



## **Submission on the Wellington City Council Long Term Plan, 2021 - 2031**

### **Introduction**

The Newtown Residents' Association has been an Incorporated Society since July 1963. We are residents and business owners from Newtown and the surrounding area, who take a keen interest in the community and local issues. We are concerned with maintaining and improving our area's liveability, connectedness and sustainability and working to make our community a thriving, diverse, great place to live.

### **Submission**

Our Association has a long history of making submissions asking for priority to be given to the City's basic services, and we are very relieved that this is now a primary focus of this Long Term Plan. A solution and upgrade to our water and sewerage infrastructure is paramount as is doing all we can to combat climate change.

### **Decision #1: Investment in three waters infrastructure.**

We support Option 3, Accelerated investment. The Council's preferred option 2, 'enhanced investment', lacks ambition. There have been many years of deferred action, with increasing deterioration to the pipes, and we are impatient with proposals to restrict remedial action now that the situation is at crisis point.

In our submission to the 2018-2028 LTP we had particular concerns about storm water management, and strongly supported water sensitive urban design. As we said then, we would like to see an emphasis on managing stormwater by increasing the extent of porous surfaces so that less water enters the stormwater network and more infiltrates to ground. As well as reducing the quantities of water being drained, this would also reduce the load of contaminants such as heavy metals and hydrocarbons entering streams and the harbour. There is only a passing reference to these principles in this plan, again in option 3. We look forward to water sensitive urban design being incorporated in the District Plan review.

### **Decision #2: Wastewater laterals**

We strongly support Option 2, the proposal that the Council should take ownership of the laterals and accept responsibility for the maintenance and renewal of private wastewater connections to the wastewater (sewerage) main underneath the road corridor. Currently householders have no control over the conditions that can damage these laterals,

and no choice over how they are repaired, but are expected to be financially responsible. The threat of large and unforeseen expenses hangs over all ratepayers, and it would be a great relief for the Council to take this responsibility.

### **Decision #3: Cycleways**

We note that none of the options in this draft plan involve any definite action on a Newtown Connections cycleway. This is merely referred to in Options 3 and 4 as something that might be delivered as part of Lets Get Wellington Moving.

Our Association members have a wide range of opinions on cycleways, so our submissions on the subject have focussed on the importance of recognising and acknowledging the needs and wishes of all members of our community, while working towards good cycling solutions.

We do agree with making it easier and safer for people to cycle. This is a healthy and environmentally sustainable mode of transport, and we agree with encouraging and supporting those who would cycle but experience it as unsafe in current conditions. However currently there is no consensus about the best way forward.

As we said in the 2018 consultation on Newtown Connections, the biggest problem area is the need for on-street car parking for a community with little off-street parking, on the one hand, and the desire for a network of protected cycleways on the other hand, and the extreme difficulty of fitting both into our narrow streets.

We acknowledged that it won't be possible to satisfy everyone, but we asked for continuing efforts to communicate and explain the rationale for decisions, to listen to concerns and to do whatever is possible to ameliorate adverse effects.

This started off well with an apparent acknowledgement that parking issues needed attention before the Newtown Connections cycleways proceeded. There were extensive reviews and consultation on WCC's Parking Policy, and we were pleased that the WCC Parking Policy (finally adopted in August 2020) made provision for Area Based Planning. During consultation there was a suggestion that Newtown might be the first, or one of the first, communities where this area based planning would be put into action. We have heard nothing more but we are still waiting and hoping that this will happen in the near future. At present the pressure on parking is increasingly severe.

### **Decision #4: Te Atakura First to Zero**

We support Option 3, to fully fund the Te Atakura action plan.

### **Decision #5: Te Ngākau Civic Precinct, Council Office Buildings**

On the information in the consultation document we prefer Option 2.

We note that it is acknowledged in the draft Plan that the MOB has particular heritage value, and the arguments for preferring the option of demolition seem unconvincing.

To demolish both buildings and start again is a huge undertaking, and it is hard to approve of this, even in principle, without having much more clarity around the parameters for the final design.

However we do not think that there has been enough public information and involvement in exploring the options and possible outcomes. We would like to see more process around this before any action is taken.

### **Decision #6: Central Library**

We support Option 1, to fund the repair and upgrade of the Central Library by temporarily breaching the current debt limit.

### **Decision#7: Sludge and waste minimisation**

We strongly support investing in treatment of wastewater at the Moa Point plant, so that the sludge can be kept out of the landfill. When there is no longer any need to mix the sludge with general waste it becomes possible to make every effort to reduce the total amount of waste going to the landfill. We hope that this will mean that there is no need to increase the size of the landfill site for many years to come.

We support Option 4, if the proposed alternative funding for this investment through the Infrastructure Funding and Financing Act is indeed a realistic option.

**Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission. We would like the opportunity to speak to Councillors about it in the appropriate forums.**

**Rhona Carson**

**President, Newtown Residents' Association**

**May 8<sup>th</sup> 2021**