

30 January 2019

Committee Secretariat
Finance and Expenditure Committee
Parliament Buildings
New Zealand
fe@parliament.govt.nz

Re: Budget Policy Statement 2019

This submission is from the Architectural Centre. We are an incorporated society dating from 1946, which represents both professionals and non-professionals interested in the promotion of good design.

We have the following comments to make regarding the proposed Building Amendment Bill:

1. Generally, we strongly support the idea of wellbeing as the core principle in the budget and in government policy more generally.
2. Our comments are restricted to the two priorities that are particularly aligned with the Architectural Centre's remit. In addition we provide a comment on the Treasury's Living Standards Framework.

Creating opportunities for productive businesses, regions, iwi and others to transition to a sustainable and low-emissions economy

3. We strongly support, and recognise the need for, transition to a sustainable and low-emissions economy.
4. However we note the apparent contradiction in retaining "consumption" as an indicator of wellbeing, given that high consumption usually correlates to high carbon use. In a similar way an economy which benefits from population growth is driven by a fundamentally unsustainable proposition.
5. We strongly recommend that the government prioritise an economy that supports low carbon use, local and neighbourhood infrastructure, adaptive re-use of buildings, good maintenance of buildings and the built environment, **low-energy products that can be fixed** and companies which service and fix such products.
6. We believe that industries that support low-energy use and/or zero- and/or low-energy living (e.g. photovoltaic panel, double glazing, and building insulation producers and installers; antiques and second hand dealers); and business models that support cheap energy production (e.g. solar energy buy back schemes) need to be incentivised by the economy supported by a wellbeing budget.
7. We consequently recommend the government dis-incentivise our current throw-away culture in its re-prioritising exercise.



the architectural centre inc.
PO Box 24178 Wellington

8. In a similar vein, dirty industries, and externalising our unsustainable behaviour (e.g. exporting plastics for others to recycle), is poor form and needs disincentivising. We point to Norway's tax on plastic producers and their bottle deposit scheme as possibilities to adopt and we suggest that there is massive business and employment potential to be capitalised locally by minimising such waste in New Zealand to an acceptable environment standard. We are after all reputably a country of entrepreneurs and innovators.
9. The built environment, through construction and transport sectors, is a significant contributor to carbon emissions. It is currently designed to support and encourage high-energy use activities. For example, **the design of our cities** privilege and incentivise private traffic. This must change. Removal of urban limits mostly produces sprawl, and results in the loss of fertile, productive land for food production. Extension along public transport routes, including the main trunk line could, however, improve the viability of some routes when communities cluster around transport nodes.
10. Generally, however, we believe that compact settlement patterns will better embrace all four capitals (human, social, natural, financial), and provide better support for neighbourhoods that enable viable work opportunities for their community.
11. These urban forms are byproducts of an economy's philosophical underpinnings, and a culture of externalising through pollution, and other causes of collateral damage. A successful wellbeing budget will be increasingly apparent in new urban forms.
12. We support a budget process that requires a change in mindset to one that comprehends long terms costs and savings. Investing in long-term projects such as light rail in our urban centres (e.g. Wellington), and re-electrifying the main trunk line are important projects for long term energy security and achieving a cleaner planet sooner. Roads need to be re-designed to prioritise active and sustainable modes, mass public transit and car-sharing.
13. Funding should be provided to extend Winston's "super gold card" to under 18s and possibly further.
14. The design of the built environment is also vital for social equity. Children and poor people have increasingly been designed out of cities.
15. Funding is specifically needed to build and provide housing and transport services (just like the government provides basic education and health infrastructure). Such housing infrastructure needs to be provided close to public transport options and to enable access to viable work choices. In this regard we favour investment in the provision of state and social housing over schemes like Kiwibuild, which are targetted at the middle classes. Government investment and research in housing should lift building standards, as well as demonstrate a range of alternative options that enable sustainable lifestyles.

Supporting a thriving nation in the digital age through innovation, social and economic opportunities

16. Many of the issues raised above could be facilitated or complemented by digital means.
17. Digital traffic management, including transit priority, is one area with potential to reduce emissions. Car share schemes are already reducing the embodied energy parked on our roads, with estimates of between 5-15 cars being

replaced by every car share vehicle, reducing car ownership and also resulting in significant reductions in land use by car-parking.

Living Standards Framework

18. We support the Living Standards Framework. We do however wonder if the introduction of a "Cultural Capital" into the framework of Financial, Social, Natural and Human capitals might be appropriate.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Budget Policy Statement. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Nāku iti noa nā


Christine McCarthy
President, Architectural Centre