

28 February 2012



the architectural centre inc.  
PO Box 24178 Wellington

**Re: Drafting the Long Term Plan 2012/22**

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 comment on this proposal. Below are a number of points in the areas you have identified for feedback.

**(1) People-Centred City**

- (a) Require higher standards of design for all aspects of the built environment, including not only the suburbs, but the city.
- (b) Increase the visibility of Maori and the history of Maori in the city
- (c) Invest in earthquake strengthening, and actively support sensible proactive measures such as the removal or strengthening of domestic fireplaces, and the secure fixing of houses onto foundations.
- (d) Invest in earthquake strengthening heritage buildings, and lobbying central government to provide tax rebates for owners of heritage buildings who undertake earthquake strengthening, as well as increasing the fund available for strengthening heritage buildings.
- (e) Require all new housing developments to have social housing as a significant part of the project eg 20% minimum affordable homes. This should apply as much to the outer suburbs as it does to the inner city.
- (f) Encourage a higher percentage of owner-occupied apartments in the inner-city. Currently the dominance of investor-owned apartments has led to poor quality apartments for tenants, with small rooms, and low quality amenity which lack active street edges. We support council efforts to increase the mix of apartment types within single developments: i.e. owner-occupied and tenanted apartments, fitted out and shell only apartments.
- (g) Celebrate Wellington's capital city status: its public servants and national significance.
- (h) Ensure the city has spaces which facilitate Wellington citizens' democratic right to protest. The Occupy movement has demonstrated that we are lacking in this respect.

**(2) Creating an Eco-City**

- (a) Encourage better levels of sustainability in building design including:
  - (i) optimising daylight and active use of daylight harvesting.
  - (ii) reduce air-conditioned cooling; alternatives include low volume tempered fresh-air/chilled beam arrangements, as well as sensible use of passive thermal mass.
  - (iii) disallow full glass facades unless externally shaded, and encourage double-skin facades for energy management.
  - (iv) reduce water consumption and rainwater runoff from roofs.
  - (v) encourage long-life buildings (via regulation as well as rating, and other incentives).
  - (vi) discourage cars in the inner city by making the provision of parking a notifiable condition under the Central Area in the District Plan.
  - (vii) create incentives for zero waste/zero carbon developments and initiate education about zero waste/zero carbon development for building professionals and other citizens.
  - (viii) all new dwellings must be fitted with solar hot water heating devices. This is an affordable and useful technology that is available and cost-effective now, and should be utilized throughout our city.
- (b) Encourage suburban residences to plant native tree species to increase biodiversity and support native birds.
- (c) Limit the edge of the city, do not allow urban sprawl.

- (d) Make Memorial Park a traffic-free connection via the Basin to the town belt.
- (e) Establish how the city is planning for the aim for making NZ a smoke-free country by 2025. The Architectural Centre supports this aim, but considers that such a radical move needs comprehensive planning and support for current smokers.

### **(3) Creating a Connected City**

- (a) Plan now for a Light Rail network, or for modern trams. While this may not be implemented for another decade, it is inevitable, and transport corridors for this need to be planned and implemented now.
- (b) Make Wellington safer for cycling and improve road markings in the city. Create a safe and fully linked together cycling network throughout the city that cannot be sabotaged by vehicle parking. All intersections need bike boxes. There must be an increasing annual target regarding the percentage of roads with provision for cyclists (e.g. bike lanes).
- (c) Make Wellington safer and more pleasant for pedestrians, particularly in the creation of buffer zones between roads and footpaths in areas where curbside parking has been removed.
- (d) Introduce an integrated public transport system with a National Travel Card.
- (e) Develop the Basin/Adelaide Rd area so that it connects with, and is not severed from, the city.
- (f) Continue work strengthening public transport connections between the railway station and the airport (via Wellington Hospital).
- (g) Ensure better West/East permeability in blocks south of Vivian St to the Basin Reserve (e.g. extending Fifeshire Ave to Tory Street) for both cars and pedestrians.
- (h) Create a strong pedestrian connection between Parliament and the harbour.
- (i) Support initiatives for better internet and telecommunications infrastructure to enable digital connectivity to supplement physical connectivity and provide alternatives to commuter traffic and inner city work locations.
- (j) Provide better cycling facilities along the waterfront. The council ought to be encouraging mutual respect and awareness between pedestrians and cyclists not prioritising one over the other (though it should be noted in an energy-conscious world that cycling is more energy efficient than walking). Both cycling and walking will be increasingly important modes of transportation in the future.

### **(4) Creating a Dynamic City**

- (a) Build depth and substance into the built fabric of the city so tourists and residents spend more time discovering Wellington. Currently you can "do" Wellington in less than a day. We should build towards giving Wellington a sense of being culturally inexhaustible as a place to visit and revisit and revisit. We want a city that is a place where wandering the streets is satisfying and intriguing.
- (b) Make Wellington a compact city. The Council must take a lead in intensive development. Lease Council land for development, and continue to redevelop current Council housing stock.
- (c) Encourage and plan for population increase, immigration and encourage long-term citizenry, but not at the expense of the city's compact size.
- (d) Improve the urban design of the Basin Reserve and its surrounding area.
- (e) Don't forget the suburban centres and strengthen their tourism value as places to visit and for residences to work, even if they are not on the transport spine. Many of these suburban villages (e.g. Karori) would benefit from a stronger local economy and more local workplaces minimising the need for people to travel into the city to work. Just because a village is not on the transport spine (e.g. Island Bay) does not mean it does not have good public transport connections.

### **(5) Effective Expenditure**

The council has asked for indications where spending priorities might change to fund more important ways of keeping the city alive and growing. We believe the the city's seemingly high expenditure on roading maintenance, footpath repaving, and verge-mowing could be reduced by doing this maintenance on a less regular basis and the money better spent elsewhere.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment on this consideration of the Long Term Plan. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Christine McCarthy  
President  
The Architectural Centre  
arch@architecture.org.nz