

Questions and Answers

Pūroro Āmua | Planning and Environment Committee

12 May 2022

2.1 Notice of Motion regarding Airport Expansion

Is there a planned pathway for reduced emissions while in the growth trajectory from Wellington Airport?

This is a question for the airport.

What could future legal implications be to WCC if we do not achieve our carbon reduction emissions as a city?

The laws around Council's liability for climate change are evolving quickly so it isn't possible to give a definitive answer as to the legal implications for not meeting the City's emissions targets at this point. However, we note that Te Atakura is not a statutory document. It is also clear that our biggest opportunities to reduce carbon emissions are in urban intensification and road transport mode shift. While important, reducing airport emissions will not on its own meet City emissions reduction targets.

How could a shareholder agreement support better strategically aligned relationships/communications between WCC and WIAL?

The law does not deal with all issues arising in a shareholder's relationship and a shareholder's agreement could significantly support a strategic relationship by covering issues such as disputes and decision making. A relationship agreement could also be a useful tool.

What is the Wellington airport strategy for being a good neighbour?

This is a question for the airport.

What amount of rates does WIAL pay to WCC? and assuming this is the commercial rate?

For FY2021/22 WIAL will pay circa \$3.86m in rates. Around 98% of the rates charged are charged at commercial rates.

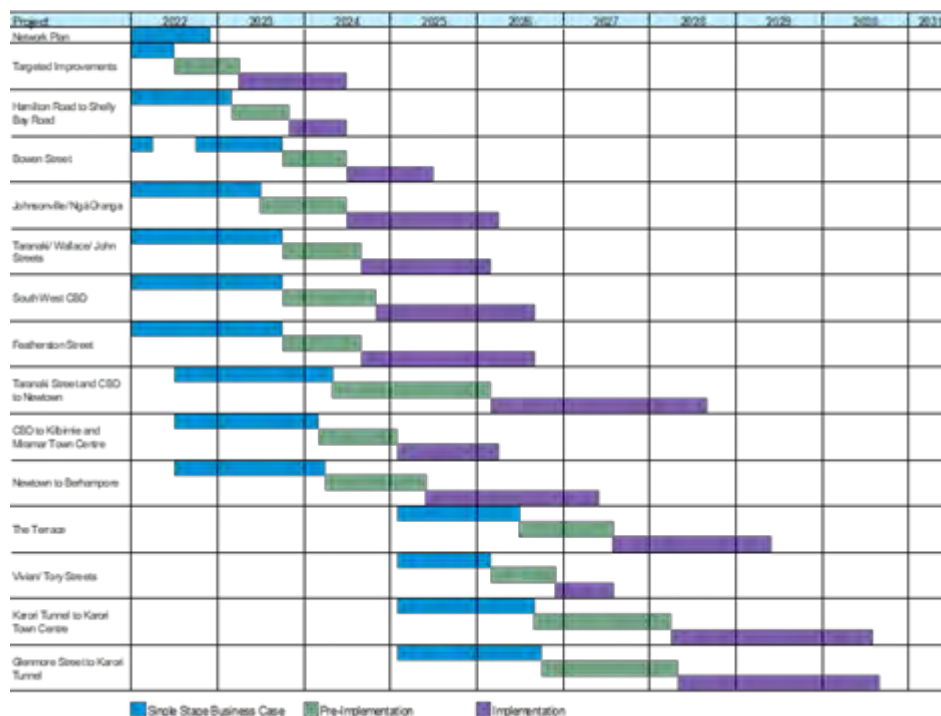
2.2 Let's Get Wellington Moving - City Streets Targeted Improvements Single Stage Business Case

Disability access – what standards will be used to ensure disabled people have access to the CBD?

The bus stop rationalisation work, identified for certain of the Targeted Improvements projects, will look to position bus stops more efficiently and to make it easier for buses to get in and out of bus stops. Well-designed entry and exit tapers will allow buses to get closer to the kerb and it will lead to buses lining up optimally to the kerb. This will make it easier for people with accessibility needs to board and alight buses. We will also be looking to provide safer crossing facilities between bus stop pairs for all abilities. We will use the latest Waka Kotahi bus stop design guidance to inform the designs.

Can we get more ambitious targets for reductions in carbon and mode shift in conjunction with other work we are doing? They seem quite small.

The targeted improvements project represents a modest programme of works. It will however still contribute to the aspirations for moving more people with fewer cars, with the associated climate change benefits, by improving the attractiveness of walking, cycling and public transport. It is important to emphasise that there are more City Streets projects being developed that will follow soon after the implementation of these projects. These projects, along with the transformational programme, will be more impactful on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.



No change in travel demand as a result of Covid? Aren't organisations now offering more flexibility for employees?

It's important to remember that LGWM improvements are targeted at mode shift for all trips, not just those taken for commuting (as important as these are). In relation to commuting trips there is no doubt that people are able to and choosing to work more flexibly as a result of Covid. We are however already seeing a welcome increase in public transport use and an increase in active mode use in the city centre in recent weeks. We expect that travel patterns and volumes may well return to almost normal as we return to a post-covid situation. However, either way the city is also growing and it is important to develop sustainable transport options to provide resilience in the transport network for this increase in the population.

2.4 Wellington Central City Green Network Plan Update

How did we decide on the vision for the plan?

Developed by the project team informed by Spatial Plan consultation and a diverse range of input.

Have we thought about a more aspirational vision that supports really setting Wellington apart globally, and makes us truly unique? - i.e. the city with the most original native forest and the most regenerating native birds in the world? Is this something we could further on with Zealandia and Mana Whenua?

As noted in the paper, we are still working with Mana Whenua re. naming of the plan and more widely regarding Mana Whenua's aspirations through the Open Space and Recreation Strategy. The vision can be reworked in future versions, but in the meantime, it does not stop us being aspirational.

What are some of the aspirations of other biophilic cities?

<https://www.biophiliccities.org/wellington>

We meet regularly with other biophilic cities. Melbourne is doing some interesting work now including their newly developed greening tool.

How are we thinking about the strategic opportunity by making sure the plan builds the best ecosystem in green spaces - like mini patches of the forest?

From a greening perspective the Green Network Plan set clear targets and objectives around this at an high level and at a future individual project level the GNP objectives and contribution to the targets will be considered in developing and evaluation the project options.

Where are we in the plan of considering rolling this plan out to inner-city suburbs with proper high density? Greening the central city was a key action out of the Spatial Plan, as it was seen as a priority.

The ongoing work on the Open Space and Recreation Strategy will look at the individual suburbs needs. There are not resources assigned to roll this out into our suburban centres. We have however done a city-wide tree canopy study and most of the background material and GNP objectives are also relevant for these centres.

It says we are not funding anything to remove or replant the dead and poorly performing trees but then in the strategy, it says we are on track for that. What would the budget for this be? Could this be bought forward?

There is currently \$150K assigned to central city greening bi-annually. This is not specifically earmarked, but some of it may go towards this. The 22/23 work programme is currently under development, but we note that this budget also needs to include the business case development.

When working in partnership with LGWM who will be responsible for the costs of trees in this collaboration?

The establishment costs are dependent on project scope. BAU asset costs will be transferred to WCC.

How will a Te Ao Māori perspective be properly integrated into this plan? This is one of the key actions.

This will be developed with mana whenua – and at a project level mana whenua are important partners in the project conception and development.

The Plan aims to have 4000 trees, difficult to understand if it is enough, what does this actually mean in terms of coverage?

The 2000 extra trees are over and above the 2000 that already exist in the central city, was a balance between being pragmatic and aspirational. This will be further tested as part of the business case development and may change in future versions.

What standards will be used to ensure disabled people have access to these parks?

This will be addressed at a project level.

How much green space does WHO say people need to be healthy?

The Wellington context is unique due to topography and the town belt – we have a high provision of access to nature areas, but less provision of the nearby everyday green spaces. Some literature, referencing WHO, talks about 9sqmetres/person, however the providence of where this has been derived is unclear, and therefore it was decided not to reference.

The paper says a few of the parks are poor – which ones?

Some of the ones which are performing poorly on a number of the criteria including green cover, environment, context, culture/Interpretation, public Life, safety and accessibility are:

- Alexander Turnbull House Lawn
- Everton Terrace Park
- Mount Street
- Jack Illot Green

How can we actively encourage more green roofs? Can we have a paper looking at incentives and barriers?

For council projects this needs to be incorporated into the scope and costing of projects from conception stage. For private projects we can encourage, but do not have any requirements in the existing or proposed District Plan. We can expect however to see an increase in green roofs to address hydraulic neutrality requirements and as demand for these types of buildings as tenants and owners seek more greener office and residential accommodation. The key barriers are the cost of the roofs to install and design. Council already offers incentives for environmentally friendly buildings, which can include green roofs.

I have asked this before, but can this plan be part of the District Plan, or any reference made to it?

The GNP is not a regulatory document like the District Plan. It sits outside the District Plan and sets out the vision for greening the City Centre and where and how we want to do this. Once finalised it helps support future LTP Budget bids and is a guidance document for the District Plan and the future of the City Centre Zone. We have worked closely with the District Plan to incorporate green outcomes where possible.

There is some kind of reference to where the destination parks will be, can you have an exact reference ?

THE GNP –is not proposing any more destination parks. Destination Parks include Waitangi Park, Pukeahu, Parliamentary Grounds, Frank Kitts Park and Civic Square. The GNP is proposing new Urban Parks.

Waitangi Park was a result of community activism, can the wording be changed to reflect this?

This can be raised at the meeting and noted in that way. We are not able to change this as a redactional change prior to the meeting.

2.5 Wellington Water 2022/23 & 2023/24 Year Opex Budget Request

I'm not clear what has changed about the risks of cost escalations that Wellington Water identified earlier in the year?

Key reasons that WWL has given regarding the cost escalations include increasing reactive faults and incident numbers and associated complexity of these failures, inflationary cost pressures and a tight labour market.

There is talk of re-prioritisation, what might miss out?

Wellington Water would use proactive work as the budget-balancing activity and treatment, reactive maintenance and incident responses would be prioritised.

I still don't see how this work will fit the criteria for government funding, can you talk further about how you think the work does meet the criteria?

We anticipate that there will be WWL activities that fit the following criteria:

- **Delivery of infrastructure and/or services** that support local place-making and **improvements in community well-being.**

How will the timing of the Better Off funding application affect the rates strike?

Applications for the first tranche of the Better off Funding can now be made. Once a decision is made at Committee around this proposed application for Better off Funding the Wellington City Council (WCC) application can be progressed. WCC Officers will work with Wellington Water (WWL) personnel to identify relevant operational (opex) projects that fall within the current criteria. WCC cannot be certain when DIA will make a decision on this application and there is potential that this will not happen prior to the setting of rates at Council.

Will we know the result of the Better Off funding prior to striking the rate? If not, how will that be managed?

As above, WCC cannot be certain when a decision will be made on the application. There is potential that the setting of rates happens prior to that decision. Council would need to accept the risk in not striking rates inclusive of this cost pressure given there is potential that after rates setting WCC receive notice that the application for Better off Funding relating to waters opex was unsuccessful. In this instance Council would have two options;

- Debt fund the shortfall in opex funding for waters Activities for 2022/23
- Request that WWL operate within a lower (original) budget envelope, this would likely result in a reduction in planned maintenance work

2.7 Actions Tracking

What progress is being made with Kāinga Ora to do a Specified Development Project?

This has been on the agenda for a while.

LGWM is continuing to work with Kāinga Ora on a potential SDP. Councillors were updated on this in the recent LGWM workshop session on Urban Development.

Day lighting of streams – going to do work as “opportunities arise” can we take a more proactive stance here and find a project within the next year?

There are no projects currently identified but opportunities could be explored if funding was agreed as part of the development of the Green Network Plan business case.

Assistance for owners with SNAs – will this definitely be part of next year’s budget decisions?

Officers will be recommending that some form of assistance for landowners with SNAs is included in next year's budget decisions on the 2023/24 annual plan. This could include a number of options such as rates relief, additional internal resource to provide assistance to landowners, or some form of financial incentive package to support landowners to maintain and improve their SNAs. However, the decision on whether these options are taken forward will be a matter for the budgeting process and Councillors to decide on.

Progress on the car-parks at Countdown? Any contact made with staff there?

- Easement agreement has been found and brought to the attention of Countdown building owner.
- WCC project team working on additional street signage to inform people of Countdown parks
- Working with Countdown building owner to improve signage inside the premises.