

**IN THE MATTER**

of the Resource  
Management Act 1991

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER**

of Submissions and Further  
Submissions on the  
Proposed Wellington City  
District Plan

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**Minute 40**

**2024 Hearing Arrangements (2)**

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## Minute 40 – 2024 Hearing Arrangements (2)

1. In Minute 38, we made directions for the 2024 hearings, noting some uncertainty as to when the provisions related to indigenous biodiversity would be heard. That uncertainty arose by reason of the need for Council to consider its response to the then recently gazetted NPSIB.
2. Since then, of course, we have had a new Government form, which has made a number of public statements about its intentions vis-a-vis management of the environment generally, but including indigenous biodiversity. The announcements to date, however, have been at a high level and we do not know when higher order direction in relation to indigenous biodiversity may change, and what exactly it may change to.
3. We understand from Council that it is considering notifying a variation specifically on indigenous biodiversity but, like the rest of us, it is waiting for clearer direction from Central Government before finalising its position.
4. In the circumstances, we consider it prudent to delay hearing of the indigenous biodiversity provisions of the Plan (that is to say, the Eco Chapter) for as long as possible. Our present intention is to utilise the hearing slot previously identified as being utilised for the purposes of a wrap-up hearing, which, as advised in Minute 38, was scheduled for 9-13 September. We doubt that this timeframe, however, will be sufficient for hearing all parties on indigenous biodiversity matters, particularly if the Council follows through on its current tentative plan of notifying a variation in the New Year. That hearing slot will therefore very likely have to be extended, and further time allocated thereafter for a wrap-up hearing.
5. Accordingly, parties should take the hearing directions in Minute 38 for Streams 6-10 as unchanged, but be aware that arrangements for hearing of the Eco Chapter and the wrap-up hearing to follow it remain to be confirmed.
6. We apologise for the lack of certainty this creates as to the process going forward, but the parties will appreciate that these are matters well beyond our (and the Council's) control.

7. In other developments, Council has appointed Commissioner Miria Pomare to join the Panel, filling the role previously occupied by Commissioner Faulkner.
8. It remains only to thank all parties for their participation in the hearings process to date. Preparation of the Panel's reports on Council's Intensification Planning Instrument (IPI) and initial Schedule 1 matters are well advanced, and we look forward to commencing the balance of Schedule 1 hearings in February. In the meantime, the Panel will be enjoying a well-earned break, and we hope all parties are able to do the same.



**Trevor Robinson**

Chair

For the Wellington City Proposed District Plan Hearings Panel

**Dated 18 December 2023**