

Spatial Planning

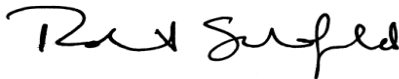


Opportunities and Options for Metropolitan Wellington
Prepared for the Local Government Commission

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|---------|--|
| GWRC | Greater Wellington Regional Council |
| GW | Greater Wellington |
| HCC | Hutt City Council |
| KCDC | Kāpiti Coast District Council |
| LGC | Local Government Commission |
| LGA | Local Government Act 2002 |
| LG(AC)A | Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009 |
| LTMA | Land Transport Management Act 2003 |
| MFE | Ministry for the Environment |
| NZTA | NZ Transport Agency |
| PCC | Porirua City Council |
| RMA | Resource Management Act 1991 |
| TLA | Territorial Local Authority |
| UHCC | Upper Hutt City Council |
| WCC | Wellington City Council |



Executive Summary

The Local Government Commission (LGC) is currently considering the potential for spatial planning to help address current and projected opportunities and challenges for metropolitan Wellington¹.

This report provides a high level overview of the advantages and disadvantages that a spatial plan could have for the region, and the challenges and opportunities for developing one. It also identifies and examines a range of options for preparing and implementing a Wellington metropolitan spatial plan.

The information in this report is intended to inform discussions between the LGC and local authorities in the Wellington metropolitan region on potential options to promote more integrated planning. The report is a high level overview, drawing on feedback from the Councils, as well as from a review of the experience of spatial planning elsewhere in New Zealand. Reflecting the requirements set out in the Terms of Reference it excludes a detailed examination of the costs and benefits of spatial planning along with any specific recommendations about the way forward.

It is also important to stress that this report should not be considered in isolation from the other workstreams in which the Commission is currently engaged, in collaboration with the Wellington councils, to identify opportunities to address the common challenges facing the region. In particular, there are strong synergies between spatial planning and the management of transportation.

In preparing this report, a series of structured interviews were conducted with representatives of the metropolitan local authorities, the NZ Transport Agency and Horowhenua District Council, to explore the merits of spatial planning for the region along with the perceived challenges and opportunities. Following issue of a draft report and presentations made to each of the councils on its findings, the feedback received from the councils helped to inform the content of this final report.

For the purposes of the report, spatial planning is taken to mean the following:

A 20–30 year strategy that sets the strategic direction for a community to form the basis for the co-ordination of decision-making, infrastructure, services and investment. It is a means of aligning other council plans, as well as providing a visual illustration of the intended future location, form and mix of residential, rural and business areas, along with the critical transport and infrastructure required to service those areas and any relevant environmental constraints (for example, natural hazards).²

A spatial plan would provide an overarching strategic plan that clearly lays out how and where metropolitan Wellington is expected to grow over the medium-term, the location and form of future development (including within existing urban areas), the transportation networks, infrastructure and community facilities needed to facilitate such growth. Such a plan would be based on integrated regional modelling and forecasting, with input from a range of government agencies, stakeholders and the wider community.

The Auckland [Spatial] Plan is the only statutorily mandated spatial plan in New Zealand to date, required as part of the establishment of the Auckland Council. However, many other local authorities (from Dunedin to Whangarei) have prepared urban growth related plans at the scale of a single district

¹ 'Metropolitan Wellington' refers collectively to the cities of Wellington, Porirua, Hutt, and Upper Hutt, along with Kāpiti Coast District, as well as the Greater Wellington Regional Council in respect of its functions within those areas. This report does not include the Wairarapa as the LGC is running a separate parallel process in that part of the region.

² Adapted from the Ministry for the Environment report *Building Competitive Cities: Reform of the Urban and Infrastructure Planning System - A Discussion Document*, p.72, 2010.



under the aegis of the LGA as a means of ensuring an integrated approach to the planning of, and investment in, the provision for urban growth and infrastructure development.

Importantly, there are also examples of collaborative metropolitan spatial planning exercises involving regional and territorial local authorities, Iwi, NZTA and other partners: Western Bay of Plenty's SmartGrowth³ and Waikato's Future Proof (now the Waikato Plan)⁴, for instance, represent initiatives that have been undertaken to plan for growth in and around Tauranga and Hamilton cities. These examples provide valuable insight into how local authorities can work together to develop and implement a well-integrated spatial plan.

Wellington is unique within New Zealand in having its metropolitan urban area administered by five territorial local authorities. Each of these councils currently undertakes district-scale planning that incorporates elements of spatial planning to varying degrees, including development frameworks, urban development plans, urban growth strategies and similar planning instruments⁵. However, uncertainty exists as to whether these plans represent component parts of an overall 'spatial plan', or are in effect 'competitive strategies' as they are usually prepared without reference to the planning undertaken by other councils in the region.

Furthermore, there has usually been limited government engagement in developing these plans, and they tend to have a relatively low profile within the community and business sectors compared with the larger collaborative planning exercises undertaken elsewhere in New Zealand. While district growth planning addresses local roading and accessibility issues, they have little influence on regional transportation requirements, reactively responding to initiatives as they arise rather than acting as a key input to their development. The major roading projects underway or proposed in the region have significant implications for growth, matters which ideally should be addressed at the regional level. Similarly, there is no clear collective position on the overall supply and affordability of housing and no deliberate, co-ordinated regional response to the issue has been evident: this will need to change if the proposed new function to the Regional Council's responsibilities under the Resource Management Act comes into effect⁶.

While a number of collaborative planning exercises have recently been taken by the councils, the development of a metropolitan spatial plan would require a significantly higher level of collaboration, as well as resolution and resourcing. It would also require significant commitment of council funding to its long-term implementation.

The interviews undertaken for this study elicited valuable information about the opportunities for spatial planning in the region. While there was no consensus on the exact process that could be followed, generally there was support for a spatial plan to be developed for the Region. However, it was commonly recognised that there are some major challenges to establishing and pursuing a collaborative process, including issues around funding and representation, the resolution of disputes and overlaps, and on how to integrate existing local growth strategies without the loss of local autonomy.

Some of the key points arising from the feedback include:

³ Involving Tauranga City, Western Bay of Plenty, Environment Bay of Plenty and Tangata Whenua

⁴ Involving Hamilton City, Waipa District, Waikato District, and Environment Waikato, as well as Tangata Whenua, the NZTA and Matamata-Piako District Council

⁵ A list of current strategies and plans within metropolitan Wellington is provided in Appendix 1

⁶ Clause 11, Resource Legislation Amendment Bill, 2015



- Support for a spatial plan spanned a spectrum of views, from strong opinions about it being crucial through to those who considered that the 'value proposition' for a spatial plan needs to be demonstrated so that the greatest benefit to the region can be achieved
- A metropolitan spatial plan would ensure a more integrated approach to urban land use and infrastructure and transport planning in the region
- A metropolitan spatial plan was seen as a way of developing a collective coherent vision for the region, which would shape the various actions and activities undertaken by the councils, individually and collaboratively
- Preparing a spatial plan would clearly demonstrate a collaborative approach to the region's common issues, and would provide a process by which central government, iwi and stakeholders could be involved in establishing regional priorities and investment strategies
- Given the absence of significant growth pressures in the region, the 'value proposition' for a spatial plan needs to be demonstrated so that the greatest benefit to the region can be achieved
- There is no clear consensus regarding the funding and governance of a spatial planning process, whether it should be completely independently undertaken by a separate agency (including decision-making powers) or be fully governed by the local authorities involved

Some of the benefits identified in having a metropolitan spatial plan were that it would:

- Draw together a single shared future of the region, with a statement of common aspirations under a single vision (such as Auckland's *Most Liveable City by 2040*)
- Provide for the future urban growth of the region in a way that could recognise the ability of the region to provide for a wide range of residential lifestyles and community environments, including areas for intensification and greenfields development
- Identify and drive forward regional infrastructure and transport network projects
- Present a collective understanding and approach to natural hazard management
- Assist in providing economic development opportunities for the whole region, thus avoiding leakages to other regions

However, in contrast to these benefits some of the challenges cited included:

- A lack of a decision-making forum that everyone is comfortable participating in, agreeing to and abiding by
- No clear political leadership to unify local support around the development of a spatial plan for the region
- The need to establish an accepted forum and process for addressing the trade-offs and issues involved in developing a spatial plan across local authority boundaries – for example, the timing and provision of greenfields urban growth and regional facilities
- The complexity of the interface between a spatial plan and statutory plans prepared under the RMA, LTMA and LGA, and the risk of inconsistent implementation through these statutory instruments
- The lack of agreed funding or governance arrangements.



Since the commencement of this study, the Resource Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 has been introduced into Parliament, which would, among the many proposed amendments, introduce a new RMA function for regional and territorial local authorities, requiring them to establish, implement, and review “objectives, policies, and methods to ensure that there is sufficient development capacity in relation to residential and business land to meet the expected long-term demands of the [region][district]”. While the Wellington metropolitan territorial local authorities appear well placed to fulfil this function, if this amendment is enacted there would be significant added benefit in proactively establishing a collaborative spatial planning process to satisfy these obligations, particularly at a regional level.

In the absence of a legislative mandate and agenda for developing a spatial plan for Wellington, there is an opportunity to develop a ‘bespoke’ framework that acknowledges and addresses the particular challenges, requirements and conditions of the region. Developing this framework would require a process of negotiation, co-operation, and a commitment to explore options and make necessary concessions.

To advance spatial planning in metropolitan Wellington, there is a range of options that could be considered, from the ‘do minimum’ to a fully resourced major planning exercise. Some of the options include the following:

- Prepare a Wellington metropolitan spatial plan (‘metro plan’), through a separate agency or organisation, based on a formal agreement between the councils or mandated through statute (for example, by seeking an amendment to the LGA), or
- Prepare a ‘composite growth plan’ through a joint planning exercise (such as that used to prepare the Combined Wairarapa District Plan), drawing on a stocktake of existing growth plans, and negotiating any areas of duplication or necessary trade-offs, with the component parts of the plan remaining the responsibility of the relevant Territorial Local Authority to implement. This exercise would inform the development of better integrated spatial plans for each territorial local authority, or
- Compile a ‘stocktake’ spatial plan drawing on the existing 23 strategies, frameworks, policies and plans within the region, to reveal the shape and nature of the current ‘disaggregated’ spatial plan. This exercise could be used to determine the ‘value proposition’ of developing a full metropolitan spatial plan.

It would be important to scope and agree on the matters that a spatial plan would address, as this would influence the costs and complexity of its production.

In terms of resourcing the development of a spatial plan, use of existing in-house council planning resources was not generally favoured, as all Councils have significant current commitments in their own programmes and initiatives. Some form of dedicated resourcing to prepare a spatial plan would therefore be needed, particularly if the plan were to be prepared within the short timeframe that was generally seen as preferable (for example, 2 years).

There is also a range of options to establish the necessary governance and delivery framework required to develop and implement a metro plan. It would be important to investigate the costs and benefits of these options, in conjunction with the form of potential decision-making arrangements.

The relationship with potential options for transport management in the region also would need to be recognised.

Some of the options to advance a metropolitan spatial plan are:



- Wellington Metropolitan Spatial Planning Committee – comprising representatives of the contributing local authorities, with an independent chair, and possibly other independently appointed members with technical skills and experience.
- Wellington Metropolitan Spatial Planning Advisory Body – a separate but not large body dedicated to the function of preparing and overseeing the metropolitan spatial plan, with experts to assist and advise on the development of the plan.
- Wellington Metropolitan Spatial Planning Agency – a separate body, formed under statute (LGA amendment), with prescribed powers and functions, that would prepare and oversee the implementation of the metro plan, and its interface with the transport, RMA and local government planning policies and strategies in the region.

In conclusion, without a legislative mandate, the challenges to preparing a metropolitan spatial plan on a voluntary-basis would appear to impose a formidable and almost insurmountable barrier. Under such circumstances it is unlikely that plan development could constructively proceed unless a set of fair processes and procedures are agreed and locked in from the beginning, and a formal, collective commitment is made to ensuring that the process is adequately resourced and managed and the resultant plan implemented.

However, there appears to be general support in principal amongst the constituent councils to explore the opportunities and potential benefits that could be derived from developing a spatial plan for metropolitan Wellington, particularly given the synergies associated with the complementary area of regional transportation.



1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Local Government Commission (LGC) is currently considering the potential for spatial planning to help address current and projected opportunities and challenges for metropolitan Wellington⁷.

To assist in this task the LGC engaged Boffa Miskell Ltd (BML) to analyse, at a high level, and report on the possible role that spatial planning could assume in the region, including:

- The challenges and opportunities that spatial planning would address for metropolitan Wellington
- The advantages and disadvantages of spatial planning for metropolitan Wellington
- Options for the processes, roles and mechanisms that might be necessary to enable a spatial plan to be developed
- Options for implementing a spatial plan effectively across multiple local authorities
- Whether there are alternatives to a spatial plan that would achieve the same or similar outcomes.

The corresponding report is intended to be used to inform discussions between LGC and the Wellington councils on potential options to develop and implement a spatial plan for the Wellington metropolitan region. Reflecting the requirements set out in the Terms of Reference, it excludes a detailed examination of the costs and benefits of spatial planning along with any specific recommendations concerning the way forward. The report also does not include the Wairarapa as the LGC is running a separate parallel process for that part of the region.

1.2 Methodology

Preparation of this report was underpinned by two key inputs: background research and feedback from key stakeholders. The research undertaken for this report involved the identification and examination of spatial planning approaches applied elsewhere around the country (for example, Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Waikato), along with the scope and scale of growth/urban related policies and strategies currently operative within metropolitan Wellington. The information derived from this analysis was subsequently used to inform an assessment of the following considerations relating to the introduction of spatial planning to the region:

- Challenges and opportunities
- Relative advantages and disadvantages
- Processes, roles and mechanisms to facilitate plan development
- Regionally specific issues and constraints
- Implementation options, including their respective pros and cons
- Alternative methods to achieve the same or similar outcomes.

⁷ This includes the cities of Wellington, Porirua, Hutt, and Upper Hutt, along with Kāpiti Coast District.



In parallel with the research and analysis undertaken, structured interviews were also conducted with representatives of the following organisations to explore the merits of spatial planning to the region⁸:

- Greater Wellington Regional Council
- Kāpiti Coast District Council
- Lower Hutt City Council
- NZ Transport Agency
- Porirua City Council
- Upper Hutt City Council
- Wellington City Council.

In addition, an interview was also held with the Chief Executive and several staff of the Horowhenua District Council.

⁸ Council representatives interviewed generally included the Mayor/Chairperson and the Chief Executive Officer of each metropolitan local authority, as well as, in some instances, senior managers and planners. For one interview, the Chair of the Policy and Regulatory Committee deputised for the Mayor, who was unavailable.



2 What is Spatial Planning?

2.1 Definition

For the purposes of this report, spatial planning is taken to mean the following:

A 20–30 year strategy that sets the strategic direction for a community to form the basis for the co-ordination of decision-making, infrastructure, services and investment. It is a means of aligning other council plans, as well as providing a visual illustration of the intended future location, form and mix of residential, rural and business areas, along with the critical transport and infrastructure required to service those areas and any relevant environmental constraints (for example, natural hazards).⁹

In broad terms, spatial planning can be summarised as the ‘practice of place-shaping and delivery’¹⁰, one that is generally:¹¹

- Multi-party – a tool for collaboration between the key decision-makers
- Focussed on the long term development of cities and regions and improving investment certainty
- A guide to the location and timing of future infrastructure, services and investment that can be used to provide for the co-location of infrastructure where this is appropriate
- Evidence based
- Integrated across sectors – by example, transport, land use, housing, education, funding policy and regulatory policy – to achieve broad outcomes (economic, social, environmental and cultural)
- Strategic – provides direction to regional funding policy, regulation and other implementation plans (by example transport, economic development)

At the minimum, spatial planning can simply focus on the provision for growth in a city or region, but ideally a spatial plan must be multi-dimensional, and integrate the various components for developing and enhancing a region. Thus, a number of strategies can emanate from a spatial plan: economic, social, environmental, or urban growth.

Typically, spatial planning involves a collaborative process and is not solely centred on land use or prescriptive regulation. As such, it offers a useful mechanism whereby higher level, strategic direction can be articulated to inform and align lower level implementation plans (for example, district plans), and which enables better integration between land use and infrastructure investment planning to be achieved. Spatial planning represents a mechanism by which agreement is reached on the key investment decisions required by a range of agencies and organisations across multiple legal mandates (notably LGA, LTMA and RMA). A spatial plan should therefore direct or at least inform the planning of all agencies involved in the growth of a region.

⁹ Adapted from MfE (2010), Building Competitive Cities: Reform of the Urban and Infrastructure Planning System - A Discussion Document, p.72

¹⁰ UCL & Deloitte (2007), Shaping and Delivering Tomorrow’s Places: Effective Practice in Spatial Planning - Report, findings and recommendations, p.11

¹¹ MfE (2010), Building Competitive Cities: Reform of the Urban and Infrastructure Planning System - a Discussion Document, p.23



2.2 What are the key benefits?

The value of spatial planning have been explored by a number of New Zealand organisations recently including the NZ Productivity Commission, the Ministry for the Environment and the New Zealand Council for Infrastructure Development¹².

Fundamentally, the underlying value of spatial planning is reflected in the range of benefits it is capable of delivering through the creation of more stable and predictable conditions for investment and development and the promotion of more judicious use of land and infrastructure for development. Some of the primary benefits include:¹³

Economic

- Providing more stability, certainty and confidence for investment through improved understanding of what types of investment are required, where and when
- Identifying land in appropriate locations to meet the need for economic development
- Ensuring that land for development is well placed in relation to the transport network and the labour force
- Identifying development that meets the needs of local communities
- Promoting regeneration and renewal
- Making decisions in a more efficient and consistent way.

Social

- Providing a common understanding of the needs of the local communities in social policy development
- Improving accessibility when considering the location of new development
- Supporting the provision of local facilities where they are lacking
- Promoting the re-use of vacant and derelict land, particularly where it has a negative impact on quality of life and economic development potential.

Environmental

- Promoting regeneration and the appropriate use of land, buildings and infrastructure
- Promoting more compact urban form through the use of previously developed (“brownfield”) land and more optimal development on “greenfield” land
- Conserving important environmental, historic and cultural resources

¹² New Zealand Productivity Commission (2015), *Using Land for Housing and Better Urban Planning: Issues Paper*; Ministry for the Environment (2009) *Spatial Planning Options for the Auckland Council* CAB Min (09) 10/1; New Zealand Council for Infrastructure Development (2015), *Integrated Governance and Delivery: A Proposal for Local Government and Planning Law Reform*

¹³ Economic Commission for Europe (2008), *Spatial Planning - Key Instrument for Development and Effective Governance*, p.2



- Addressing potential environmental risks (e.g. flooding, seismic events) and improving resilience
- Protecting and enhancing areas for recreation and natural heritage
- Promoting access to developments by all modes of transport
- Encouraging energy efficiency in the layout and design of development.

Transportation

- Involving all parties involved in the transportation planning for a region and getting cross-party agreement
- Identifying the key priorities and timing for transportation investment and development
- Integrating the planning for all transport modes on a regional basis

These benefits were recognised in recent comments made by the New Zealand Productivity Commission where it noted, in relation to spatial planning in New Zealand, that:

There are obvious benefits in having a central strategic plan that clearly lays out how and where the city is expected to grow over the medium-term, how much land and development capacity will be required, the types and costs of infrastructure that will be needed to facilitate growth, and the transport investments that will need to be made.¹⁴

The Commission further exhorts the benefits of spatial planning in two of its most recent Issues Papers¹⁵.

Other benefits

There are also a number of other interrelated benefits derived from regional spatial planning:

- **Visibility** – large-scale regional spatial planning exercises tend to be more visible, media attractive processes, than smaller scale growth planning processes
- **Significance** – the scale and importance of regional spatial planning enhances its profile and impact within a region
- **Participation** – regional spatial planning is likely to encourage greater participation and engagement, not only from the community generally but also from key stakeholders with an interest in leveraging off the process
- **Perception** – undertaking a collaborative exercise such as a spatial plan will enhance the perception of the region in its ability to work collectively and efficiently
- **Confidence** – embedding major public investment and housing supply decisions within a spatial plan would help to improve investor confidence in the region and to incentivise and co-ordinate private sector investment

¹⁴ New Zealand Productivity Commission (2015), *Using Land for Housing*, p.279

¹⁵ Ibid, and New Zealand Productivity Commission (2015), *Better Urban Planning: Issues Paper*



- **Optimisation** – regional spatial planning recognises the cost and location of ‘sunken’ infrastructure and is pivotal to determining the optimal location of activities within a region
- **Integration** – aligning local and central government growth and development aspirations within a regional spatial plan would help to facilitate more coherent and co-ordinated decision making around land use and infrastructure, including more integrated consideration of the effects of land use on such matters as surface/ground water quality and quantity, biodiversity and landscape
- **Prioritisation** – regional spatial planning enables improved decision making regarding the priority, location and funding of future major upgrades to physical infrastructure and network (e.g. road, rail, three waters, flood protection) and anticipated social infrastructure (e.g. schools, recreational facilities)
- **Place shaping** – regional spatial planning plays a central role in ‘place shaping’ and in the delivery of land use activities and associated infrastructure that are available ‘at the right time and in the right place’
- **Efficiency** – regional spatial planning offers the opportunity for improved efficiencies and reduced duplication through focusing planning resources and efforts on integrating and co-ordinating land use activities at a regional versus individual district scale
- **Complexity** – spatial planning at regional scale enables complex land use considerations associated with such matters as transport infrastructure, flood protection and residential growth to be addressed in a more comprehensive and inclusive manner

It should be emphasised that a spatial plan is typically only part of a broader programme of planning and investment decision-making activities: by involving multiple stakeholders, a greater level of efficacy across a number of front is likely to be achieved.



3 Spatial Planning – the New Zealand Context

Research commissioned in 2012 by the Ministry for the Environment into emergent trends in spatial/strategic planning highlights that the concept of spatial planning in the New Zealand context is still evolving, as evidenced by the variable mix of growth management strategies, spatial plans and structure plans examined.¹⁶

A divergence in the scope of what is addressed in spatial strategies/plans is also evident, with the range of content exemplified as follows:

- A broad, high level vision statement, objectives and associated intensification strategies in response to local residential growth demands (i.e. Nelson Urban Growth Strategy)
- A vision, strategic goals/objectives and initiatives to inform a tailored urban design/form response to local challenges and conditions (i.e. Wellington 2040, Dunedin Spatial Plan)
- A strategic vision, principles, community aspirations, associated direction/s and implementation initiatives (e.g. indicative settlement pattern to accommodate housing, business, education, community and recreational activities; associated transport and open space networks to service these activities) at a sub-regional level to respond to growth management pressures (i.e. Western Bay of Plenty ‘SmartGrowth’ Strategy, Christchurch Urban Development Strategy)

In addition to variation in typology and scope, the research found there were inconsistencies in the spatial scale of the strategies reviewed, noting that:

The scale ranges from those which focus on a mostly self-contained city/town within a single local authority area (e.g. Whangarei); to those that focus on a sub-part of an urbanised area separated by jurisdiction (e.g. Wellington 2040, Nelson Urban Growth Strategy); to full metropolitan/regional strategies which cross jurisdictional boundaries (Auckland, Western Bay of Plenty, Christchurch). In some cases there is a hierarchy of strategies with both regional and local strategies (Waikato Region).¹⁷

Regardless, in the context of the nine local authorities examined the research concluded that the rationale for undertaking spatial planning was generally underpinned by such factors as:¹⁸

¹⁶ Beca (2012), *Spatial Planning Outside Auckland*, p.3. The strategies/plans examined include:

- Western Bay of Plenty – SmartGrowth
- Waikato – Future Proof
- Wellington 2040
- Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS)
- Gisborne Spatial Plan
- Dunedin Spatial Plan
- Napier/Hastings - Heretaunga Plains UDS
- Whangarei – Sustainable Futures 30/50
- Nelson Urban Growth Strategy

The report also noted that these strategies/plans were the result of a LGA process rather than one originated through either the RMA or LTMA (pg.3)

¹⁷ Ibid, p.3; also Johnson, A (2008), *Strategic Growth Management Planning in New Zealand – A Review of Practice*, p.8

¹⁸ Ibid, p.62



- Community concerns about lack of collaboration and leadership on growth matters
- High growth rates and development pressures
- Need for a long term view of growth issues
- Need for certainty around land use, particularly to inform the Regional Policy Statement and Regional Land Transport Strategy
- Funding the costs of growth – need to know what, where and how much in terms of development
- NZTA concerns about lack of integrated planning
- Transport funding – the importance of an integrated planning approach in order to access funding for large projects

The research also observed that despite discrepancies in scope, the strategies examined shared the following common characteristics:¹⁹

- A sub-regional profile, comprising a clear description of the sub-region, local, regional and national pressures
- A reflection of relevant national objectives, strategies and policies
- An assessment of trends/scenarios
- An action plan, including lead agencies, phasing, timelines and funding requirements
- A balance between detailed prescription versus flexibility

However, the recent inquiry into *'Land Use for Housing'* by the New Zealand Productivity Commission noted that, with the exception of the Auckland Plan, all New Zealand spatial strategies/plans prepared to date have been voluntarily initiated by the participating councils under the aegis of the Local Government Act 2002.²⁰ In response, the Commission concluded that although there is a role for spatial plans in the planning system, the design of the planning framework needs to ensure that these plans:²¹

- Have stronger legislative weight in other planning processes (i.e., land use regulation, transport and infrastructure)
- Express clear priorities and trade-offs
- Include a statement of expected housing demand
- Focus on activities and goals that have a close link to the demand for and use of land
- Make extensive use of data and are designed with close involvement from infrastructure providers

The Commission strongly extorts the use of spatial planning to provide integrated vertical coordination in its recent review of urban planning practice in New Zealand²².

¹⁹ Ibid, p.63

²⁰ New Zealand Productivity Commission (2015), *Using Land for Housing*, p.276

²¹ Ibid, p.281

²² New Zealand Productivity Commission (2015), *Better Urban Planning: Issues Paper*



4 Current Practice in the Wellington Metropolitan Region

By way of preface, following the reform of Auckland local government, metropolitan Wellington is somewhat different within New Zealand for its unique degree of jurisdictional fragmentation, relative to other metropolitan areas. Unlike the other large urban areas, which are primarily governed by one major city council with several surrounding district councils which accommodate the 'overflow', the Wellington metropolitan area is governed by five, largely urban local authorities.

Unlike a number of other major urban areas within New Zealand, there is no overarching 'spatial plan' that applies across the Wellington metropolitan region.²³ Regardless, a review of current practice in the region reveals that elements of spatial planning – comprising various forms of growth/development strategies/ frameworks/ structure plans with some degree of spatial focus – have been actively advanced at a local level, as evidenced by the range of statutory and non-statutory documents of relevance to spatial planning that have been prepared by the constituent local authorities.

A stocktake of existing plans relevant to spatial planning was undertaken by Greater Wellington Regional Council in 2013 as an input into a report on Regional Spatial Planning for the Wellington Chief Executives and Mayoral Forums.²⁴ The stocktake identified that a combined total of 87 strategies, frameworks, plans and codes of practice with broad spatial planning implications currently apply across the metropolitan region.²⁵

As part of this report, an update and further review of the documents contained in the 2013 stocktake was undertaken, with an emphasis on identifying those with an explicit focus on place-shaping and delivery: a revised version of the stocktake is attached to this report (refer Appendix 1).

What the review revealed is that 23 out of the initial data set of 87 strategies, frameworks, plans and codes of practice appear to have a direct bearing on where urban development should occur in the region and how infrastructure, services and investment is to be co-ordinated. A generic breakdown of the nature of these documents is set out in **Table 1** below, with more specific detail contained in Appendix 1:

²³ Examples of areas where a regional/sub-regional approach to spatial planning has been introduced include Auckland, Western Bay of Plenty and Greater Christchurch

²⁴ Greater Wellington Regional Council (2013), *Draft Mayoral Forum Report on Regional Spatial Planning*, Attachment 3

²⁵ These included, for example, such documents as:

- Regional land transport, biodiversity, economic development, recreation/open space, urban growth/development, transportation and coastal management strategies
- Growth, development and revitalisation frameworks
- Long term, annual, district, structure, asset management, parks network/open space and cemetery management plans
- Land development and subdivision codes of practice



Table 1: Metropolitan Strategies, Frameworks, Policies and Plans

| Strategies, Frameworks, Policies, Plans | Number |
|---|---------------|
| <i>Land transport, urban development, urban growth strategies</i> | 5 |
| <i>Growth management, urban development frameworks</i> | 3 |
| <i>Regional Policy Statement, centres policy</i> | 2 |
| <i>District, urban growth, structure, development plans</i> | 13 |
| Total | 23 |

The review reveals that many elements of a metropolitan spatial plan for the Wellington Region already exist, although there is considerable variation in the form and nature of these elements: these range, for example, from growth corridors/plans to future/deferred urban areas and structure plans, and development frameworks. The methodology and information used to develop growth plans in the region is also variable.

The spectrum of existing growth plans within metropolitan Wellington raises, in turn, a couple of clear questions:

- Are these plans essentially pieces of an existing metropolitan Wellington spatial plan ‘jigsaw’ which, when combined, provide a coherent picture of regional growth aspirations – or is there too much variability, overlap and inconsistency between plans?
- Are they representative of a deliberate ‘competitive’ desire on the part of constituent councils to increase their local share of the cake rather than growing the cake itself?

There also appears to be a lack of visibility and broad understanding of these growth plans at a regional level, which means the benefits that could be derived from a regional spatial plan are not currently being capitalised on. These include, for example, obtaining full central government input and buy-in, providing an overarching unified vision and sense of direction, and the potential to create greater investment stability, certainty and confidence.



5 What Key Stakeholders Told Us

A series of structured interviews with the five metropolitan territorial authorities, Greater Wellington Regional Council, NZTA Central Region, and Horowhenua District Council was undertaken over November – December 2015. The interviews with the Councils generally involved the Mayor/Chair and the Chief Executive, and often senior management involved with planning and strategy.

A summary of the feedback received from these interviews is provided in Appendix 2: this section distils the key points arising from that feedback.

The interviews followed a series of questions around:

- The key drivers for having a spatial plan for the Wellington Region
- The scope of a spatial plan
- The major obstacles/challenges in developing a spatial plan
- Whether legislative changes would be required
- The funding, governance, resourcing of spatial plan development
- The scope, form and nature of community engagement
- Alternative approaches to spatial planning
- The implementation of a spatial plan

In general, there was support for a spatial plan to be developed for the Region, but this support spanned a spectrum of views, from strong opinions that it is essential through to those who considered that it should only occur if clear drivers or objectives are first identified: in other words, a spatial plan should focus on the key regional drivers for growth/investment, where value would be gained through a regional approach.

A range of reasons for having a spatial plan were given, including that it is a way to manage and plan for growth, migration, resources in the metropolitan region, and avoid the inefficient use of time, energy, and resources involved in the current duplication of plans, missed opportunities, over-investment and poor decision-making.

Investment planning was frequently identified as a key purpose for a spatial plan. For example, it was seen as a means of providing certainty on where to invest in order to create benefits for the economy. A spatial plan was also cited as a way of achieving the full potential of the transport network.

Another commonly cited purpose was to provide a common vision for the future of the whole region that all councils can benefit from:

- *“It would help Wellington to seriously shape its identity as a region, attracting growth and investment to benefit all”*
- *“It would support and enhance Wellington’s overall identity and competitiveness”*

In terms of growth management, there was a variety of views from those who saw that it could help stimulate growth to those who considered that the lack of significant growth in the region negated the need for a spatial plan.

- *“It is needed, but there is competition for the limited growth occurring in Wellington – each council is fighting for it and wants whatever will enable it”*



One driver for a spatial plan was that it would be to avoid the need for amalgamation (*“a cynical view but it’s the real view”*), by demonstrating that the region can collaborative and work together well without amalgamation:

- *“Preparing a spatial plan would take advantage of post-amalgamation climate: everyone’s trying to be a bit more collaborative, participating and being nice to each other right now, but still doing things in isolation. A spatial plan could be the process to unify and pull everyone together”*

However, not all interviewed considered that a spatial plan was needed – *“there’s not huge merit in doing it now, it might be something we do in due course when there is enough growth to need it”*. There was also some scepticism that a spatial plan would stimulate regional growth:

“The key problem [for the region] is sluggish economic growth and the spatial plan isn’t the solution. Spatial plans tend to be used to manage growth not create it. Different tool sets are required to stimulate economic growth”

Others considered that spatial plans were more useful to manage significant growth:

- *“Wellington’s not actually that broken – you don’t see the dysfunction you do in Auckland and Christchurch”*
- *“Give the collaboration that’s occurring between the Councils now enough time to bed in, and then do one. We’re already working collaboratively on plan changes”*
- *“Don’t always just leap to something new, maybe what we have right now could just be tweaked”*

Others considered that there was a need to identify the key drivers that a spatial plan would address: i.e., a need to identify the value proposition of having a spatial plan, prior to any agreement to commit time and resources on such an exercise. Identifying the key drivers for a spatial plan for the Wellington metropolitan region was seen as a critical way of bringing all councils on board.



6 Challenges and Opportunities

Drawing on the feedback from the research and interviews, the development and implementation of a Wellington spatial plan could provide a number of opportunities for the region.

A metropolitan spatial plan could draw together:

- A single shared vision for the future of the region and underlying aspirations – such as the Auckland Plan’s vision of “World’s Most Liveable City by 2040”
- Provision for future urban growth, recognising the ability of the region to provide for a wide range of residential lifestyles and community environments and existing local constraints (for example, available capacity and natural hazard limitations)
- Major infrastructure and transport network projects and requirements
- Land use planning, including areas for intensification and greenfields development
- Economic development opportunities for the whole region, thus avoiding leakages to other regions (for example, provision of industrial land)

It could also provide a useful vehicle to elevate complex planning issues/decision-making to a higher level in order to achieve shared regional direction and collective agreement. As experienced elsewhere, a spatial plan is likely to achieve far greater visibility and importance than a myriad of more localised strategies or growth plans, not only within the regional community to which it serves, but also to iwi, government agencies and other stakeholders.

Additionally, the interviews conducted with key regional stakeholders also noted the further potential that a spatial plan could offer in terms of:

- Natural hazards and resilience (for example, implementing the current regionally focused natural hazard strategy work currently underway);
- Providing an opportunity to understand and agree on a consistent and supportable set of population growth projections for the Wellington metropolitan region; or
- Addressing the potential dispersal of some key government and tertiary education services away from the region.

However, there are a number of challenges to developing a spatial plan for the Wellington metropolitan region, particularly a non-mandatory (by statute) plan which involves the five constituent local authorities working collaboratively with government agencies and other stakeholders. The key challenges identified were:

- Different approaches to investment decision-making under the current ‘divided’ political structure, and different perspectives about priorities
- Lack of a decision-making forum that everyone is comfortable participating in, agreeing to and abiding by
- A degree of mistrust between territorial authorities and the regional council following the amalgamation debate
- Perception or concern that the plan would be too Wellington city-centric



- Ingrained parochialism/patch protection/parish pump politics, potentially making trade-offs difficult (i.e. “Councils will all say yes to a regional spatial plan and high level goals but when it comes to discussions about the difficult things, they really won’t do anything”)
- Lack of common agreement around the need for, and drivers of, a metropolitan spatial plan, and therefore no strong underlying commitment or sense of urgency
- Limited Central Government political will to invest in Wellington, particularly in the absence of a nationally significant issue necessitating a response (for example, growth in Auckland, or the rebuild of Christchurch)
- Lack of political leadership to unify local support around the development of a spatial plan for the region, and the consequential risk that the plan becomes politicised (i.e. an ongoing political target during triennial local authority election cycle) or that the process becomes little more than a ‘talk fest’ or is overwhelmed by technical detail
- Consistent implementation of the plan across the metropolitan region, particularly where its status is voluntary as opposed to mandatory (i.e. ongoing adherence to the plan in the face of local political/leadership changes)
- A relatively difficult interface between a spatial plan and statutory plans prepared under the RMA, LTMA and LGA, and the risk of inconsistent recognition and implementation through these statutory instruments (for example, Regional Land Transport Plan, Long Term Plans, District Plans) given their differing legal requirements and tests
- Relationship with existing local authority strategies and programmes, and how these are integrated into a spatial plan (for example, urban growth/development strategies or plans independently prepared by the constituent TLAs)

These challenges would appear to impose a range of impediments that would make a voluntarily based spatial planning process difficult, as there would be opportunities for disagreement at every step, and the ability for it to be derailed. A voluntary based approach would only be viable if it were to be adequately resourced, and if all Councils could formulate and then abide by a set of fair rules that provided a fair process from the outset would allow a mandated framework to be locked in. Such a framework would have to cover decision-making processes and resourcing aspects.

In regard to resourcing, the development and associated funding of a spatial plan also raises several issues and challenges. Effective spatial planning requires a strong evidence base to support coordinated planning and investment, and is highly reliant on good data and well integrated and consistent forecasting and modelling. Consequently, such factors as the application of agreed datasets, forecasts and assumptions at a regional scale relating to such matters as demographic change are fundamental to establishing a defensible evidence base and ensuring that planning and investment priorities are clearly identified and aligned. While councils in the region appear to collaborate with one another in terms of information and data sharing, a step change improvement would be required to develop the evidence and knowledge base necessary for a regional scale spatial plan.

The development and ongoing implementation of the plan also presents an issue concerning funding arrangements given the relative size and capacity of the constituent councils. This is exemplified by the following observation made during the course of the key stakeholder interviews:

“The Regional Amenity Fund is not a good model i.e. each council contributes for the good of the Region but actual decisions tend to be based on ensuring that the amount contributed is spent back in the city/district plus some”



There are also variable views as to how a spatial plan might be funded, as evidenced by the following models raised by stakeholder representatives during the interviews:

- Funding on a per capita or similar basis; or
- Shared model with an agreed equity contribution by central government and councils; or
- A regional rate struck on a per household basis.

The inter-relationship between funding and council representation in governance and decision-making processes relating to the spatial plan also presents a challenge. There appears to be a diversity of view amongst the constituent metropolitan councils as to what this relationship would look like, particularly if funding was to be apportioned on a per capita or similar basis: should representation be based on the level of funding contributed or should there be equal representation?

By way of example, preparation of the Combined Wairarapa District Plan by the South Wairarapa, Carterton and Masterton District Councils was funded on a per capita basis, but with all three local authorities having equivalent representation on the Joint District Plan Committee.

Resourcing to prepare a spatial plan could also be problematic, particularly as the will to commit resources may vary between constituent councils and/or there is a lack of capacity and capability to commit (for example, key staff are already fully engaged on current projects). This, in turn, could result in either a sub-optimal outcome regarding the quality of the plan that is prepared or a lengthening of the timeframe associated with plan development. Alternatively, recruiting new staff and/or forming a separate agency and/or engaging external expertise to prepare the plan could also have significant time/cost implications.

Effective engagement of, and 'buy-in' by, major stakeholders (including the constituent local authorities, key Government Ministries, Crown agencies and infrastructure providers) and key interest groups in the wider regional community could also prove challenging as, for example:

- There is already a considerable amount of consultation occurring or anticipated to occur within the region (i.e. *"there's so much the community are going to be asked about in the next year - the community is quite likely to be cynical about whether this would make any difference"*)
- There appears to have been a lack of strategic, cross council engagement with the Crown regarding 'whole of government' investment in the Wellington metropolitan region (for example, the identification of mechanisms to coordinate investment to achieve better economic, environmental and social outcomes for the region)
- A spatial plan could be perceived as being at too broad and technically complex to attract widespread community interest (i.e. it doesn't have a direct bearing on me or what I can do on my individual property) or sufficient local political interest (i.e. *"You can't go to the public too early - they'll go to the trenches and think of conspiracies. Some sort of commitment from elected members first to say to the community 'we need to look at this'"*)



7 Options for Developing and Implementing a Spatial Plan

As highlighted in Section 6 above, there are a range of opportunities and challenges associated with the development and implementation of a spatial plan for metropolitan Wellington, largely derived from the number of local authorities that make up the region, the geographic spread of their respective communities of interest, and the absence of a strong underlying consensus regarding the necessity of a spatial plan.

The terms of reference for this commission assume development of a comprehensive spatial plan for the region as the base proposition, with options directed towards the processes, roles and mechanisms that might be necessary to enable a spatial plan to be developed and how a spatial plan might be effectively implemented across multiple local authorities. However, other alternative approaches are available which could also act to stimulate or advance spatial planning in the region, albeit to a lesser extent than a full spatial plan.

In light of this, and as a precursor to exploring options to develop and implement a comprehensive metropolitan spatial plan, a brief outline of the alternative options available to the region follows.

7.1 Options for Advancing Spatial Planning for the Wellington Metropolitan Area

In broad terms there are four general approaches that could be employed to advance metropolitan spatial planning for the Wellington region:²⁶

- A. Status quo or 'business as usual' approach
- B. Preparation of a 'stocktake' plan of the region
- C. Preparation of a 'composite' growth plan for the region
- D. Preparation of a comprehensive metropolitan spatial plan

A description of each of these approaches, along with a consideration of their relative advantages/disadvantages, is outlined below.

A. Status Quo

This approach would involve metropolitan local authorities continuing to individually develop and implement their own urban growth/development and associated strategies and/or plans, with targeted collaborative joint planning occurring around key areas of mutual interest (such as that occurring on network utilities and regional hazards).

²⁶ It should also be noted that the geographic application of each of these options could also be extended to include Horowhenua District



B. Stocktake Plan

This approach involve the constituent metropolitan councils undertaking a collective ‘stocktake’ exercise of the documents referred to in Section 4 (and further described in Appendix 1) of this report, one which would be specifically directed towards:

- i. Assembling information derived from the urban growth/development and associated strategies and/or plans that have been prepared into a series of maps that illustrate the collective growth aspirations of the individual councils
- ii. Identifying where gaps, inconsistencies and/or overlaps exist (for example, the quality of the base data, growth assumptions)
- iii. Exploring how these could be reconciled and whether there is a value proposition in developing a full spatial plan.

As this approach is largely centred on the compilation and analysis of existing information it may not necessitate the need for a shared vision and corresponding objectives to be developed. Delivery could occur through a cross council technical working group, with oversight provided by a management group comprising senior representatives from each of the metropolitan councils.

C. Composite Growth Plan

This approach would involve the metropolitan local authorities undertaking a deliberate joint exercise to investigate and identify future growth areas at a regional scale, with the outcome being achievement of consensus on a composite growth plan for the region that would be independently implemented by the constituent councils (i.e. through individual strategies/plans).

The approach would need to be underpinned by agreed terms of reference, with a negotiation pathway to reconcile any issues. It could also be premised on a shared collective vision and associated objectives to inform the direction of future growth in the region. Delivery could be achieved through establishment of a cross council technical working group, with project oversight provided by a management group comprising senior managers from each of the metropolitan councils, and governance via relevant representatives of the Wellington Region Chief Executives Forum.

D. Comprehensive Metropolitan Spatial Plan (Wellington Metro Plan)

This approach would involve the metropolitan local authorities committing to the preparation and implementation of a legislatively mandated, fully integrated spatial plan for the region that draws together, for example, the following:²⁷

- i. a long-term vision for the region (i.e. 20 to 30 years)
- ii. a visual illustration of how areas will develop in the future
- iii. an evidence base to inform decisions

²⁷ Greater Wellington Regional Council (2013), *Draft Mayoral Forum Report on Regional Spatial Planning*, pg.1



- iv. strategic directions translated into priorities and policies
- v. policy and investment decisions integrated into one coherent whole.

If there were a willingness to make that commitment then one option might be to lock in the commitment by providing it with a legislative mandate.

Delivery could be achieved through the establishment of a specific spatial planning agency which operates as either a stand-alone entity or as an adjunct to one of the existing metropolitan councils, while governance direction and oversight could be provided through the establishment of a joint committee or a management board comprised of constituent council representatives.

It should be noted that these approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In particular, the stocktake could occur within the period leading up to local body elections later this year, after which a decision could be made as to whether to continue and, if so, whether to either develop a Composite Growth Plan or to commit to the development of a full Wellington metropolitan spatial plan within the next triennium.

Regardless, there are a range of advantages and disadvantages to the region associated with each of these approaches. These are summarised in **Table 2** below:



Table 2: Spatial Planning Options – Advantages and Disadvantages

| Options | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| <i>A: Status Quo</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional resources or expertise required • Allows councils to collaborate in a way that aligns with their current resource capacity and capabilities and existing work programmes • Allows current council strategies and growth policies and programmes to proceed without delay • Politically neutral/palatable – maintains local autonomy • Does not preclude future options being exercised (e.g. response to proposed RMA changes/urban management initiatives) • Relatively consistent with spatial planning feedback supplied by some key stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will not yield the advantages of a full spatial plan, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of strategic, regional direction/vision to inform metropolitan local authority statutory plans (e.g. regional policy statement, district plans), resulting in positional inconsistencies • Minimal opportunity to achieve better integration (e.g. location and timing of key regional infrastructure, services and investment) • Evidence base likely to be developed in an ad-hoc manner resulting in sub-optimal basis to inform investment choice and poor understanding of true/current growth costs to the region (e.g. infrastructure investment) • Perpetuates intra-regional competition regarding growth opportunities, leading to inefficiencies (e.g. infrastructure) • Public perception of a lack of regional coordination to address growth management issues |
| <i>B: Stocktake Plan</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be expedited relatively quickly (i.e. in advance of the next triennial local body elections) and at minimal cost (e.g. no new primary research, no additional community engagement) • Provides basis to understand the need for, and potential value of, spatial planning and to identify where value could be achieved through improved collaboration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will not yield the advantages of a full spatial plan, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of strategic, regional direction/vision to inform metropolitan local authority statutory plans (e.g. regional policy statement, district plans), resulting in positional inconsistencies |



| Options | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|--|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politically neutral/palatable – maintains local autonomy • Focuses spatial planning response to best value outputs, including the opportunity to explore development of consistent approach to density and development capacity • Means to enhance relationships and coordination between councils around growth management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal opportunity to achieve better integration (e.g. location and timing of key regional infrastructure, services and investment) • May provide insufficient basis to demonstrate the value proposition of developing a full metropolitan spatial plan for the region • Risk that it may yield little information around areas requiring greater collaboration • May exacerbate intra-regional competition, with no mechanism to manage/negotiate areas of contention • No significant change to public perception of uncoordinated response to growth management issues |
| <p><i>C: Composite Growth Plan</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less challenging than a full spatial plan and would require less investment/resource • Demonstrates to Central Government a collaborative commitment to advancing a more integrated approach to regional growth management • Means to address regional growth management issues and to achieve a co-ordinated response • Provides means to reconcile identifiable flaws/gaps in regional growth management data sets and delivery (e.g. population projections, time horizons) • Provides basis to understand the need for, and potential value of, spatial planning and to identify where value could be achieved through improved collaboration • Focuses spatial planning response to best value outputs, including the opportunity to explore development of consistent approach to density and development capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will not yield the advantages of a full spatial plan; in particular it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a higher level of governance, resources and funding than the status quo/enhanced status quo, along with a longer timeframe to develop and implement • Requires a clear commitment from all councils to reconcile issues identified (e.g. agreed terms of reference) • Is politically challenging (i.e. increased risk of failure) • Likely to require additional spatial planning resource/expertise to supplement the existing skill base of constituent councils |



Options

Advantages

Disadvantages

D: Wellington Metropolitan Spatial Plan

- Potential to resolve any areas in which there is unnecessary duplication or inefficiencies in the provision for growth and/or infrastructure and/or regional assets
- Allows some degree of flexibility as it enables each council to retain autonomy over the growth policies and strategies in its area, albeit modified as required by agreement
- Means to enhance relationships and coordination between councils around management of urban growth and development

- Provides a forward looking strategic vision/direction to inform growth management within the region
- Provides basis for wider conversation with community/ key interests concerning future growth
- Provides a common information base (e.g. growth forecasts, planning horizon) for individual councils
- Provides a comprehensive and co-ordinated basis for efficient use of resources, hazard and catchment management, climate change
- Provides basis to effectively respond to RM directives and to inform subsequent plan changes
- Demonstrates to Central Government a collaborative commitment to integrated regional growth management
- Enables more efficient planning and delivery of infrastructure
- Facilitates discussion and negotiation across sectors (e.g. iwi, infrastructure, transport, funding) to achieve improved economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes for the region
- Provides a guide to the location and timing of future infrastructure, services and investment that can be used to provide for the co-location of infrastructure where this is appropriate

- Potential time, costs and political risks associated with the introduction of legislative amendments
- A comprehensive region-wide process would be more time, resource and funding intensive
- Politically challenging - requires political consensus and clear governance arrangements in advance of delivery
- Obtaining agreement on region-wide projects and aspirations, particularly where strategic regional priorities override or clash with local priorities and actions
- Potential disruption to currently committed planning processes/growth aspirations
- Achieving meaningful public engagement may be challenging given the breadth and technical nature of some of matters addressed in the plan
- Pace and consistency of implementation may be varied across the region
- Potential tensions associated with the retrofit of current local growth/RMA plans to align with the regional spatial plan



| Options | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|----------------|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gives direction to, and has the potential to effectively align, implementation and the regulatory and funding plans of individual councils• Has the capacity to integrate otherwise competing policy goals, and to create opportunities to develop a coherent and combined approach to investment and regulation• Provides opportunity to fully engage the public and partners in developing the future strategic direction for the region | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Likely to require additional spatial planning resource/expertise to supplement the existing skill base of constituent councils |

If a spatial plan is considered by constituent metropolitan councils to be the most ‘fit for purpose’ option to inform the management of urban growth and development in the region it is advisable that its development is undertaken within a relatively short timeframe (i.e. a two-year period) in order to realise the following:

- To enable preparation of the plan to be accomplished within one local authority triennium
- To avoid scope creep and the prospect that the exercise becomes too large and expensive
- To maintain a strong level of focus and community engagement



7.2 Spatial Plan Delivery Options

Further to the analysis of spatial planning options outlined in section 7.1 above, this section of the report identifies and assesses the relative advantages and disadvantages of potential options (and associated permutations) to advance the preparation and implementation of a spatial plan for the region in the event that an agreement in principle is reached by the constituent metropolitan Wellington councils on its necessity and value.

The potential organisational options that have been identified are as follows:

- A. Collaborative spatial plan development
- B. Enter into a spatial planning shared service arrangement or a transfer of responsibility
- C. Establishment of a dedicated spatial planning agency

It should be recognised that partners to a successful Spatial Plan collaboration could include non-local government partners, such as NZTA, key government agencies (such as health and education), iwi, and others.

A description of each of these options, including their associated processes, roles and mechanisms, is set out below.

Option A: Collaborative Spatial Plan Development²⁸

This option involves the establishment of a Wellington Metropolitan Spatial Planning Joint Committee under LGA²⁹ as a mechanism to provide collective governance oversight centred on the development and implementation of the spatial plan.³⁰ The Committee could comprise equal political representation from the contributing local authorities, along with independent appointees (for example, iwi, NZTA, infrastructure providers) and possibly an independent chair. Wider community/sector input to help inform the development and ongoing implementation of the plan could also be provided through the establishment of a reference group or contributory forums (for example, iwi, strategic partners, property developers).³¹

Under this option the spatial plan would be collaboratively prepared by the constituent councils, with specialist technical input provided through a project team/s comprised of relevant council staff supported by requisite external resources. Day-to-day project oversight and management could be delivered through a dedicated project manager/director, supported by a cross council senior managers group.

These arrangements are exemplified in the following diagram of the governance and delivery structure developed as part of the Waikato 'Future Proof' exercise:

²⁸ This option is based on the approach outlined in 'Appendix 1: Project Plan and Critical Matters for Consideration When Preparing a Spatial Plan for Wellington' of the GWRC Memo to the Mayoral Forum (August 2015); it also reflects the approach applied to Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth and the Waikato Plan (formerly Future Proof)

²⁹ Clause 30A, Schedule 7, LGA

³⁰ Other less formal options such as the existing Mayoral Forum, a separate joint forum or an independent panel could also be considered; however, these are unlikely to exert the same degree of influence over the development and implementation process given the non-statutory nature of their status

³¹ Such fora were established as a key input into the development and implementation of the Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth Strategy, each with clear terms of reference setting out their associated purpose, role, membership and underlying principles



Development of the plan would be funded through cost share arrangements agreed between the councils. The plan would be independently delivered by each of the constituent councils, with the joint committee assuming responsibility for monitoring the degree to which the plan is being consistently implemented and facilitating resolution of any emergent implementation issues.

Option B: Spatial Planning Shared Service Arrangement or Transfer of Responsibility

This is an extension of the above option, with preparation and implementation of the plan being delivered through either a collective, shared service arrangement or transfer of responsibility.³²

Unlike the preceding option, exercising the shared service agreement option would see one of the constituent councils being contracted to either:

- Prepare and implement the spatial plan on behalf of the metropolitan councils; or
- Prepare the spatial plan, with implementation undertaken by individual councils

By contrast, exercise of the transfer option would see responsibility for development and/or implementation of the spatial plan allocated to either a territorial authority or the regional council,³³ subject to satisfaction that the benefits of such a transfer outweigh any negative impacts.³⁴

Under each of these options governance oversight would continue to be provided through a Spatial Planning Joint Committee, with day-to-day project oversight and management delivered through, for example, a dedicated project manager/director reporting regularly to a cross council senior managers group. Development and/or implementation of the plan would be funded

³² Through, for instance, constituent councils in the Wellington metropolitan region entering into a triennial agreement under s.15 LGA regarding the delivery of regional spatial planning services

³³ Refer ss.17(1) and 17(2) LGA

³⁴ Refer s.17(4) LGA



through either agreed contract terms or cost share agreements between the 'lead agency' and the balance councils.

Option C: Mandated Spatial Planning Agency

This option represents a significant 'step change' from the preceding options and involves the establishment of a dedicated, fully integrated spatial planning agency to develop and implement the spatial plan and to monitor its ongoing effectiveness.

Given some of the challenges that the current legislative arrangements under the LGA present to realisation of an integrated and comprehensive spatial plan (for example, discretion as to shared service arrangements, ability to reverse a transfer of responsibility), an amendment to the LGA is envisaged under this option. Any such changes could either be Wellington centric or extend to include nominated areas subject, for example, to urban growth and development pressures.

In addition to outlining such matters as the purpose and content of a spatial plan,³⁵ the amendments could also extend to cover the requirements and processes associated with plan preparation and implementation. These could include, for example:

- **Structure:** the agency could either be a stand-alone entity (for example, a spatial planning CCO)³⁶ or incorporated into the organisational structure of one of the existing metropolitan councils (for example, a spatial planning unit within GWRC), with staff drawn from the constituent councils (for example, direct transfer, secondment) or the open market
- **Governance:** direction and oversight could be provided through the establishment of a joint committee or a management board comprised of constituent council representatives, either of which would have delegated authority to make decisions regarding the development and implementation of the spatial plan
- **Funding:** this could be provided through directing an agreed, equitable proportion of the rates struck by constituent councils across the region to financing the delivery of an integrated and centralised regional spatial planning service

Evaluation of Options

In order to gauge the merits of these options, the following criteria have been developed to inform assessment of their relative advantages and disadvantages:

- **Efficiency and effectiveness** – does the option enable efficient and effective use of available resources?
- **Capacity and capability** – will the organisations responsible for spatial planning have sufficient financial and staff capacity and capability to undertake the necessary work?
- **Mandate** – does the option provide a clear mandate and sufficient authority to prepare and implement associated actions?
- **Accountability** – does the option provide good decision-making with respect to the development and implementation of a spatial plan (e.g. fiscal responsibility, resourcing)?

³⁵ Refer, for example, s.79 LG(AC)A

³⁶ Refer Part 5 and Schedule 9 LGA



- Integration – will the option enable improved alignment between plan development and delivery?
- Acceptability – how politically palatable is the option?

Table 3 below summarises the relative advantages and disadvantages of these options.



Table 3: Spatial Planning Implementation Options – Advantages and Disadvantages

| Options | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|--|---|---|
| <p><i>A: Collaborative Spatial Plan Development</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could be implemented without the need for legislative change • Led by a strong independent chair with commitment to agreed protocols for dispute resolution, it could help resolve any areas of dispute • Proven success in other jurisdictions (e.g. SmartGrowth BOP) • Provides a strengthened and more coherent vehicle to address urban growth and development issues across the region • Potential for improved efficiencies through use of common methodologies (e.g. spatial modelling) and datasets (e.g. demographic change) and sharing of specialist skills and expertise • Increased political acceptability as it provides direct line of local authority accountability through establishment of a joint committee (although possibly with some independent representation), with implementation governed directly by each council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relies on a voluntary approach to implementation resulting in challenges to maintenance of ongoing commitment • Potential to achieve greater regional coherence could be undermined by a misalignment of views between constituent councils • Council capacity and capability could be restricted due to the nature and breadth of skills currently employed and the availability of key staff given other priority commitments • Accountability for implementation and funding decisions continues to reside with individual councils, thereby increasing the risk of inconsistent practice and follow through • Potential for joint committee decisions to be re-litigated as ongoing implementation and funding rests with individual councils • Poses a challenge to effective integration as implementation decisions continue to reside with individual councils |
| <p><i>B: Spatial Planning Shared Service Arrangement or Transfer of Responsibility</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be exercised under current legislation • Led by a strong independent chair with commitment to agreed protocols for dispute resolution, it could help resolve any areas of dispute • Provides a strengthened and more coherent vehicle to address urban growth and development issues across the region | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relies on a voluntary approach to implementation resulting in challenges to maintenance of ongoing commitment • Implementation and funding decisions continue to reside with individual councils, thereby increasing the risk of inconsistent practice and follow through |



Options

Advantages

Disadvantages

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides potential means to realise efficient delivery of spatial planning services and reduced administrative and operational costs • Potential for improved efficiencies through use of common methodologies (e.g. spatial modelling) and datasets (e.g. demographic change) and sharing of specialist skills and expertise • Offers potential for more consistent plan implementation depending on contract/transfer terms and conditions • Increased political acceptability as it provides direct line of local authority accountability through establishment of a joint committee (although possibly with some independent representation), with implementation governed directly by each council (or contracted to the 'lead' agency if mutually agreed) • Allocation of widened functional scope to a single entity provides potential to increase levels of staff specialisation and expertise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on agreement being reached as to which council would assume the 'lead agency' role • Potential for councils to terminate shared service arrangement or reversal of responsibilities transferred resulting in development/implementation delays and associated costs (e.g. external resourcing) • Potential for joint committee decisions to be re-litigated as ongoing implementation and funding rests with individual councils • Poses a challenge to effective integration as implementation decisions continue to reside with individual councils (unless delegated by agreement to the 'lead' agency) |
| <p><i>C: Mandated Spatial Planning Agency</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a separate agency with a clear and direct statutory mandate to prepare and implement the spatial plan • Enables spatial planning service to be delivered more consistently, leading to increased efficiencies and reduced transaction costs • Organisational scale could enable more effective implementation and resources to be efficiently re-allocated where required • Improved efficiencies through use of common methodologies (e.g. spatial modelling) and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires justification of need and agreement of the constituent councils • Requisite legislative change could be viewed by Central Government as ad hoc and unnecessary given other options available • Time/cost involved in the creation of new institutional and administrative arrangements, and ongoing associated operational costs • Transfer of over-riding accountability to a statutory committee/board may be politically unacceptable to the constituent councils due |



Options

Advantages

Disadvantages

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>datasets (e.g. demographic change) and centralised repository of specialist skills and expertise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enables more robust prioritisation regarding implementation as outcomes would be assessed on a regional vs local basis• Enhanced staff capacity and capability, enabling higher levels of specialisation, greater flexibility and reduced reliance on external resources• Enables regional level decision-making to occur with a reduced risk of re-litigation (i.e. 'patch protection')• Removes organisational and functional barriers to integration and delivery of spatial planning services and outputs (i.e. improves alignment between planning and funding) | <p>to the perceived 'arm's length' governance and decision making arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indirect accountability that could result in a disconnect between the decision-making and implementation role of the agency and the democratic and financial accountability of individual councils• Potential reduction in connectedness with, and responsiveness to, local constituent communities (i.e. strong regional vs local focus)• Potential lack of transparency and perceived vulnerability regarding local autonomy and control (i.e. subsidiarity) |
|---|---|



8 Alternative Methods

There is no real alternative method to a spatial plan,³⁷ which is a distinct process and form, sitting outside but informing other statutory planning instruments, such as land use and transport planning.

The closest alternative to a spatial plan would be the use of a higher level planning instrument to govern the location, extent and form of land use and development, including transport corridors, infrastructural assets, open space and recreational facilities, protected natural assets, and other components that would otherwise comprise the elements of a spatial plan.

In New Zealand, the closest form of such an instrument under our principal planning statute, the Resource Management Act (RMA), is a Regional Policy Statement (RPS), the purpose of which:

... is to achieve the purpose of the Act by providing an overview of the resource management issues of the region and policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the whole region. [section 59, RMA]

To date, Regional Policy Statements in New Zealand have been used, in limited fashion, to provide some elements of spatial planning, but primarily in relation to the management of natural resources (for example, catchment management, landscape and biodiversity). The closest use of an RPS for providing direction on spatial planning is the current Auckland Regional Policy Statement (to be superseded by the Auckland Unitary Plan) which established Metropolitan Urban Limits, as well as direction on high density centres, intensive corridors and future urban areas, the strategic and regional arterial (roading) network, and volcanic cone viewshafts.

However, the degree of scope to use an RPS for spatial planning purposes under the current RMA is uncertain, as there is no explicit direction or mandate under the Act for such an instrument (nor indeed for any regional plan) to provide direction on future urban growth. Consequently, there has been, and is likely to continue to be, ongoing doubt about whether there is scope for an RPS to provide specific spatial direction on the location, extent and form of urban development in a region.

It is noted that one of the proposed changes to the RMA under the current (2015) Amendment Bill involves the addition of a further regional council function as follows:

the establishment, implementation, and review of objectives, policies, and methods to ensure that there is sufficient development capacity in relation to residential and business land to meet the expected long-term demands of the region³⁸:

A similar addition is also proposed to be added to the functions of territorial local authorities under the RMA³⁹. This amendment, if enacted, could provide the basis for a RPS to be developed that provides specific spatial direction relating to residential and business growth, as well as supporting physical infrastructure. However, the outcome of the legislative process is indeterminate at present.

Regardless, the amendment would not necessarily enable the RPS to include direction on other aspects that councils might wish to address within a spatial plan (for example, provision for future social/cultural infrastructure), and lacks any complementary statutory connection to the LGA and LTMA.

³⁷ However, approaches such as those outlined in section 7.1 of this report (e.g. composite growth plan) could offer an intermediate alternative to development of a full spatial plan

³⁸ Clause 11, Resource Legislation Amendment Bill, 2015

³⁹ Clause 12, Resource Legislation Amendment Bill, 2015; it is also instructive to note that the definition of 'development capacity' includes zoning and the provision of adequate infrastructure



9 Conclusion

Spatial planning is a well-established practice in New Zealand, with many local authorities having prepared and are now implementing spatial plans as a means of ensuring an integrated approach to the planning of and investment in the provision for urban growth and infrastructure development. The Auckland Plan has established the basis for the region's infrastructural, transport and urban growth planning, as well as the vehicle for a number of social and economic initiatives. The Bay of Plenty's 'SmartGrowth' and the Waikato's 'Futureproof' (Waikato Plan) are examples of successful collaborative spatial planning exercise involving several local authorities, the NZTA, iwi and other stakeholders.

Metropolitan Wellington has a unique degree of jurisdictional fragmentation, relative to other metropolitan areas in New Zealand: unlike the other large urban areas, which are primarily governed by one major city council with several surrounding district councils, the Wellington metropolitan area is governed by five largely urban local authorities.

All the constituent territorial local authorities in metropolitan Wellington, as well as the Horowhenua District Council, have undertaken growth planning in some form or another, and are implementing a range of growth strategies, development frameworks, and other plans. These are regularly reviewed, and involve consultation with stakeholders and the local communities.

However, the preparation of these instruments has occurred in the absence of any regional coordination, with limited visibility of any close collaboration between the councils. Currently, a variable approach to spatial planning appears to have been adopted across the region (for example, differing methodologies and datasets). It is not clear how far these growth plans represent, in effect, competing strategies rather than providing a sound basis for coordination and cooperation.

Furthermore, there has usually been limited central government engagement in these plans, and they have generally assumed a relatively low profile within their respective community and business sectors compared to larger collaborative planning exercises undertaken elsewhere in New Zealand. For example, although district growth planning addresses local roading and accessibility issues it appears to have little influence on regional transportation requirements, reactively responding to initiatives as they arise rather than acting as a key input to their development. The major roading projects underway or proposed in the region as part of the Wellington Northern Corridor improvements (for example, Transmission Gully) have significant implications for growth; ideally, these are matters that should be addressed at a regional level given the nature and scale of such projects.

Similarly, in terms of housing, no clear collective position on regional supply and affordability is apparent, as is any evidence of a deliberate, co-ordinated regional response to these matters.

It is generally acknowledged that spatial planning for metropolitan Wellington would derive a number of benefits to the region, including –

- Establishing a single vision/direction to inform growth management within the region
- Providing a vehicle for a wider conversation with the community, iwi and key stakeholders concerning future growth
- Providing a vehicle for a wider conversation with central government about investment in regional infrastructure and facilities
- Establishing a common information base (for example, growth forecasts and planning horizons)



- A comprehensive and co-ordinated basis for addressing the key resource management issues of the region, including natural hazard and catchment management, and responding to climate change
- A basis to effectively respond to impending resource management directives and a vehicle to inform subsequent plan changes

There is also increasing pressure for cities and regions to ensure they proactively plan for their future urban growth and associated infrastructure: the recently introduced Resource Legislation Amendment Bill is proposing to make this an explicit function of both territorial local authorities and regional councils. Such a function would need to be exercised through the development of future regional and district policy and planning instruments. Undertaking some form of collaborative spatial planning process for metropolitan Wellington would ensure a proactive approach to fulfilling this obligation, particularly at a regional level.

Notwithstanding the advantages associated with a metropolitan spatial plan, there is a clear need to better articulate the value proposition of such a plan, and to identify where the benefits of coordinated research and plan preparation would reap the greatest benefits over and above the individual planning currently undertaken by individual councils. This would help shape the form of collaboration and coordination that would yield greatest value.

A metropolitan Wellington spatial plan need not limit the ability of each council to pursue strategies that meet the demands of its local community or to take advantage of the attributes and opportunities within different parts of the region. However, there will be an inherent tension between any commitment to pursue a regional approach and the freedom of individual councils to develop and advance local strategies that compete with others – consequently, a regional spatial plan will inherently involve trade-offs.

While there clearly are challenges to developing a spatial plan that crosses several local authority jurisdictions, there are examples around New Zealand of successful collaborative planning exercises (such as SmartGrowth in the Bay of Plenty). There are also a range of approaches that could be explored to deliver a spatial plan for metropolitan Wellington ranging from a bespoke arrangement or process developed under the existing statutory framework, through to legislative changes that are tailored to provide for the specific requirements of the region.

In conclusion, without a legislative mandate, the challenges to preparing a metropolitan spatial plan on a voluntary-basis would appear to impose a formidable and almost insurmountable barrier. Under such circumstances it is unlikely that plan development could constructively proceed unless a set of fair processes and procedures (for example, terms of reference and governance arrangements) are agreed and locked in from the beginning, and a formal, collective commitment is made to ensuring that the process is adequately resourced and managed and the resultant plan implemented.

However, there appears to be general support in principle amongst the constituent councils to explore the opportunities and potential benefits that could be derived from developing a spatial plan for metropolitan Wellington, particularly given the associated synergies and inter-relationships with the complementary area of regional transportation.



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SmartGrowth Strategy, 2013

UCL & Deloitte (2007), *Shaping and Delivering Tomorrow's Places: Effective Practice in Spatial Planning - Report, findings and recommendations*



Appendix 1: Wellington Metropolitan Region Spatial Planning Documents

Spatial Planning - Key documents of direct relevance in the Wellington metropolitan region⁴⁰

Statutory plans highlighted in grey.

| Document name/ Council responsible | Operative | Review | Scope and purpose | Relevance to spatial planning |
|---|------------------|---------------|---|--|
| <i>GWRC Regional Policy Statement</i> | April 2013 | 2023 | Sets out the framework and priorities for resource management in the Wellington region under the RMA. Identifies the regionally significant issues around the management of the regions natural and physical resources and sets out what needs to be achieved (objectives) and the way in which the objectives will be achieved (policies and methods). Regional and district plans and the Regional Land Transport Strategy are required to give effect to policies 1-34 of the RPS, and to consider policies 35-60. | Is supportive of a spatial planning approach – includes constraints and growth areas, policies on maintaining vibrancy, supporting compact regional form, integration of land use and transport. Requires identification of hazard areas and landscape as part of the consideration policies. |
| <i>Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan 2015</i> | May 2015 | 2021 | Provides the policy framework and strategic case for developing and investing in the region's land transport network, and sets out the programme of proposed land transport activities over a six year period including a 10-year financial forecast. | Forms the basis for identification, selection, and prioritisation of projects and activities by the Regional Transport Committee, sets targets against which the region's transport networks can be monitored, and guides |

⁴⁰ The documents outlined in this table are a refinement and enhancement of those included in the initial stocktake undertaken by Greater Wellington Regional Council in 2013; however, they do not constitute a comprehensive audit of all potential documents of relevance to spatial planning in the Wellington metropolitan region



| Document name/ Council responsible | Operative | Review | Scope and purpose | Relevance to spatial planning |
|---|------------------|-----------------|--|---|
| | | | | reviews of more detailed transport implementation and corridor plans. |
| <i>WCC Wellington City District Plan</i> | July 2000 | Rolling review. | Contains objectives, policies and methods to manage activities, including growth and development, in the city under the RMA. | The plan contains specific growth related provisions and associated guidance that apply to the northern suburbs of the city between Johnsonville and Tawa. |
| <i>WCC Wellington Towards 2040: Smart Capital</i> | 2011 | | Sets an overarching vision to guide the development of the city over the next 30 years. Aims to strategically position the city to support economic, social, physical and environmental resilience into the future. | Several of the strategy's objectives have a spatial focus, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support mixed residential, commercial, social and cultural activities in Wellington's suburban areas. • Develop strong links and access to good transport options between suburban areas and the CBD and other parts of the city. • Understand the factors that influence housing affordability and cost of living to ensure the city can support a dynamic and diverse population. |
| <i>WCC Centres Policy and Centre Plans</i> | August 2008 | | The Centres policy provides a framework to guide the development and management of Wellington City's centres. The Centre Plans are specific place-based plans developed for the city's key growth areas and major centres including, for example, the central city, Johnsonville, Kilbirnie and Adelaide Road. The Policy is supported and implemented through more detailed policies (including the District Plan and | The Centres Policy considers in an integrated way the varied roles of the centres, to provide guidance on how they should be managed and developed in the future, and to assist in coordinating the Council's activities and programmes in and around these centres. |



| Document name/ Council responsible | Operative | Review | Scope and purpose | Relevance to spatial planning |
|---|------------------|-------------------------|--|---|
| | | | centre plans), the Council’s infrastructure investment decisions and specific projects and initiatives. | |
| <i>WCC Central City Framework</i> | 2013 | | Gives a strategic direction for the growth and enhancement of Wellington’s central city over the next 30 years. It articulates objectives and an approach for implementing the vision set out in the Wellington Towards 2040: Smart Capital document. | Supportive of a spatial planning approach - has an emphasis on setting design principles, urban ecology, and enhancing connectivity. |
| <i>Wellington Urban Growth Plan 2014 – 2043 (and Implementation Plan)</i> | June 2015 | Reviewed every 3 yrs | Provides a tool to manage future growth and investment in the city. It updates, combines and replaces the previous Urban Development and Transport Strategies and seeks to encourage growth in areas close to services, employment and good public transport. | Guides Council decisions relating to planning, growth, land use, housing, transport and infrastructure, and helps to achieve goals identified in other key strategies. |
| <i>WCC Northern Area Framework for Growth Management</i> | October 2003 | | Provides a ‘strategy for achievement’ for the future development of the northern part of Wellington City. It provides the communities, landowners, developers and WCC a set of goals and an agreed process for planning urban expansion together. | Supports a spatial planning approach in terms of pulling together and attempting to reconcile economic, environmental, transport, housing and other land use objectives. |
| <i>Lincolnshire Farm Structure Plan</i> | October 2013 | | A series of maps and diagrams with supporting text included in the WCC District Plan to guide the development of the area between Newlands and Takapu. It does this by defining the pattern of development and land uses, areas of open space, the layout and nature of infrastructure, and other key features to manage the effects of development. | Provides a vehicle to realise the Council’s strategic vision and implement the principles of the Northern Growth Management Framework. |
| <i>PCC District Plan</i> | November 1999 | Currently under review. | Contains objectives, policies and methods to manage activities, including growth and development, in the city under the RMA. | The plan contains specific growth related provisions and associated guidance that applies to the Judgeford Hills zone; this zone covers development within the Pauatahanui Village and Judgeford basin areas. |



| Document name/ Council responsible | Operative | Review | Scope and purpose | Relevance to spatial planning |
|---|------------------|---------------|---|--|
| <i>PCC Porirua Development Framework (and Detailed Action Plan)</i> | August 2009 | | The Framework is a non-statutory guiding document that is intended to influence how and where the city will physically develop over the next 30 years. The Framework provides a "picture of what the city may eventually look like" – areas where people may live, work and play, It is also intended to guide change within the city founded on principles of sustainable development. The Detailed Action Plan is a partner document that specifies a set of projected actions required to implement the Framework. This document will be updated as required, over the lifetime of the Framework. The Framework also helps the city in reviewing its District Plan and will guide future changes to that plan. Matters that have been incorporated into the Planning Assumptions of the Framework, the Assessment Criteria used to identify potential locations for particular development forms, and the Action Plan are climate change, environment, sustainability, transport, integrated planning and Treaty of Waitangi and iwi issues. | Is supportive of a spatial planning approach - In areas of the city where there is competition between regional strategies, local community aspirations and plans, the District Plan and the Framework, the Framework has identified the need for further detailed studies. These 'Strategic Study Areas' represent places where there are often significant and competing challenges facing the future planning and development of those places. The action of undertaking Strategic Studies is intended to address these tensions. |
| <i>PCC Pauatahanui-Judgeford Structure Plan</i> | November 2012 | | A series of maps and diagrams with supporting text included in the PCC District Plan to guide the development within the Pauatahanui Village and Judgeford basin areas . It does this by defining the pattern of development and land uses, areas of open space, the layout and nature of infrastructure, and other key features to manage the effects of development. | Is supportive of a spatial planning approach - takes into account issues such as recent intensification of rural lifestyle subdivision and development in the area, major transport infrastructure developments such as Transmission Gully Motorway that will add further pressure for land utilisation in the area, and the sensitive receiving environment of Porirua Harbour. |
| <i>PCC Aotea Block</i> | February 2003 | | The 246-hectare Aotea Block is of significant strategic importance to Porirua City because of its | The Plan takes an integrated approach to development by incorporating |



| Document name/ Council responsible | Operative | Review | Scope and purpose | Relevance to spatial planning |
|--|------------------|-------------------------|--|---|
| <i>Development Plan</i> | | | large size, and its location adjacent to the City Centre, the motorway and the railway. It is the largest area for urban growth within the City's boundaries. In recognition of the importance of the site Council acquired the Block in April 2000. Council then identified a strategic vision for the Block: "Achieve an integrated, mixed-use development that responds to and enhances the important landscape features of the Block." | considerations such as protection of landscape values, attention to streetscape detail (e.g. street planting, street lights and pavement features), enhanced employment opportunities, areas of varying residential density, and extensive erosion and sediment control measures. |
| <i>PCC Northern Growth Area Structure Plan</i> | December 2014 | | Sets out a scenario for future urban development in Porirua's northern suburbs, between Camborne and Pukerua Bay, over a 30-year+ period, as well as providing direction to inform changes to the land use and subdivision provisions of the Porirua City District Plan. | The structure plan is a "blueprint" for guiding development over a long timeframe. It is the result of studying a wide range of factors such as housing and business needs, land contours, ecology, roading and connections, heritage and infrastructure. The structure plan brings all these elements together and considers how land can best accommodate growth and development. |
| <i>PCC Transportation Strategy</i> | December 2012 | | A twenty-year vision for Porirua City's transport system that supports the other goals in Council's Strategic Plan. The Porirua Transportation Strategy informs the Long Term Plan and Annual Plan processes and is required to support funding applications to Central Government. The Strategy aims to ensure integrated transport development and to make certain that the transport network provides for the future needs of the city. | While primarily a transportation strategy, the role of land-use and the need to integrate are recognised. As a consequence, this strategy has been developed with consideration of the District Plan. |
| <i>KCDC District Plan</i> | | Currently under review. | Contains objectives, policies and methods to manage activities, including growth and development, in the district under the RMA. | The plan contains specific growth related provisions and associated guidance that apply to the Ngarara, Waikanae North and Future Urban Development zones. |



| Document name/ Council responsible | Operative | Review | Scope and purpose | Relevance to spatial planning |
|--|------------------|-----------------|---|---|
| <i>KCDC Development Management Strategy</i> | September 2007 | | Sets out KCDC's strategy for the management of development and settlement patterns on the Kapiti Coast. One of a number of strategies written within the context of Kapiti Coast: Choosing Futures – Community Outcomes articulated by the community in 2003/04. Also draws on previous documents and initiatives developed since 1992 when the first broad strategic development framework was developed. Takes into account the growth framework from the original Wellington Regional Strategy document. | The strategy considers a range of spatial factors such as settlement history, the nature and rate of population growth, the character and safety of town centres, housing density, timing and extent of residential subdivision, improved public transport, local economy and efficient use of existing infrastructure. |
| <i>Ngarara Precinct Structure Plan</i> | March 2010 | | Identifies a series of development areas, called Neighbourhood Development Areas, and adjoining open spaces areas, with the development of each neighbourhood informed by specific management principles and guidelines that dictate the form and nature of development. Included as part of the KCDC Operative/Proposed District Plan. | Provides for urban growth and development that maintains existing rural coastal ecology, limits urban sprawl and maintains open space between neighbourhoods, while providing for residential and limited mixed use development. |
| <i>HCC District Plan</i> | 2004 | Rolling review. | Contains objectives, policies and methods to manage activities, including growth and development, in the city under the RMA. | |
| <i>HCC Urban Growth Strategy 2012 - 2032</i> | March 2014 | | Outlines the City's development vision, highlighting 5 key areas: growth targets, greenfield development, targeted infill housing and growth in low rise apartments, investigations into the potential for development in the southern portion of Manor Park, and financial incentives. | Focuses on how the City wants to grow in future, where new homes and businesses will be accommodated and what will be done to support and encourage this development. |
| <i>UHCC District Plan</i> | 2004 | Rolling review. | Contains objectives, policies and methods to manage activities, including growth and development, in the city under the RMA. | |



| Document name/ Council responsible | Operative | Review | Scope and purpose | Relevance to spatial planning |
|---|------------------|--|---|---|
| <i>UHCC Urban Growth Strategy</i> | September 2007 | Under review. | Aims to guide decision making to ensure that urban growth in Upper Hutt is well integrated, affordable and sustainable. Looks at how best to adapt to changing local, national and international conditions while at the same time addressing local issues such as identifying new land and new ways of providing opportunity for further growth of business, housing and related services. | The Strategy focuses in particular on identifying where greenfield residential expansion could occur; other development options that could be retrofitted into the existing urban environment; encouraging a greater diversity and choice of housing and business development; guiding decision making to achieve an affordable and sustainable compact urban form. |
| <i>UHCC Maymorn Structure Plan</i> | February 2012 | Under review (as part of Urban Growth Strategy review) | Articulates a long term vision for Maymorn and the Mangaroa Valley and outlines a strategic framework to guide the development process in the area. | Guides future land uses, infrastructure provision and potential development in the Maymorn area; has been developed with an urban design focus, drawing on key urban design and sustainability principles, with varying housing densities proposed. |



Appendix 2: Summary of Interview Feedback

A series of interviews with the five metropolitan territorial authorities, Greater Wellington Regional Council, NZTA Central Region, and Horowhenua District Council was undertaken over November – December 2015. The interviews with the Councils generally involved the Mayor/Chair, the Chief Executive and senior management.

The interviews followed a series of questions around –

- The key drivers for having a spatial plan for the Wellington Region
- The scope of a spatial plan
- The major obstacles/challenges in developing a spatial plan
- Whether legislative changes would be required
- The funding, governance, resourcing of spatial plan development
- Community engagement
- Alternative approaches to spatial planning
- The implementation of a spatial plan

The following summarises the feedback received from the interviews, identifying commonly held views or ideas, as well as differing views.

Does the Wellington Region need a spatial plan?

Common responses

In general, there was support for a spatial plan to be developed for the Region, but this support spanned a spectrum of views, from strong opinions that it is essential through to those who considered that it should only occur if clear drivers or objectives are first identified.

Specific reasons for having a spatial plan included the following:

- It would avoid the waste of time, energy, and resources involved in the current duplication of plans, missed opportunities, over-investment and poor decision-making
- A spatial plan is a way to manage and plan for growth, migration, resources
- It would provide certainty on where to invest in order to create benefits for the economy
- Full potential of the transport network can be reached
- A common vision for the future of the whole region that councils can benefit from
- Needed, but there is competition for the limited growth occurring in Wellington – each council is fighting for it and wants whatever will enable it



- Would help stimulate economic growth for the region – for example, in transport/roading
- Avoiding waste of time, energy resources through duplication of plans, missed opportunities, overinvestment and poor decision making
- Helps Wellington to seriously shape its identity as a region, attracting growth and investment to benefit all – support and enhance Wellington’s overall identity and competitiveness
- It would help Wellington to seriously shape its identity as a region, attracting growth and investment to benefit all
- A driver would be to avoid amalgamation (“a cynical view but it’s the real view”) – would demonstrate that the region can collaborative and work together well without amalgamation
- Take advantage of post-amalgamation climate: Everyone’s trying to be a bit more collaborative, participating and being nice to each other right now, but still doing things in isolation. A spatial plan could be the process to unify and pull everyone together

Alternative views

There was a range of views questioning the need for a spatial plan:

- There does not appear to be strong / clear drivers that all councils could get behind
- There’s not huge merit in doing it now, it might be something we do in due course when there is enough growth to need it
- What would happen if we don’t do a spatial plan? It’s already there in one form or another
- What are the consequences for doing nothing? There doesn’t seem to be a huge case for this unlike there is in Auckland where there is the growth that needs to be managed. There is no massive growth in the region
- Wellington’s not actually that broken – you don’t see the dysfunction you do in Auckland and Christchurch
- Give the collaboration that’s occurring between the Councils now enough time to bed in, and then do one. We’re already working collaboratively on plan changes
- Don’t always just leap to something new, maybe what we have right now could just be tweaked
- What big projects are coming up in Wellington that mean the region needs to function better?
- What would the spatial plan do that we don’t do already? What could it do for us that we aren’t doing now?
- There’s lots of things to fix in these places [outside central Wellington] but you fix that by changing peoples’ attitudes about the places and encouraging them to live there



- The Wellington [City] Urban Growth Plan covers everything and we wouldn't want to re-do this.
- Key problem is sluggish economic growth and the spatial plan isn't the solution. Spatial plans tend to be used to manage growth not create them. Different tool sets are required to stimulate economic growth. Urban development cooperatives, economic zones – not a big structure plan.

What opportunities could spatial planning address for the Region?

Common responses

In regard to the scope of a spatial plan for the region, there were some common responses:

- Provision for future urban growth
- Major infrastructure projects and requirements
- Effective land use and transport planning
- Elevating complex planning issues/decision making (for example, addressing traffic congestion) to a higher level to take political heat out of discussing and implementing them.
- Provide economic development opportunities for the whole region, avoiding leakages to other centres (for example, provision for industrial land)

Alternative views

Some more specific matters were suggested for the spatial plan to address:

- Natural hazards and resilience
- An opportunity to understand and agree on an accurate version of population growth figures in Wellington (and make informed decisions on how to manage) growth figures have been difficult to agree on in the past
- Potential dispersal of some key government and tertiary education services away from the city centre

Others considered that:

- A spatial plan cannot be too abstract, must be clear and concrete about the purpose, efficiencies gained
- Define the issues into the problem that the spatial plan should address



What are the challenges in developing a spatial plan for the Region?

Common responses

- Current 'divided' political structure: different approaches to investment and what is funded, and a lack of a decision-making forum that everyone is happy to participate in and agree to.
- Mistrust/broken relationships with the regional council
- Ingrained parochialism/patch protection/parish pump politics – councils unwilling to put the region before their own community so agreeing to trade-offs will be difficult. Communities unwilling to think regionally
- Other councils will “all say yes” to a regional plan and high level goals but when it comes to discussions about the difficult things, “they really won’t do anything”, particularly if it is contradictory to local initiatives or aspirations
- Political will for Central Government to invest in Wellington is low, and we don’t have the growth (Auckland) or rebuild (Christchurch) issues
- Lack of political leadership that could unify everyone
- Funding: willingness and does share of funding equal share of the vote?
- Councils having resources and expertise to implement / key staff tied up and fears that it will not result in a high quality solution, creating more ill feeling and even less willingness to work together
- Getting councils to agree to trade-offs, convincing that no one council will lose out completely
- It won’t happen without legislation
- How to implement without it being mandatory and councils unwilling to become involved if plan lacks mandate

Alternative views

- Wellington city-centric complex: If you concentrate in Wellington you take from elsewhere
- Huge psychological threshold for other councils who are assuming Wellington City will want/will get largest share of the vote/investment
- Representation should relate to the level of funding for a spatial plan
- Consistency – sticking to the plan when politics and political leaders change
- Politicising: risk that a spatial plan becomes a political platform to be used
- Government should legislate to make the plan “politically safe”
- EPA Board of Inquiry type process, once developed councils will police it themselves



When and how long should a spatial plan be developed?

Common responses

In regard to the timing of the development of a spatial plan, the following feedback was received:

- Sooner the better, so as not to lose momentum / within a reasonable time so the process doesn't drift
- Within a local body election triennium, to avoid grandstanding around elections – i.e., about 2 year period
- Have 'a spatial plan' developed quickly as a starting point with some 'quick wins' around the important stuff and fill in details later
- Value in starting off with 'what do we have right now' in terms of spatial planning
- Implement the sooner the better – otherwise forgotten/diluted
- One single hit is the only way

Alternative views

To the contrary, the following response was received:

- It's not urgent, we have loads of stuff we want our planners to be getting on with right now other than this
- Perhaps it will be needed in 10 years once the region is growing

Who should provide leadership?

Common responses

- Non-political independent committee/entity/champions with final decisions endorsed by the councils individually – working like a hearing, either it gets fully adopted or it doesn't
- It should be led by a really credible figurehead (Sir Geoffrey Palmer, Chris Laidlaw mentioned)
- GWRC is not the right leader for this due to distrust at political level
- Mayors must drive the process – what would engage them is very important
- Central government [through incentives/or mandating/or funding]
- Genuinely impartial body that the councils are in accordance with (secondment of planners and economists from TLAs)
- Councils with staff focussing solely on the spatial plan



Alternative views

- An independent commission/body would not work. The politicians are adamant that they have control over the issue. Politicians would have to deal with whatever was put out to the public.
- GWRC are right to lead this having put the most thought into it
- The LGC must bring councils together and incentivise to think that “we NEED a spatial plan”
- A council other than Wellington City, Porirua City Council or Greater Wellington: perhaps the Wairarapa who have experience of doing a joint plan
- Don't want to be in the position where there is some sort of grand government plan for our council

How should a spatial plan be funded and resourced?

Common responses

- Funding should be on a per capita or similar basis but all territorial authorities should have an equal vote
- Shared model with the central government and TLAs where both put in money
- A regional rate across the region per household

Alternative views

- Regional amenity fund is not a good model i.e. each council contributes for good of region but actual decisions tend to be based on ensuring that the amount contributed is spent back in the city/district plus some
- Change the governance structure – decrease the number of territorial authorities in the region
- Voting should be on the basis on share of funding

Community involvement in developing the plan

Common responses

- Community engagement would be important, but need to use differing techniques aimed at differing groups – for example, use innovative online engagement in addition to more traditional methods
- Engagement with key stakeholder/specific groups: commerce, social groups, elderly on key themes i.e. cannot consult on every issue



Alternative views

- Use Whaitua/community focus groups
- Should encourage 'people power' to pressure implementation (important for each community to understand the value and benefits of supporting and push councils to support)
- Community engagement would be difficult as a spatial plan would be at too high level/abstract at a regional level
- You can't go to the public too early – they'll go to the trenches and think of conspiracies. Some sort of commitment from elected members first to say to the community 'we need to look at this'
- There's so much the community are going to be asked about in the next year – the community is quite likely to be cynical about whether this would make any difference

Alternatives to a spatial plan?

Common responses

The only other method to a spatial plan suggested was using the Regional Policy Statement for spatial planning purposes. However, it was commonly thought that the RPS was not the most appropriate solution, for the following reasons:

- You'd have to be careful about ownership around it – who is governing whom would be the trickiest thing
- The Resource Management Act may not provide sufficient legal scope to address everything it should address
- If it's quite broad and becomes binding, it'll be seen as a spatial plan by stealth run by the Regional Council
- Implementation could be difficult as it will only bind regional and district plans

Alternative views

The potential use of the Regional Land Transport Plan was suggested by one respondent.

How should the spatial plan be implemented?

Common responses

- The Councils should have dedicated staff to its implementation
- The spatial plan should be 'given effect to' i.e. one line written in to laws and plans that states the spatial plan must be given effect to.



- Spatial plan must have power to inform district plans

Alternative views

- If we agreed with it, of course we'd give effect to it in District plans etc. If you reference the current spatial planning documents through the RPS the same thing would work
- Councils are already well progressed in undertaking District Plan reviews and changes for growth
- This sort of thing should be covered in peoples' district plans. Let's not create a whole set of different and potentially contradictory tools.