

District Plan - Hearing Stream 4 Centres

I am presenting as an individual and as a resident of Newtown for 45 years. I am also a member of LIVE WELLington, a grassroots organisation that champions a liveable city, and of the Newtown Residents' Association.

Like Jane O'Loughlin's LIVE WELLington's submission, Stream 4, my submission is about "ensuring our centres are vibrant, interesting, liveable and attractive.

And as stated in Rhona Carson's submission on behalf of the Newtown Residents Association, Stream 4, I am "in favour of increasing housing and housing density, and of careful planning about where well-designed multi-unit developments are best situated."

A LIVEABLE NEWTOWN

1.

I support the recommendations arising from these hearings to extend the character precincts in Newtown and hope that the submissions in stream 2 and 3 for increasing the recognition of the character and historic nature of the streets around the Centre will lead to these being increased further.

2.

I believe the PDP over-upzones Newtown and Tim Helm presenting for the Newtown Residents' Association in Stream 4 (STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF TIMOTHY HELM 12 JUNE 2023) supports this with expert evidence:

"The assumption that District Plan zoning choices pose inevitable trade-offs between housing affordability on the one hand and heritage, amenity, and the local environment on the other is not well grounded in economics." Para 11 Tim Helm

"Economic theory and empirical evidence in relation to new housing development establishes that there are generally no such trade-offs. Zoning shapes where housing is built and what it looks like, but does not generally change how much is built across the city. This rate is set by the market." Para 12 Tim Helm

"In Wellington, the Housing and Business Development Capacity Assessment identified sites with zoned capacity for over 100,000 additional dwellings under the operative District Plan. Of these, 35,000 are estimated to be feasible to develop profitably immediately. But each year only around 1,000 are developed (one in 35, or 3%)". Para 69 Tim Helm

"The tiny fraction of zoned capacity developed each year is not evidence that more capacity is needed in Wellington to encourage more development. It is evidence that more than enough capacity is already available for developers' needs." Para 70 Tim Helm

3.

I support prioritising density along the Newtown's Riddiford St spine as put forward by Martin Hanley and Anna Kemble Welch's "Red Design" plan. This provides capacity to more than meet the housing demand while preserving important heritage buildings. High-quality multi-use developments in Riddiford Street would bring vibrancy and opportunities with trade, commerce, hospitality and entertainment at street level and apartments above.

4.

I oppose Kainga Ora's proposal to make Newtown a 'Town Centre'. **Newtown is truly a Local Centre not a or Metropolitan centre.** See more details in Rhona Carson's points in The Newtown Residents' Association submission Stream 4.

A LIVEABLE ADELAIDE ROAD

5.

I propose a localised approach to Adelaide Road including using urban planning strategies and incentives for liveable residential developments that coexist with compatible business uses.

Like Jane O’Loughlin of LIVE WELLington (Stream 4) **I do not believe Adelaide Road (the Basin to John St) should be zoned CCZ.** The current Proposed District Plan puts Adelaide Road in the City Centre Zone (CCZ) with a Height Control Area 10 allowing up to 42.5 metres.

As Jane cites in her submission, Adelaide Road is an area well recognized as ripe for development. In 2008 the council worked with the local community on a blueprint for how the area might look in 20 years.

<https://wellington.govt.nz/-/media/your-council/plans-policies-and-bylaws/plans-and-policies/a-to-z/adelaiderd/files/adelaiderd-framework.pdf?la=en&hash=71FEAEFE79D90D97F7B1A262F22C795B2A19F086>

See ‘Artist impression of future Adelaide Road envisaged 2008’ attached

This picture is particularly pertinent to an examination of Adelaide Road now. The 2008 framework wisely envisaged heights of up to 18 metres (permitted) and 24 metres (discretionary) along the main thoroughfare, with lower heights (12 and 18) elsewhere.

The proposed CCZ height allowances are not appropriate for Adelaide Road if it is to be developed as a residential area.

Refer to the map ‘Adelaide Road Basin to John’ showing current uses and proposed developments

High density residential developments are planned and recently completed here but measures are needed to encourage more developers to choose areas like Adelaide Road for residential development rather than going for easy pickings in Newtown’s currently highly functioning sunny neighbourhoods and already densely populated streets. (Another reason not to upzone the Newtown suburb.)

6.

I propose varied heights as in the 2008 plan so that views and sun do not get blocked as more buildings are built. *See photos of ‘Hauwai’ and ‘Urban Habitat Co-housing’ (proposed but now a Kainga Ora site).* Hauwai Apartments - 93 one and two bedroom apartments just completed on Adelaide Road by Wellington Company and Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika set an example for the future if incentives are there. Note it is only six stories -21 metres, an appropriate scale for its position on Adelaide Road.

From Jane O’Loughlin’s Stream 4 LIVE WELLington submission:

“There is a general assumption that for a city to achieve density, very tall buildings must be built.

However, American New Urbanist Jeff Speck points out in his book ‘Walkable City’ that much density can be achieved at lower heights: Indeed, many of the cities held up as great examples of density – e.g. Paris, Copenhagen – do not feature high buildings outside of its central city – if at all.

An additional point is the desire to **give developers certainty**. If it is not known how high future buildings located around their own sites may go, developers may be wary of developing, and potential residents may be wary of being ‘built out’. This nervousness is already evident in Te Aro, where there is a phenomenon of mostly corner sites being developed, where that risk is lessened”

7.

I support the development of an Open Space Investment Plan by WCC for Adelaide road.

The provision of green spaces are necessary for health and wellbeing and will be an incentive to attract developers to build housing. Refer to *map ‘Adelaide Road Basin to John St* (suggested park site) and *‘Adelaide Road liquefaction’ map*. <https://wellington.govt.nz/-/media/your-council/plans-policies-and-bylaws/plans-and-policies/a-to-z/spatial->

plan/liquefaction-susceptibility-report---may-2021.pdf?_ga=2.86440408.1794728008.1684469962-1509731412.1599694508

There is a reason why the road is where it is. And possibly also a reason why there is one high-rise and three others planned on the West side of the Road rather than the East: there is unstable ground and potential liquefaction at the base of Mt Victoria where a river used to flow. These areas would be suitable for parks and green spaces.

This expert statement is separate from the PDP hearing process but highly relevant:

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION STRATEGY HEARING 25 May 2023 Wellington City Council -Steve Dunn - extracts

“It is widely recognised that PROMOTING and DESIGNATING NEW OPEN SPACE NOW is critical given the push to intensify and all provide housing, particularly in the central city. There will be reliance on the public open space and streets to give an environment for health and wellbeing, a connection to nature as people are housed in multi storey buildings with limited outdoor areas associated with their unit.

A case in point is Adelaide Road that has always been identified as an area suitable for growth and intensification. The Adelaide Road Framework (Nov 2008) showed pedestrian connections and open space but only the Drummond Street steps design with pocket park has been implemented.

When asked at a recent Mt Cook Mobilised meeting, the Kāinga Ora project manager said that there wasn't any provision for open space at the old petrol station site (28-44 Adelaide Road) and the business plan focussed on the type and number of units. It is an indication that this organisation is focussed on the yield of units without the wider living environment.

Given the future development along this transport spine, planning for an urban park should be started here. The Kennard Hire site on the Adelaide / Hospital Roads corner (see photos “*Kennard Hire site*” corner has potential and the building setbacks along the east side of Adelaide Road (from a previous road widening designation) could include green infrastructure. So how to do it?”