

10 May 2019

Wellington City Council  
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**Our City Tomorrow : Planning for Growth**

Tēnā koutou,

Thank you for providing opportunity to comment on this documentation. Thank you also for planning for Wellington's growth.

For over 70-year the Architectural Centre has been advocating for greater residential density. Within the parameters of this consultation the Centre most strongly supports scenario two, and most strongly opposes scenario three. Scenario four has attractive elements but only at the expense of the existing built environment. Scenario one's focus on residential development in high-rise towers (either up-to 15 stories or +15, the consultation documents are ambiguous) the construction of which present too great a cost in natural resources. High-rise residential developments have had a checkered history. Such buildings have their uses but the Centre does not see this as the most desirable solution.

Given the importance of the success of this consultation process, and the need for it to work in relation with other aspects of Wellington city's built environment, we would like to highlight a number of issues in the consultation documentation which we consider important. We make the following points:

1. The documentation is premised on a population growth of 80,000 residents in the Wellington region while simultaneously suggesting the region is unsafe, due to earthquakes, and will be subject to inundation by rising sea levels. These two factors would suggest it is not population growth, but population redistribution that should be planned for. The city/region cannot rely on population growth to fund this movement. Any future developments should seek to actively move existing residents from unsafe areas. The implication of scenario four is that a few who



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cannot afford to, will move to safety while the existing residence who cannot will be left increasingly vulnerable.

2. The documentation makes no reference to the immanent Zero Carbon Act and the impacts that this will have on construction, infrastructure and transportation. Climate change is a reality. New building cannot add to this problem - it must be part of the solution. This planning process has the opportunity to place strong incentives to support development of **sustainable built environment and housing**. We continue to urge the council to lobby government to amend the Building Act to make sustainable architecture a requirement for all buildings in the future.
3. The documentation makes no mention of potential development of **affordable housing**, maintenance or remediation of existing parcels of council and state social housing. For sustainability reasons, this is of great concern. Demolition of existing infrastructure is wasteful. The costs of demolition (deconstruction, haulage and landfill) are typically underestimated.
4. The documentation repeatedly describes densification of city fringe and suburban centres in terms of a loss of character, denying the potential of **high quality design of the public realm to improve the character** of the built environment. Many of these centres (Newtown, Kilbirnie, Johnsonville etc) are appalling civic spaces dominated by heavy traffic. Good design that responds to specific needs and how people engage with and actually use spaces (e.g. desire lines) is vital for successful inner and fringe city neighbourhoods. We ask that the council improve consultation processes by explaining that a densification process, through good planning and design, can improved access to existing open spaces and community facilities such as schools etc.

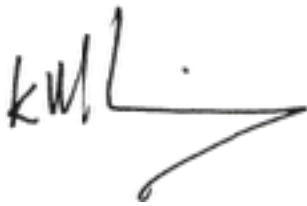


5. Densification does not require loss of existing building character. In the examples included above, late-Nineteenth and early-Twentieth Century housing has been successfully modernised to increase occupation rates. The right-hand example also maintains a traditional built form of residential-over-commercial, ensuring that basic services and commodities are accessible to residents without need for car journeys..
6. The documentation restricts consideration of the predicted population growth to housing impacts without addressing where and how these people may work, go to school and access essential services such as medical care. As such, potential densification of residential building

through light industrial/commercial zones, such as Kent/Cambridge Terrace and Adelaide Road, is not presented as an option. Bringing people closer to where they work increases the opportunity for active modes of transport and enlivens non-residential areas that go dead after work hours.

7. The Centre considers removing the requirements for on and off street car-parking as a solution to the space requirements for densification of Wellington's residential areas.

Ngā mihi,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'kwl' followed by a stylized flourish that extends to the right and then curves downwards.

The Architecture Centre.

p.p. Kate Linzey