

8 September 2011



the architectural centre inc.  
PO Box 24178 Wellington

**Re: Town Belt Legislative & Policy Review**

This submission is from the Wellington Architectural Centre, a group which represents both professional and non-professionals interested in architecture and design, and in the promotion of good design in Wellington. Thank you for this opportunity to make a submission on this review.

The Architectural Centre supports the Councils' Draft Town Belt principles, and we support and congratulate the Council on the work it has done since 1998 to protect and recover Town Belt land. We strongly support the Council's intention for mana whenua to play a greater role in the future of the Town Belt. We definitely strongly support the Town Belt Reinstatement Policy regarding the 2009 claims settlement.

We consider the definition of the Town Belt to be the pre-Deed or original Town Belt of 625 hectares, but do not see this as the extent of the Council's obligations to provide recreational space in the city.

While we support the Draft Town Belt principles, we have some further comments to make.

**Principle 1.** We recommend a slight change in the wording of this principle so that it reads as follows: "There will always be **the** Town Belt." We strongly support the Council's intention to "continue a robust policy of avoiding any further alienation of Town Belt land ... [and the pursuit of replacing] any alienated land with open space of equal [recreational] value or character to be returned to the Town Belt." We strongly support assertive action being taken by the council to achieve this including legislative changes to ensure local government decision-making is prioritised. We encourage the Council to outline how it intends to achieve legislative change to increase the protection of the Town Belt, including a proposed timeline for achieving this.

**Principle 2.** The partnership referred to in this principle needs to be a true and meaningful partnership with mana whenua.

**Principle 3.** We strongly support this, especially the need for the Town Belt to be a continuous belt of land. We strongly encourage the Council to proactively work toward the creation of green corridors to amend the current gaps of continuity in the Town Belt.

**Principle 4.** We agree with this principle

**Principle 5.** We believe that the council needs to provide more built infrastructure for formal recreation (including sports fields) in Wellington. We strongly encourage the Council to conduct a review of current facilities for supporting formal recreation, especially built structures (including sports fields) in the city. Such facilities do not need to be accommodated within the Town Belt, but ensuring sufficient facilities (with good access to public transport), is a related issue which will inform the wording of this principle. Consequently we believe that a review of sports/formal recreation infrastructure needs to be undertaken in parallel with decisions made in relation to the quantity and type of recreational support to be provided within the Town Belt, and which are defined in the Town Belt Principles.

We support the intensification of built structures on sites within the Town Belt that have existing buildings, and we consider that such intensification could occur with respect to both space and time management. We strongly encourage the Council to develop a policy on car parks in the Town Belt. We believe that car parking must be minimised in the Town Belt, and that planning sporting infrastructure in relation to public transport is essential to assist in this. We also recommend to Council the use of grass car parks, as has been implemented in Newtown Park, to help minimise the impact of car parks on the Town Belt environment.

We support the gradual change in the ownership and control of buildings on the Town Belt so they become Council owned and operated.

**Principle 6.** We support increased acknowledgement of the historical links of mana whenua to the land. We also consider that built structures, including continuity of use, within the Town Belt are part of its rich and diverse history, and consider that the governance of the Town Belt facilitate the repair and maintenance of building fabric in existing structures.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Town Belt Legislative and Policy Review. If you have any questions in relation to our submission, please do not hesitate to contact me.

best wishes

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