

Inner City Wellington – Verbal submission to District Plan Hearing 29/06/23

Rev Stephen King – Chair ICW

Inner City Wellington (ICW) is the Residents Association for the CBD and Te Aro. This is now the largest suburb in Wellington in terms of population on the smallest area of land and with this comes many problems associated with the critical lack of green space and community amenities.

ICW works hard advocating for this community whose specific needs as residents are often subsumed in planning and resources allocation discussions by the needs of those who work in the city during the day and those who use the city as a destination for entertainment, shopping and socialising.

ICW attempts to advocate for this rapidly growing residential population. Intensification in our patch is a current reality that will only accelerate. We already have some of the highest density residential populations in the nation, The Dixon mesh block, 5 minutes walk from these hearing rooms in the 2018 (Census) had population densities similar to Islington in London. That population has increased significantly since that time.

Area	Population	Land area hectares	Pop density per hectare
Courtenay	1755	37	47.60
Dixon	4182	30	138.14
Vivian East	2403	29	83.91
Vivian West	3489	37	94.29
Wellington Central	2991	56	53.40
TOTAL	14820	189	78.41

Islington, London	206,125	1486	138.7
Tower Hamlets	254096	1977	128.5

Inner City Wellington's submission to the Draft Plan began with these words

"ICW has consistently highlighted the reality that the existing level of public amenities available to what is already the largest residential community in the city, falls well short of an appropriate level, and that the current level of intensification already occurring is exacerbating the existing deficit in amenities available to inner-city residents living in 'vertical streets'.

The actions or inactions of this Council in supporting how these rapidly growing inner-city neighbourhoods develop, with the amenities that are available to the thousands of people who don't leave the city to go home, will determine whether these neighbourhoods are places that families with children, our seniors, our key workers, the most vulnerable, our students, want to live in. That is what is at stake in this draft plan. "

WHO guidelines are that " urban residents should be able to access public green spaces of at least 0.5-1 hectare within 300 metres linear distance (around 5 minutes walk) of their homes".

In CENTRAL CITY SPATIAL VISION Report to WCC by Warren Mahoney/Boffa Miskell (February 2020) they stated the equivalent to another 10 Te Aro parks would be required to meet the needs of the proposed additional central city population. (10 Te Aro Parks = 56 Tennis courts)

The Behl , 2021 Public Space Public Life study Commissioned by "Lets Get Wellington Moving , The GWRC, WCC."

There is a lack of street trees and green in general - in Te Aro especially.

- The waterfront is the major destination for recreation - there are no major central green parks in the other parts of the central city.
- Pressure on green space due to growth - need for more and high-quality green space AND ***the Green space amount per capita in the central city declines substantially - by half on average - when projected population growth to 2043 is considered***

We do not see how provisions contained in this plan will deliver the additional green space necessary to correct the existing deficit of green space available to inner city residents.

In the document "A Social Wellbeing Framework for Wellington" adopted by Council in August 2021 it says; "Our vision for social wellbeing is 'An inclusive, liveable, and resilient city where people and communities can learn, are connected, well housed, safe and healthy. Wellington is a people-centred city.'" Source: A Social Wellbeing Framework for Wellington August 2021

That same document goes on to state as one of its long term strategic objectives ; "Children and young people are thriving in diverse and inclusive neighbourhoods Communities and cultures are connected, thriving, have a sense of identity and enjoy access to open public spaces Access to affordable, good quality and resilient homes Our older, disabled or most

vulnerable communities are supported, financially secure and connected” Source: A Social Wellbeing Framework for Wellington August 2021

ICW strongly supported the inclusion of Assisted Housing Provisions in the plan. We note that provisions such as these have been successfully implemented across many jurisdictions worldwide.

We note that the Housing Crisis in Queenstown has been in the news lately. In our submission we noted the comprehensive consultation on this issue undertaken by Queenstown Lakes District Council on this subject.

I quote 1 comment from that document that is a truth that will come to pass in Wellington.. *If it isn't compulsory, it won't happen.*

We also included in our submission a quote from the article <https://nextcity.org/urbanist-news/a-view-of-inclusionary-housing-from-down-under> provided the following data *...mandatory inclusionary zoning in South Australia, with a 15 percent target rate of affordable housing units in new residential areas, has triggered the creation of approximately 5,500 low-cost dwellings. That amount is equivalent to roughly 17 percent of the region's overall housing supply.*

In New South Wales, an incentive-based housing program generated an estimated 2,000 affordable rental units in Sydney, which makes up around 1 percent of the city's overall housing stock.

The Behl , 2021 Public Space Public Life study noted that “Children, young people, and the elderly are absent due to a lack of targeted and attractive programs in public spaces.” In its recommendations in support of Inclusion and diversity advocated a program of public and privately funded playgrounds and programs to increase share of affordable housing.

We do not see how provisions contained in this plan will deliver the social, economic, and generational diversity that are the hallmark of successful residential inner-city neighbourhoods across the world.

Our draft submission ended with these words

“We cannot see how Council in good conscience can advocate unconstrained intensification in the inner city at the same time as claiming the reality of fiscal constraints in the provision of the necessary infrastructure required to support such intensification. You cannot uncouple intensification of residential development from the provision of the appropriate level of community amenities required to support the people who will live there.

Whether or not in the future our inner-city will support, along with business, hospitality and entertainment, the socially, economically, and generationally diverse residential communities that are the hallmark of successful residential inner-city neighbourhoods across the world depends on Council's willingness to make some challenging decisions that will deliver development with necessary infrastructure and amenities to support the diversity necessary for those communities to thrive. "

ICW remains very concerned that the provisions contained in this district plan provide the council with inadequate means to actively influence the quality of the neighbourhoods being created by ongoing rapid intensification of residential dwellings in the Te Aro and the CBD.

How do the provisions of this District Plan enable the intentional decisions and actions necessary to provide the appropriate level of public amenities, green space, physical infrastructure, for our rapidly growing residential population – where and when they are required and likewise ensure that the our inner-city neighbourhoods support the diversity necessary for those communities to thrive?

We don't think that they do, we think that they are long on aspiration but short application.

We recognise that there are statutory and legislative limitations as to what can be accomplished through this process. BUT that will be of no consolation to our Inner-City residential population living in neighbourhoods that lack the level of community amenities required to support the people who will live there.

Thank-you