

PICT submission on

Draft Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region 2008

Introduction

The Pauatahanui Inlet Community Trust (PICT) is a charitable trust established in May 2002 tasked with ensuring the implementation of the Pauatahanui Inlet Action Plan. *Towards Integrated Management: the Pauatahanui Inlet Action Plan* includes the following vision statement:

“the Pauatahanui Inlet and its catchment is managed to:

Enhance the quality of the environment by protecting the integrity of existing ecosystems and by restoring degraded ecosystems wherever possible.

Enable people to enjoy recreational activities and to undertake economic activities without compromising the reasonably foreseeable needs of present and future generations.

This can only be achieved by management agencies and the community working together”.

The draft Regional Policy Statement (RPS) and the various plans developed under the Resource Management Act 1991 are critical to delivering this vision for the Pauatahanui Inlet and, indeed, for the whole Porirua Harbour¹.

General comments on the draft RPS

Overall, we think the draft RPS is well structured, logical, easy to read, and covers the important regional matters.

Regionally significant issues

We support the regionally significant issues identified in the draft RPS.

Objectives

We support the objectives in the draft RPS particularly those for the coastal environment and fresh water. The focus on improved erosion and sediment control and storm water management is very important.

Policies

In general, we support the policies as set out in the draft RPS.

We particularly support:

¹ PICT defines the Porirua Harbour as encompassing the Pauatahanui Inlet, the Onepoto Arm and the channel to the sea.

- the policies for the coastal environment. We support the identification of the Pauatahanui Inlet as a site of regional significance.
- Policies 13 – 16 related to fresh water. We support the identification of the streams in the Pauatahanui and Kakaho catchments as significant indigenous ecosystems in Table 18.
- We support the focus in Policy 15 on promoting collective sewage systems for rural residential areas.

However, we consider that the Horokiri stream and catchment has similar qualities to Pauatahanui and Kakaho catchments and consider it should be added to Table 18.

We suggest that Policy 39 should also apply to new and upgraded roading projects in order to manage storm water from that type of development.

We also suggest that Policy 37 may need to be amended to allow ‘costs’ to be taken into account as well as benefits.

We note that Policy 55 (management of regional focus areas) identifies Pauatahanui as a regional focus area for which a planning framework will be developed. We support this policy, in principle, as any development in the Pauatahanui village area must be part of an integrated plan that considers the effect of development on the natural values of the Inlet and catchment. We look forward to opportunities to comment on the detail of the framework as it is developed.

Methods

We generally support the methods as set out in the draft RPS. We are pleased to see further work proposed on earthworks and storm water in Method 29 – protocol for managing earthworks and Method 32 – regional storm water action plan.

As Council will be aware, a Porirua Harbour Strategy is to be developed by Porirua City Council in conjunction with GWRC. Presumably this could be an example of integrated management identified in Method 27b. PICT is supportive of this type of approach.

Anticipated environmental results

PICT is generally supportive of the anticipated environmental results(AERs). However, we would like to see one of the AERs for Objective 6 strengthened to read:

Biodiversity of the intertidal zone (between mean high and mean low water springs) will be maintained, or improved over time where it has deteriorated from its natural state.

While Objective 6 refers to enhancement, the AERs do not so we think this should be addressed.

We would also like Objective 9 to be amended by adding:

(f) without damaging the social, cultural, aesthetic and ecological values of the environment.

Summary and conclusion

In summary, we support many of the provisions of the draft RPS. However, we would like some changes as follows:

- The addition of the Horokiri stream and catchment to Table 18.
- Objective 6 (p121) strengthened to read: *Biodiversity of the intertidal zone (between mean high and mean low water springs) will be maintained, or improved over time where it has deteriorated from its natural state.*
- Objective 9 (p121) amended by adding: *(f) without damaging the social, cultural, aesthetic and ecological values of the environment.*
- Policy 39 amended to apply to new and upgraded roading projects in order to manage storm water from that type of development

In conclusion, PICT congratulates GWRC on the Draft RPS. We would like to be added to the RPS contact list.