

Questions & Answers

Kōrau Tūāpapa | Environment and Infrastructure Committee

08 Haratua 2025 (08 May2025)

Item 2.1 Dixon Street and Te Aro Park Upgrades - Update and Approval to Proceed

- 1. To confirm will this design be for the whole of Dixon Street, including the Western section?**

Yes

- 2. If Cycle access goes down Dixon Street, how will this join to a northern and southern routes or is it proposed to stop at Victoria street?**

This project is being designed alongside the Cross-City Bike Connections project and the two teams are currently working on the design interface at the Victoria and Willis Street intersections.

- 3. What is the cost of this design and planning work that is being approved by this decision?**

Approximately \$800k will be spent on design and planning to get to the next Council decision, when the traffic resolution comes for approval to proceed into construction. This funding has already been allocated in the current LTP.

- 4. Will either the Te Aro Park or the Dixon Street projects attract any NZTA Co-funding?**

No.

- 5. How many car parks and other parks are currently on Dixon Street?**

<i>Dixon Between Cuba and Victoria</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1x 10min Loading Zone 8-6pm• 5m Motorbike Parking• 56m Taxi Stand (approx. 9 spaces)• 7x Metered (Paid) Parking spaces• 1x Accessible Car Park
<i>Dixon Between Victoria and Willis</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 13m Loading Zone 8-6pm• 27x Metered (Paid) Parking• 1x Parklet (1 parking space)
<i>Dixon Between Taranaki and Cuba</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 24m Motorbike Parking• 5x Metered (Paid) Accessible Car Parks• 58.5m Loading Zone 10 min. (20m, 10.5m, 12m, 16m)• 7.6m of LockyDock Bike Parking• 8.5m P15• 6 Parklets (8-9 parking spaces)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eva Beva/El Barrio - Old Quarter - Mexico - Babaili Malatang - Pho Viet - Swimsuit (footpath permissions)
Inglewood Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14m Motorbike Parking • 16.5m Proposed Goods Vehicles • 13x Metered (Paid) P120 • Approx. 8m authorized Drainage Vehicles • 2x Electric Vehicle Parks • 2x Accessibility Metered (Paid) Parks

6. Will the proposed redesign likely mean the loss of car parks and, if so, what use will be made for this road space?

Yes. A mix of paid parking, loading zones, accessible car parks, motorbike parking, taxi stands, parklets, bike lanes, extended footpaths and planted buffers.

7. Have businesses local to Dixon Street been consulted on the proposed changes to their street? If so, what is the feedback and if not, why not?

See paragraphs 49, 53 and 76. As part of the current transitional project businesses were engaged and consulted including prior to adoption of TR169-22. Business engagement also occurred post construction to gain insight into how the businesses experienced the changes. In both the engagement we have done pre and post installation generally the hospitality businesses were more positive about the changes than the service retail. The positive feedback we have received include comments from businesses who have parklets, acknowledging that their parklet had made a positive contribution to their business. General positive feedback received includes that the street looks better and feels cared for, and it is nice that cafes and restaurants have outdoor seating. Negative feedback identified the loss of car parking due to installation of parklets, trouble with deliveries, and that many people continue to park illegally blocking laneways, mobility parks and footpaths (on the decking). These are things we are looking to address in the new design.

8. Will the design work include an assessment of the impact on the loss of parking and a traffic impact assessment and, should the work be approved, when will this analysis be available to elected members?

Analysis of the parking impact of the project will be undertaken as part of the design process including considering the location of high priority parking, nearby parking alternatives and revenue. This analysis will be available as part of the traffic resolution consultation and the report presented to the relevant committee. We are also undertaking traffic impact assessments and will include that information into the report.

9. Paragraph 62 says:

62. Potential future upgrades to Te Aro Park, which are linked to the work on Dixon Street, are not currently budgeted for in the current LTP. Depending on the outcome of a codesign process, funding may be sought in future annual or LTP processes for the park section of the design. Can officers elaborate on what this means and how much funding IS already approved for the upgrade of Te Aro Park?

See paragraphs 12 and 34. As we have raised with elected members previously, including during LTP discussions, the design of the park is likely to exceed the currently available budget given the significance of the site.

10. Paragraph 65 says:

65. Consultation with the public on both the detailed design and any necessary traffic resolution for changes to Dixon Street is expected in accordance with section 82 of the Local Government Act 2002 of the Local Government Consultation with the public on both the detailed design and any necessary traffic resolution for changes to Dixon Street is expected in accordance with section 82 of the Local Government Act 2002.

Can officers elaborate on what this means and how what is the plan for public consultation for these projects?

See paragraphs 50-53. Prior to consultation on the TR, engagement with local businesses and other key stakeholders will take place throughout 2025 to inform development of the design.

11. In terms of ensuring adequate accessibility to Dixon Street, have Fire and Emergency and Wellington Free Ambulance been consulted on these proposed plans and will they be consulted in as part of the design process?

FENZ were involved in conversations related to the design of the transitional improvements that are currently in place, and we have had recent conversations with them about their concerns regarding transformational plans. These conversations will continue through the design process to ensure we meet their requirements. Wider emergency services are updated through WCC's regular emergency management meeting. An update on Dixon St was most recently provided to this group in late January.

12. What is the next decision point for council on this project and when is it expected to be taken?

See paragraph 78.

Item 2.2 Business Improvement District (BID's) Policy Amendment

1. In terms of engagement with Mana Whenua, will Council or Iwi be providing any additional support or resources to establish this process/relationships? How can BIDs build this capability if they do not have a current relationship with MW?

While the policy requires BIDs to meaningfully engage, this primarily relates to relevant projects that have potential to impact mana whenua, for example projects that intend on using public land that are also sites of significance. In these cases, Council officers will provide advice and guidance in the early stages of development, via the Mataaho Aronui team.

2. What guidance will WCC provide that will help BIDs identify if they have relevant projects with the potential to impact MW?

Officers work alongside BIDs in the development of strategic planning and through this process can provide advice and guidance on projects that may require engagement with mana whenua. This may include projects in public spaces, cultural sites, or environmental features of significance, activities that could affect land use, heritage, or community identity and/or economic initiatives with the potential to influence local Māori business or cultural narratives.

3. Given the Incorporated Societies Act says organisations with less than \$2m turnover do not require an audit, why have we settled at a \$250k requirement and not something higher?

The threshold of NZ\$250k for mandatory annual audits was selected based on the practical realities and scale of BID operations in Wellington, rather than the Incorporated Societies Act threshold, which applies more broadly to all incorporated societies. This lower threshold balances the need for accountability with affordability for smaller BIDs and reflects feedback from BIDs about the high cost of audits (approx. \$5,000), which can be disproportionate for those with smaller targeted rates.

Regular audits and reviews are a fundamental component of good governance, serving to protect BID Committees by ensuring transparency, accountability, and compliance. This oversight helps safeguard committee members against potential allegations or reputational risks, reinforcing public trust and confidence in BID operations.

4. Do any of the current BIDS have income over \$250k?

No BID has an income over \$250k. The largest BID is Destination KRL with an income of \$150K.

5. What was the general feedback from business districts that had been engaged with on these changes?

Was it supportive?

Generally, submitters were supportive of the key proposed amendments and there was a shared interest in improving clarity, fairness, and feasibility within the policy framework.

6. How will ratepayer details be protected in giving some data to the BIDs?

Any data shared will comply with the Privacy Act 2020 and WCC's Privacy Policy and will be used exclusively for BID-related purposes. This arrangement is formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding currently in place between Wellington City Council and the BID Chairs.

7. How effective are the BIDs? What are the metrics for success?

BIDs own annual planning processes determine their focus for the forthcoming year, with a range of success measures including economic impact, community engagement and infrastructure improvements (investing in green space, public art etc). There currently are no universal metrics to measure the effectiveness of the BIDS in place, however officers will be developing a performance survey as outlined in the BID policy, noting that there hasn't been any survey conducted to date.

8. How will the BIDs meaningfully engage with mana whenua in practice?

Officers will work alongside BIDs to identify projects that may impact mana whenua, particularly those involving public spaces, cultural or heritage sites, environmental features, or economic initiatives that intersect with Māori business or cultural interests. Where appropriate officers will provide initial guidance and facilitate introductions to mana whenua as required.

Meaningful engagement in practice will involve early consultation, collaboration, and communication on project planning where appropriate, and ensuring mana whenua perspectives are incorporated into decision-making. This may include hui (meetings), co-design opportunities, and ongoing dialogue to maintain respectful and informed relationships.

9. In terms of engagement with BIDs, have the individual BIDs seen the proposed BID Policy and did they have a chance to provide feedback on it before it was published in the E & I Committee Report?

Officers engaged with BID Managers and Chairs through two dedicated workshops and a full-group meeting to ensure broad consultation. An email was sent on 30 April to all Chairs formally advising them of the exact wording for the proposed amendments.

10. What is the level of significance where the BID Policy would expect a BID to engage with Mana Whenua? For example, the Tawa BID supports hanging baskets and murals on the Main Road. Would Mana Whenua be expected to be engaged when the flowers in these baskets and/or murals are changed?

No. The intention is to work with mana whenua representatives on areas of mutual interest. For example, we would work with BIDs to engage with iwi regarding projects involving public spaces, culturally significant sites, important environmental features, as well as for activities that may impact land use, heritage values, community identity, or economic initiatives with the potential to influence local Māori businesses or cultural narratives. As appropriate, officers will provide guidance and facilitate introductions to mana whenua as required.

11. Is Mana Whenua engagement expected to be cost free or would BIDs be expected to help fund their engagement with iwi?

The level of involvement will depend on the nature of the project and the expectations of iwi participation. Where engagement requires significant time, expertise, or resourcing, it is reasonable to anticipate that a financial contribution may be appropriate. In such cases, it would be expected that this is considered and accommodated within the BID's budget.

Item 2.3 Submission on the Sale and Supply of Alcohol (Sales on Anzac Day Morning, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, and Christmas Day) Amendment Bill

1. How does this align with the City's safety plan?

The submission states that we believe generally that removing alcohol sale restrictions for on-licences may have less impact on alcohol-related harm risk than removing restrictions for off-licences, because on-licensed drinking environments are supervised and have host responsibility. We consider that in Wellington, larger off-licence retailers (such as supermarkets and bottle stores) are not permitted to open on the restricted days and the retail supply of alcohol is limited to small grocery stores. We consider that this may mitigate increased alcohol-related harm risk from removing alcohol sale restrictions for off-licences on the restricted trading days.

2. How does this submission align with reducing access to off-license alcohol?

The submission proposes to follow the original policy intent (as understood by officers) in the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 that alcohol sale restrictions should be aligned to trading restrictions, so that if a shop is permitted to open on the restricted trading days, they should be able to sell alcohol if that is part of their usual business. The only off-licensed stores that are permitted to open on the restricted trading days are small grocery stores, which reduces the overall access to alcohol off-licence compared to normal trading days. Larger retailers such as bottle stores and supermarkets usually supply the majority of off-licence alcohol and are not permitted to open on restricted trading days.

3. Is there a contradiction that is not resolved in paragraph 3 by saying that we want a vibrant economy based on alcohol whilst limiting social harm?

Officers consider that removing alcohol sale restrictions on the restricted trading days primarily offers clarity for operators and improves their business confidence. In officers' experience, much of the reported hospitality sector demand during the restricted trading days is for food service rather than alcohol sales. We consider that the alcohol-related harm risk that may result from the proposal is not significant for Wellington, and the economic benefits outweigh the potential risk of social harm in this case, particularly for on-licences.

Item 2.5 City Noise and Music Venues: Advice on District Plan Changes and Other Methods

1. Is it possible to 'trial' bespoke noise overlays around key music venues, even if temporary or small scale?

It is technically possible but requires the same time and resources as a permanent change. Any 'trial' method must use the same RMA plan change process as a permanent change and meet the same evaluation and evidence tests. A plan change realistically takes 12-24 months.

We would discourage new district plan rules for noise that are only intended to last for a limited time, because residents, landowners, venue operators and developers make

longer-term decisions based on noise emission and noise insulation rules being clear and certain.

- 2. Are there opportunities for venue soundproofing support (e.g. small grants or rates relief) as part of a non-regulatory package? future housing developments near established venues could be prioritized, or funds could pivot from the Heritage Resilience and Regeneration Fund**

This would ultimately be a decision for elected members. Currently the Long-Term Plan and its draft 2025 amendment do not have a budget allocated for supporting venue soundproofing. If Council wanted to use money from other funds then that would require changes to their terms to allow this to occur.

- 3. Officers have said the current 2004 insulation standards are effective, but won't it be too late if we wait until they're no longer fit for purpose? Given once homes are built, it's much harder and more expensive to retrofit acoustic insulation, and wouldn't being proactive provide greater certainty for developers and residents?**

Whilst the insulation standards are from 2004, this approach is still considered best practice. Many councils, such as Dunedin City Council, are only now implementing similar acoustic insulation provisions.

While the City Centre has become significantly denser with residential activity since 2004, the number of complaints relating to entertainment activities have reduced over this time.

In preparing this paper we also reviewed complaints data and, of the few complaints in recent years against venues, the majority of complaints come from buildings that were built before the insulation requirements or when music from venues exceed District Plan limits. Until these buildings redevelop, this is not an issue that the District Plan can address.

The 2024 District Plan increased the areas of Te Aro and the CBD with High Noise Area insulation requirements, where they are next to State Highway and KiwiRail designations – see orange hatched areas in the map below. It is Council's choice whether or not to direct officers to add more areas of Te Aro into the High Noise Area through a District Plan Change.

Our advice remains that monitoring of the current noise insulation rules shows they are effective in minimising noise complaints from new apartments (and other noise-sensitive activities) about live music venues.

The evaluation report required for a district plan change would need to show that future adverse noise effects are possible and significant, and that a High Noise Area would be more efficient and effective than a Moderate Noise Area considering costs and benefits.

This evidence and evaluation would be challenged through submissions and may be difficult for officers to justify.

The agenda paper notes that under Section 35 of the RMA we will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the plan provisions. This includes any trends different to those since 2004.



4. **Can the sub on Pillar 3 reform include tools to protect creative spaces from reverse sensitivity complaints? Specifically looking at future housing developments as they increase in quantity, and the insulation standards are of 2004, won't it be too late?**

The Government have announced that there will be reforms to reverse sensitivity, the details of the particular tools that will be used to do this are yet to be released.

A submission on Pillar 3 reform can include tools to protect creative spaces from reverse sensitivity and noise complaints. On the latter point, refer to answer given for question #3.

5. Are we able to also loop in with other councils or Creative NZ to form a unified voice for national noise direction that protects live music? Some Cllrs Mayor's office have met with CNZ

We can work with Creative NZ and other Councils to create as much alignment in our submission as possible.

6. What are the restrictions in requiring officers to include objective evidence of non-compliance before enforcement actions?

The Council is required by law to provide two types of noise control services.

1. We investigate complaints relating to noise under human control at the time they are received under section 326 of the RMA. Case law is clear this requires a subjective analysis only
2. When a noise issue is identified we undertake sound measurements for comparison with District Plan limits.

The District Plan specifies an A weighted noise limit (dBA). Which is less stringent on low frequency sound. It is possible to comply with the limit while creating “excessive noise” from thumping bass.

Conducting sound measurements is a demanding task that takes time. These measurements must be done by experienced and qualified practitioners using expensive equipment. They must follow NZS 6801 and NZS 6802:2008 standards. Each reading can take up to an hour on-site, and the weather must be suitable—dry with calm or light winds—which can be challenging to achieve in Wellington. Therefore, section 326 is a useful tool to provide temporary relief from excessive noise for a complainant.

Assessment is conducted by trained officers who are adequately supported by council staff. Only in the case that there is genuinely considered excessive noise will a noise direction notice be issued and per internal policy we do not shut down venues. ‘Worst case scenario’ pursuant to an assessment made under section 326 is reducing noise to a non-excessive level. On identification of an issue council officers will take over and undertake sound measurements.

Council officers are currently researching other Councils approach to ascertain whether the current policy can be improved.

7. When is the IMVA Independent venues report due?

The IMVA Venues report is currently being finalised and officers are due to receive the final report later in May.

8. I know this paper is about planning and regulatory changes, but what progress is being made on the guidance for venue operators and event hosts? Could this include a code of good practice or funding for sound management?

There is guidance published on the Council Website. Officers will be meeting with Whanganui City Council, who have a good guide to setting up a venue, to discuss what they have found from their work.

9. What is the reason for not recommending extending the high noise zone to the Te Aro / Cuba street district?

The 2024 District Plan has covered some of upper Cuba Street with the High Noise Area as shown in the map above. The purpose of this extension was to mitigate noise from the state highways, but it applies the same regulation as our existing Courtenay Place Noise Area. The new High Noise Area covers a few live music and entertainment venues, such as Valhalla, Meow Nui, and Thistle Hall.

The reason for not recommending to extend the High Noise Area to around Cuba Street, or all of Te Aro, is explained in Question #3 and in the agenda report – essentially, that the current provisions are generally working effectively, and that music and entertainment venues can open, close and relocate to different spaces over time. Venues that would be encompassed by a Cuba High Noise Area have not been subject to many noise complaints. Those that have been, are now encompassed by the new stretch of High Noise Area.

The Cuba Street Heritage Area from Wakefield St to Webb St has many heritage buildings, so may not be developed with new buildings and good noise insulation to the same extent as other parts of Te Aro. The District Plan gives discretion to reduce acoustic insulation in heritage buildings where this is necessary to maintain the heritage values. This has good outcomes for our heritage buildings, but would diminish the effectiveness of a High Noise Area.

10. What was the scope of the Independent Venues reviews report? Who was going to be part of contributing to this?

IMVA were commissioned by Council to provide an overview of operating of independent venues in Wellington, with the primary focus on the economic and cultural benefits venues bring to the city, the challenges they face, and how their operation can be supported.

Officers identified independent venues to be selected and approached as contributors to the report Both primary purpose music venues (independently owned and operated, hosts live music) and • secondary purpose music venues (hosts live music, but may be limited in its capacity for music programming i.e. bar, theatre, or cinema.) were included.

11. What is the timeline for it to come back?

- Officers are due to receive the final report later in May.

12. Feedback provided from most council departments - was Cuba Dupa or Newtown Festival asked for feedback?

Cuba Dupa and Newtown Festival are temporary activities. The Temporary Activities chapter in the District Plan had its Hearing Panel recommendations this year, and the Council will make decisions on it on 12 June 2025. The Proposed Temporary Activities Evaluation Report does not mention that Cuba Dupa and Newtown Festival were asked for feedback. A reference group including WellingtonNZ and Screen Wellington were consulted.

13. The policy is to work with the venues to reduce noise but is it clear to the venue what the noise level is- and how it can be verified?

District Plan noise standards are useful parameters, but the type of music, its noise levels and the operation of the venues (e.g. is it a warm night and doors are left open) can be unique. This means Council officers responding to noise complaints do a holistic assessment, as well as noise measurements where needed. Providing noise levels may not always be practical if the best solution is something as simple as closing the doors during performances.

On review of complaints data, most venues don't have any logged complaints recently. Where there are specific venues experiencing issues, the noise team work with the venue to resolve them.

14. Has the team considered a document like how to set up and run a music venue in Wellington as Wanganui have done? Link [here](#)

See Question 8

15. Why have we done no preliminary consultation with residents near the main music venues?

Officers were directed by Committee resolution to develop initial advice with the Aho Tini Team.

Officers are recommending a separate plan change for noise to allow time to test out options with affected people such as inner-city residents, apartment developers, entertainment venues. The content of this plan change will depend on Council resolutions from this report.

16. 2% seems like quite a significant cost for insulation if you add in other costs like seismic and climate resilience. Can you clarify why this is not considered significant?

The 2% estimates from those two studies is compared to baseline building costs that do not have noise insulation requirements. Whereas Te Aro already has noise insulation and ventilation requirements by being part of the City Centre Zone (Moderate Noise Area). The cost difference for insulation between the Moderate and High Noise Areas will be less than the 2% in those studies. Though we noted that higher acoustic insulation standard can constrain design options.

17. To clarify, these changes would not be likely to increase allowable noise levels?

Any changes to insulation requirements would have the effect of reducing incoming noise to sensitive activities, and would not affect allowable noise levels (for noise emitters). The Council did ask officers to give initial advice on whether to increase permitted noise thresholds from live music venues and approved events. The committee agenda report does not recommend this option.

18. What is the estimated cost and timeframe for this District Plan Change?

Cost and time depends on the content of the Plan Change. Until these are agreed they are difficult to estimate. Most plan changes take 12-24 months from notification. The timeframe will also depend on Council resolutions about the scope of the plan change – whether it covers more or fewer changes than recommended in the report.

Small standalone District Plan changes typically cost between \$50-100k to process (not including Officer time). Costs will ultimately depend on the extent of technical reports required to support proposed changes, the number of submissions made, and whether there is a need to resource specialist commissioners. Appeals can also be costly processes, should they arise.

Item 2.5 Housing Action Plan 6-Monthly Report

1. How many units are expected to be delivered or be under contract by the end of July 2026?

As of May 2025, 473 units are either delivered, or under construction for delivery. A further 167 units are in negotiation and have received endorsement from the Te Kainga Governance Board pending further due diligence around market rent. This makes a total of 640 units.

To achieve the existing 1,000 unit target, would require a further 360 units to be contracted by end of June 2026. However as discussed in the paper, it is more likely that the existing pattern cadence of delivery could contract a further 100 by the end of June 2026 bringing the total to 740 (or 74% of the target).

2. Is there an option to reduce the 1,000 unit target to the amount confirmed by the current deadline and, if so, what is the cost saving from doing this?

Yes that is an option if directed by Committee. There would be no cost saving, as programme is designed to be cost neutral to ratepayers.

Item 2.6 Johnsonville Investigative Report

1. Does the Council now plan to complete an update to the Johnsonville Town Centre Plan and, if so, what is the timeframe for completing this?

See paragraphs 31-33. Officers will report back to Council in the first quarter of 2026 with a project brief. This brief will outline potential scope, resourcing, and next steps for a review of the planning framework, informed by community leasing and integrated transport opportunities. The brief will inform the decision on proceeding with the town centre plan.

2. Given the Integrated Bus Hub was added to the GWRC LTP due to the efforts of the Johnsonville Community Association efforts and liaison with GWRC, why are they not listed on the stakeholder list and can they be added?

The report acknowledges that there is a wide range of community interest. The stakeholders listed were those that officers directly engaged with to inform the investigation report. They in turn have received a wide range of feedback and inputs from stakeholders that is beyond the scope of this report to recognise.

Item 2.7 Decision Register Updates and Upcoming Reports

1. Does the work with GW involve any discussion around bus stops and their locations?

This question will be responded to once more information is gathered from officers.