system shows the hill land as Residential Hill and the flat triangle as Rural Lifestyle but when clicking on either lands they are both "Rural Life" which presumably is Rural Lifestyle. The planning maps *u36.pdf* and *u37.pdf* (downloaded from the UHCC web page for the District Plan 2004) show the zoning as Rural Lifestyle.

The Public Notification is wrong. Wallaceville Developments Limited does not appear to own any Rural Hill land.

This is most confusing and unfortunate as it is the land south of Alexander Road that is central to our submission.

Our submission is that *(Please state in summary the nature of your submission. Clearly indicate whether you support or oppose the specific provisions or wish to have amendments made, giving reasons. Please use additional sheets if necessary.)* :

1. With increasing densification, the population of Upper Hutt will grow. If it grows at a rate of 1% per annum it will double from 40,000 residents now to 80,000 residents by about 2090. (Note that population projections for Upper Hutt are uncertain. This rate of population increase may vary up or down in which case the year our population doubles may be different.) However, an eventual doubling of population means that our 55 parks and reserves will change from an average 700 people per park/reserve to 1400 people unless more open space is added. Of course, beyond 2090 the pressure on our parks and reserves will continue to grow.
2. Furthermore, because of densification, the unavailability of green space on individual properties (ie, their lawns and garden) will mean the people will seek parks and reserves more than they do now, so the park/reserve visits per person will rise as people compensate for the lack of green space in their own property.
3. Forest and Bird have proposed to UHCC the establishment of a protected Town Green Belt around the main valley of Upper Hutt. This was presented to a Council meeting in Dec 2013, and at a workshop to councillors in March 2015. It is also part of our April 2015 submission to the UHCC Long Term Plan 2015 – 2025. See that submission for a full description and the many benefits of the Belt. Two key reasons for the Green Belt are in points 1 and 2 above.

4. The proposed Green Belt includes the Wallaceville Hills and consequently it is essential that the Green Belt be recognised in this proposed Plan Change.
5. Specifically, the land south of Alexander Road that is owned by Wallaceville Developments Limited, needs to be recognised as a key part of the Green Belt, and protection assigned accordingly. Putting this land into housing will significantly affect the visual outlook of the 700+ medium-density-housing dwellers who will constantly view the Ward St spur and forest.
6. **The land south of Alexander Road that is owned by Wallaceville Developments Limited (currently zoned Rural Lifestyle) should be changed to Open Space.**
It would adversely affect the character of this prominent spur and nearby forest for even a single house to be built on it.
7. This Open Space includes the triangle of grassed wetland south of Alexander Road.
The grassed area is a wetland that is a receptacle for colluvial wash in major storms (as noted in the Geotech report from WDL). From time to time the streams will disgorge shingle, stones and rocks into the grassed areas. There is a constant risk of repeat outfalls of rocks in severe storms. The area is very wet and would provide a challenge to any development.
8. The proposed Structure Plan states that UHCC has said a reserve contribution is not necessary from WDL because they are contributing the two covenanted areas. This is a mistake. These “reserve contributions” already existed prior to WDL purchasing the land, so they have not been contributed by WDL. They were contributed by the former landowners, Agresearch, in a covenant to DOC.
9. For such a significant development (700+ homes) there needs to be a corresponding significant reserve contribution. **Forest & Bird seek that WDL provide all the WDL land south of Alexander Road to UHCC as reserve contribution.** Fortunately the area of the grassed triangle is only 1.4ha and so can only hold one house (under the minimum 1ha lot size in Rural Lifestyle) so it is of little value to WDL. It would be an eyesore to have any housing on this small pocket of land, let alone medium-density housing.
This land should be contributed to the UH City Council and made into a scenic and conservation reserve. The forest includes maturing pockets of indigenous forest providing a seed source for the rest of the forest. It includes maturing kahikatea and beech trees. (See the attached letter from the QE2 National Trust.)
The pines on the land can be removed and allowed to revert to native forest. This spur and adjacent forest will provide a welcome visual counterpoint to the major housing area and the nearby expanding industrial estate. The land is adjacent to Rural Hill land that has potential to be part of the Green Belt. This adjacent land has mature rata that is rare so close to a city and needs the buffer of a protected reserve between it and Alexander Road and houses.
10. **UHCC receive the land south of Alexander Road as reserve contribution from WDL, protect it (eg, as Scenic reserve), and recognise it as part of the protected Town Green Belt of Upper Hutt.** In time UHCC should re-establish the wetland in the triangular grassed area.
11. **We support the notification by WDL of 43 trees as notable trees** (in the chapter “Rules for Notable Trees”) but we ask that this list be checked to ensure it is complete and that every totara tree is protected.

12. We seek that **sustainable housing be a cornerstone of the development** and the precincts be built with the following:
- a. Grey water (from showers and washing machines) is collected in 2,000+ litres tanks – and used in toilets and gardens
 - b. Harvest and hold 10,000+ litres of rainwater – used in toilets (if no grey water left), gardens, washing machines, showers and even drinking (if use a first flush diverter)
 - c. Compost toilets
 - d. Solar hot water
 - e. Renewable electricity generation (eg, solar PV panels and residential wind turbines)
 - f. 15A wiring in garages (for electric vehicle charging)
 - g. Store heat from the sun, eg, black block walls that absorb solar heat during the day and release during the evening
 - h. Shared composting and recycling facilities
 - i. Hydraulically neutral (with respect to water runoff) – harvest rainwater, soak excess rainwater onsite, and further excess water is managed locally eg, through swales, etc. Subdivision is hydraulically neutral.
13. Turn the drainage system into a stream through the subdivision
14. We do not support a path through Grants Bush as it is a conservation area that will be damaged by people going through it
15. Provide for a cat free zone within 1000m of Grants bush, as otherwise they will roam into the bush and kill the birds.