



Introduction

This statement is in support of the proposal that is the subject of the application for land use resource consent to the Wellington City Council.

The proposal is the outcome of the Future Accommodation Strategy approved by Cabinet in 2015 to address shortcomings in Parliamentary accommodation and to improve the long-term security, resilience, performance, and utility of the Parliamentary Precinct in a way that is cost-effective, operationally efficient, eliminates Parliament's reliance on third party providers of floorspace, and provides Parliament with a set of buildings that are sustainable and carbon neutral.

The proposal has cross-party support and is the culmination of seven years of investigation and design work with the objective of enhancing the ability of Parliament to better meet the democratic needs of New Zealand.

Background

Since its establishment in Wellington in 1865, the Parliamentary Precinct has been progressively developed with a variety of buildings, structures, and landscape necessary to serve the democratic needs of the people of New Zealand.

As these needs have evolved and changed, the buildings, structures and grounds within the Precinct have had to be adapted, altered, added to, and in some cases demolished so that the Precinct can continue to be fit for Parliamentary purposes. The last major developments of the Precinct were the construction of the Executive Wing in the 1970s and the refurbishment of Parliament House and the Parliamentary Library in the 1990's. It should be noted that this included the removal of various rundown buildings on the west precinct to the rear of Parliament House and later in the 1990's the removal of Radio New Zealand House due to fire damage.

Since then, there have been significant changes affecting Parliament and the Precinct. These have included:

- Significant growth of New Zealand's population.
- Increasing diversity of NZ society and the differing needs of respective communities.
- Increased awareness and representation of the bicultural history of New Zealand and the obligations of the Treaty of Waitangi.
- Increasing complexity of public policy and decision-making brought about by Mixed Member Proportional Representation (MMP).
- Increased numbers of Members of Parliament and the increasing numbers of Ministers and portfolios.
- Increased number of political parties being represented within Parliament.
- Increased numbers of visitors and guests being hosted within Parliament, and by Ministers, Members, and staff.
- Increased need for Parliamentary resilience, particularly for efficient and effective Ministerial decision-making in response to major adverse events (such as the Kaikoura and Canterbury earthquakes, other civil emergencies, and the COVID-19 pandemic) and for Parliamentary accommodation with the appropriate level of seismic resilience.
- Increased need for more effective security and safety.
- Desire for the Precinct to remain publicly open and accessible and for more public facilities and functions to be able to be accommodated particularly within Parliament House.
- In response to climate change the Government Mandate for all agencies to be carbon neutral by 2025.

- There is now insufficient floorspace on the Parliamentary Precinct to accommodate the necessary Parliamentary functions.
- Parliamentary accommodation is increasingly having to be located within leased floorspace in buildings outside the Precinct with a range of cumulatively significantly adverse effects, including:
 - Ongoing financial commitment of leases to landlords.
 - Separation of functions between accommodation sites i.e. fragmented accommodation.
 - Compromise to security, privacy and operational continuity because of shared access and dependency on landlord systems and controls.
 - Increased risk of information breach and data sharing due to shared accommodation.
 - Inefficiency of function due to increased travel between dislocated accommodation locations, particularly of note for Ministers and Members for whom time is critical.
 - Constraints to timely and collaborative decision-making because of the dis-location of Ministers.
 - Requirement for multiple similar services and overheads, including security clearance points, visitor controls, staff amenities etc.
 - Visitors and guests of Parliament travelling to the wrong location due to uncertainty of where their host is located.
 - Reliance on landlords to provide low carbon footprint and sustainable buildings that are fit for purpose.
- The Executive Wing is too small to accommodate all Ministers (The Executive). Currently, nine members of the executive and their immediate support staff cannot be co-located with the Prime Minister and the other Ministers within the Executive Wing. Ministerial efficiency, effectiveness, security, and safety are being unacceptably compromised because of the inability to co-locate all Ministers within the Executive Wing.
- The Press Gallery building at the rear of the Executive Wing cannot be used because it has been classified as earthquake prone. The City Council requires that it be demolished or strengthened by 2029. The Press have been relocated from this building to Parliament House further putting pressure on accommodation.
- Safety and security requirements within the Precinct have grown. There are currently multiple vehicle access and delivery points across the Precinct, and multiple pedestrian entry points to buildings. These issues have recently been highlighted by the occupation protest occurring at Parliament and its surrounds.
- Parliament does not have seismically resilient accommodation suitable for continued use following a significant adverse event. This creates risk around the requirement to provide uninterrupted Government and emergency management. The buildings are also vulnerable to the loss of key utilities supplied from the Wellington network.

The western part of the Precinct (i.e. behind the Executive Wing and Parliament House) is vehicle dominated and poor quality space. Parliament wishes to transform this space into a pedestrian centred plaza, supporting improved public amenity and complementing the redevelopment of the adjoining Bowen Campus. This will enhance traffic and pedestrian safety and almost eliminate vehicle traffic entering the site from the uncontrolled Museum Street intersection with The Terrace and Bowen Street.

Parliament has unique requirements for its buildings. As well as being the heart of our political system – housing the Debating Chamber and offices of our Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers – the buildings perform many other roles. They act as a major function centre, restaurant, house art galleries and exhibitions, host select committee hearings open to the public, and are home to many New Zealand tāonga and other historical items. They also welcome tens of thousands of members of the public each year, some visiting, and some engaging with our political system.

The Parliamentary buildings have requirements that no other organisation in New Zealand has. By their very nature they should be both secure enough to protect our high-profile politicians and staff, yet accessible enough to promote and encourage access to our democracy by all New Zealanders. They need to be befitting their role as our country's Parliament, yet modest enough to reflect their taxpayer funded nature. They need to be efficient in their use, yet they need to transform every three years to reflect the changing size and work habits of parties in Parliament.

Within our Parliamentary Precinct, trying to achieve all these contradictions-in-use we currently have four main buildings blocks: the Parliamentary Library, Parliament House, the Executive Wing, and Bowen House on Lambton Quay. The first three were constructed using the architectural trends of the day and sit on Crown-owned land. They were built for ongoing use as Parliamentary buildings and are now rated category 1 historical places in New Zealand.

Bowen House however was built in 1991 as a short-term office accommodation solution while Parliament House and the Parliamentary Library were being renovated. It is being earthquake strengthened by the landlord and is vacant. It housed the staff of several agencies, as well as Members and Ministers, until all Parliamentary occupants were moved out of the building in 2020 to enable the earthquake strengthening to occur.

The proposal to move to fully New Zealand-owned and controlled Parliamentary buildings instead of landlord owned Bowen House is based on sovereignty of control, effective use, cost effectiveness, and future-proofing our Parliament. The proposal has been developed to take the Parliamentary Precinct forward into its next 50 years.

Key Objectives:

The overall objective is for all Parliamentary functions to be accommodated on the Parliamentary Precinct in a way that achieves:

- **Best Economic Value** – Provide accommodation at the best economic value over the life of the assets.
 - Greater utilisation of the Parliamentary Precinct will provide the best economic value in the long term and avoid having to lease floorspace.
 - Increase Efficiency – Improve operational effectiveness and utilisation of the Crown buildings.
 - Centralise Parliamentary functions on the Precinct and close to Parliament House, thus reducing walking time and promoting the efficient use of Parliamentary time and resources.
 - Colocation of crucial functions to improve efficiency of Parliament.
- **Fit for Purpose** – Provide fit-for-purpose workspaces that offer flexibility.
 - Accommodation that is accessible, flexible and adaptable, creating less disruption and facilitating a more efficient transition between Parliaments.
 - Restoring the symbolic and physical separation of the Executive and Legislative branches of Government by accommodating all existing Ministers within the Executive Wing.
 - Enhance Parliamentary communication, collaboration, confidentiality and decision-making through colocation on the Precinct.
 - Centralise the management of deliveries to the Precinct.
- **Consolidate Parliamentary Footprint.**
 - Parliamentary functions currently accommodated in leased premises outside the Precinct will be brought onto the Precinct condensing the footprint.
 - Centralising Parliamentary floorspace on the Precinct in accommodation that is efficient in location, design and operation.
 - The provision of new accommodation space will allow existing buildings to be reaccommodated by functions in line with their original design.
- **Safety and Security** – Ensure security of Precinct occupants and the general public is maintained.
 - The safety of those working on, and visiting the Precinct is enhanced and threats to security and confidentiality are reduced through the provision of fit for purpose buildings and better management of deliveries.
 - Improved safety of staff and visitors to the Precinct by pedestrian centred design that incorporates Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- **Cultural Partnership** – Recognise cultural values and opportunity for codesign elements with early engagement and inclusive design process.
 - Commitment to partnering and collaborating with tāngata whenua recognising their unique relationship to the land and role as kaitiaki.

- Implementing appropriate design and other measures.
- Environmentally Sustainable – Achieve environmentally sustainable design and carbon zero goal.
 - Create a world-leading example of energy efficiency, moving Parliament closer to carbon zero goals.
 - Promote environmental sustainability in the location, design, materials and operation of the buildings, and encouraging the greater use of alternative modes of transport to private motor vehicles.
- Increase Resilience – Incorporate seismic resilience.
 - Reduced risk of disruption in the event of an emergency / disaster or supply infrastructure failure.
 - Reduce the potential adverse impacts of an emergency or disaster through resilient design.
 - Adopt low damage seismic design principles and achieve appropriate post-damage functionality.

The Proposal

The proposal has been designed to positively contribute to achieving the above objectives and particularly will:

- Provide suitable accommodation for Members on the Precinct and allow for the foreseeable future growth of Parliament.
- Improve the efficiency and economy of Parliament and Government functions through reduced transit times, concentration of functions closer to Parliament House, and easier access and adjacency of Parliamentary functions.
- Facilities for visitors and guests will be enhanced, including enhancing the capacity for Parliament to host public functions on the Precinct.
- The western part of the Precinct will be positively transformed for the public and more of the ground floor of Parliament House will be able to be allocated for public activities and services.
- The resilience of Parliament and emergency management will be enhanced through the provision of accommodation suitable for continued use immediately after a significant adverse event.
- Energy efficiency and environmental sustainability technologies are incorporated to current best practice and this will significantly reduce the Carbon Footprint of the Parliamentary Precinct.
- Safety, security and operational continuity will be enhanced.

The positive effects of the proposal will be significant and ongoing.

Proposed Museum Street Building

This new building will provide fit for purpose Members accommodation and other Parliamentary functions close to Parliament House and with direct and efficient linkage to the Debating Chamber. Centralising Parliamentary accommodation on the Precinct in this new building will significantly contribute to achieving project objectives.

The building will be of a IL4 earthquake resilience standard and self-sustaining for approximately two weeks to enable essential Parliamentary operations to continue in a major emergency affecting Wellington.

Proposed Ballantrae Building

This new building is essential to provide the Parliamentary Precinct with the necessary enhanced safety and security.

Centralising all deliveries within the building will significantly reduce vehicles accessing the Precinct via Museum Street and enhance the safety and efficiency of this important Central Area intersection. This will also provide a safe linkage for the proposed Botanic Gardens – Bowen Street cycleway.

Proposed Plaza and Environmental Sustainability

The Museum Street and Ballantrae Place buildings will be integrated together by a carefully designed and safe plaza that will transform the western part of the Precinct from a surface car park to be more in keeping with the role and quality of the front of the Precinct.

Parliament has set ambitious environmental goals for itself to achieve. By significantly reducing car parking on the Precinct, the project will promote other modes of commuting. The three buildings will incorporate solar power generation and energy efficient plant with the goal of being carbon neutral.

Adaption of the Executive Wing

The Executive Wing does not have sufficient floorspace and layout to accommodate all Ministers. The options for accommodating all Ministers within the Executive Wing are complex. Consultation has also encouraged further investigation of the options to adapt the Executive Wing to accommodate all Ministers.

If in the future changes are proposed to the external design and appearance of the existing Executive Wing, they will be the subject of a separate future application for resource consent.

Public Notification

The application for resource consent is to be publicly notified to provide the opportunity for interested persons to "have their say".

Ahead of this notification, consultation has been undertaken with Heritage New Zealand, Wellington City Council, iwi, Wellington Architectural Centre and the only adjoining landowner, Precinct Properties Ltd. This is detailed in the application for resource consent documents.

Conclusion

The Parliamentary Precinct and its buildings, services, staff and MP's have been serving the needs of New Zealand since 1865.

The application for resource consent seeks to continue this heritage by increasing the capacity of the Precinct to accommodate necessary Parliamentary functions and significantly enhancing the environmental quality of the rear of the Precinct.

It is acknowledged that the proposal requires significant investment, however, we must look at the long term. Ultimately, this is the right and responsible course of action to ensure our nation's Parliament is supported to operate efficiently and effectively for many years to come.

On behalf of Parliament, I seek your support for the proposal.



Rt Hon Adrian Rurawhe

Speaker of the House of Representatives