

Property Council New Zealand

Submission to Wellington City Council on Te Ngākau Precinct Development Plan Consultation

13 November 2024

For more information and further queries, please contact
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Submission on Wellington City Council's Te Ngākau Precinct Development Plan Consultation.

1. Summary

- 1.1 Property Council Wellington Branch ("Property Council") welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on Wellington City Council's ("WCC") Te Ngākau Precinct Development Plan Consultation ("Development Plan").
- 1.2 WCC has already committed \$65 million to address the Te Ngākau Precinct. Wellington requires strong leadership and direction. The Development Plan should favour the option that would best provide WCC return on their investment, by increasing the vibrancy and use of the facilities.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 At a high level, we recommend that WCC:
- Adopt *Option 1 – Addition of a pedestrian crossing only*. However, this could be adopted on the proviso that investigation and negotiations into a new Sea Bridge occurs under *Scenario 3 – More commercial activity*; and
 - Adopt *Option 3 – More commercial activity*.

3. Introduction

- 3.1. Property Council is the leading not-for-profit advocate for New Zealand's most significant industry, property. Our organisational purpose is, "Together, shaping cities where communities thrive".
- 3.2. The property sector shapes New Zealand's social, economic and environmental fabric. Property Council advocates for the creation and retention of a well-designed, functional and sustainable built environment, in order to contribute to the overall prosperity and well-being of New Zealand.
- 3.3. Property Council is the collective voice of the property industry. Property is the third largest industry in Wellington. There are around \$223.6 billion in property assets across Wellington, with property providing a direct contribution to GDP of \$3.6 billion and employment for 24,820 Wellington residents.
- 3.4. We connect property professionals and represent the interests of 139 Wellington based member companies across the private, public and charitable sectors.
- 3.5. This document provides Property Council's feedback on the proposed changes to [Wellington City Council's Te Ngākau Precinct Development Plan Consultation](#). Comments and recommendations are provided on issues relevant to Property Council's members.

4. City to Sea Bridge

- 4.1. WCC is asking for feedback on whether the bridge is replaced with a pedestrian crossing or a pedestrian crossing and a new bridge. Funding for the proposed demolition of the bridge and a new pedestrian crossing is budgeted for in the existing 2024-2034 Long-term Plan. However, if a new bridge was the preferred option following public consultation, an estimated \$17 million (above the current \$65 million) would be required in a future Long-term Plan.
- 4.2. WCC's Long-term Plan 2024/25 saw average rates rises of 16.9 per cent (plus 1.6 per cent for the sludge levy). The business differential is 3.7 times the residential rates. On top of this, Greater Wellington Regional Council rates increased by 20.55 per cent. WCC cannot solely rely on rates and needs to secure private capital to unlock the City's vibrancy.
- 4.3. We do not support WCC spending an additional \$17 million for the Sea Bridge. However, we still believe that there is demand for a Sea Bridge and that this can be met through negotiations and partnership with the private sector to wholly or partially fund a new bridge via the sale of the Michael Fowler Centre site.
- 4.4. WCC must become strategic, develop a more coordinated approach in the Development Plan and investigate alternative revenue sources (i.e. private funding) than solely rates.
- 4.5. We recommend WCC adopt Option 1 – Addition of a pedestrian crossing only. However, this could be adopted on the proviso that investigation into a new bridge occurs under Scenario 3 – More commercial activity.

5. Remaining parts of the precinct

- 5.1. We strongly support scenario 3 – More commercial activity.
- 5.2. WCC has committed \$65 million to address the Te Ngākau Precinct. This consultation should investigate how to best get a return on their investment as well as looking at the wider context of Wellington.
- 5.3. For example, when considering whether to landscape Jack Ilott Green, the consultation does not mention that WCC have already dedicated budget towards the redevelopment Frank Kitts Park which is directly across the road using the new pedestrian crossing. WCC should not be competing with their own assets that are across the road from one another. A new building would provide more vibrancy and provide WCC with a better return on investment with more people using the new and upgraded facilities.
- 5.4. A new building on the Michael Fowler Centre site would also offer significant cultural, commercial, residential and hospitality opportunities. It would not only create a new way to access towards Cuba Street, but would also be a 400m walk to Takina Wellington Convention Centre.

- 5.5. If the public would like to see a new Sea Bridge, WCC should investigate whether a partnership can be obtained with the design of the new building on the existing Michael Fowler Centre site to incorporate a new raised pedestrian bridge. This would be an alternative way to fund the Sea Bridge and would not result in Wellington ratepayers having to agree to an additional \$17 million of funding (on top of the current \$65 million).

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. We support *Option 1 - Addition of a pedestrian crossing only*. However, this could be adopted on the proviso that investigation and negotiations into a new Sea Bridge occurs under *Scenario 3 – More commercial activity*.
- 6.2. We strongly support scenario 3 – More commercial activity. Property Council advocates for the creation of a well-designed, functional and sustainable built environment. We believe that additional capital from the private sector is required to truly unlock the Te Ngākau Precinct and support WCCs \$65 million investment in the Long-term Plan.
- 6.3. Property Council members invest, own, and develop property in Wellington. We wish to thank WCC for the opportunity to submit on the Te Ngākau Precinct Development Plan Consultation. This gives our members a chance to have their say in the future of our city. **We also wish to be heard in support of our submission.**
- 6.4. Any further enquires do not hesitate to contact Katherine Wilson, Head of Advocacy, via email: katherine@propertynz.co.nz or cell: 0278708150.

Yours Sincerely,



Melissa McGhie
Wellington Committee Chair
Property Council New Zealand