

1st May 2006



the architectural centre inc.
PO Box 24178 Wellington

Re: Proposed District Plan Change 42: Clarification of Airport Precinct Rules

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. Members of the Architectural Centre who are associated with the proposal, or who are associated with firms involved in the design (and hence may be seen to have a conflict of interest), have had no input into the writing of this submission.

Support for the Proposal

The Architectural Centre strongly endorses the City Council's proposed District Plan Change 42 regarding the Airport and Golf Course Recreation Precinct.

Discussion

The Architectural Centre recognises that the existing District Plan rules regarding the Airport and Golf Course Recreation Precinct continues out-date ideas about airport activities which date from a time when airports operated within a narrow definition of public service port company. The changing commercial programme of contemporary airport companies, where maximising financial profit has broadened the activities of the airport company to include those of commercial land developer, has meant that the current District Plan does not appropriately evaluate and accommodate new developments in the precinct. As the proposal notes: "More recently WIAL has applied for a number of certificates of compliance to confirm that a range of non-airport activities are permitted. The proposals include a childcare centre, office complex, supermarket, gym, bar and other retailing" (Appendix 2, p. 2.).

The Architectural Centre therefore strongly supports Option 2 outlined in the Section 32 Report, namely to "Amend existing Precinct rules to clarify the intent." The Centre supports the change to "limit the rule to building developments related to the primary function of the airport," and we support the "default maximum building height of 12m ... [to reflect] the height restriction on buildings used for commercial, recreational and travellers' accommodation and services, and in Suburban Centres."

We consider that such changes will address ambiguities in the current District Plan regarding this precinct, and will promote similar obligations and benefits as those for similar development in other areas of the city.

Conclusion

The Centre strongly supports the need for this District Plan Change 42, and commends the council for taking this initiative. We consider that non-airport related activities would contravene the existing plan, and strongly encourage the council to request that WIAL reapply for certificates of compliance once the District Plan has been altered so that it is able to appropriately evaluate these applications. We commend the council for its work to ensure that the Airport Area rules are aligned with the objectives and policies of the precinct, and to bring this precinct under controls similar to those elsewhere in Wellington city.

Yours sincerely

Christine McCarthy
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