

Environmental Reference Group

Meeting Minutes

Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council
Me Heke Kī Pōneke

Details: Date: Monday, 8 June 2020
Time: 5:07pm – 7:03pm
Venue: Virtual Meeting
Chair: Lynn Cadenhead

Members present: Steven Almond George Hobson
Mike Britton Clare Stringer
Lynn Cadenhead Michelle Rush
Arron Cox Chris Watson
Isla Day Eleanor West
Sally Faisandier Andrew Wilks

Councillors present: Cr Laurie Foon

Democracy Services Staff: Hedi Mueller, Democracy Advisor

ELT Member: Moana Mackey (Chief Advisor to the Chief City Planner)

Topic	Description	Start time
1.	Welcome & Apologies Apologies were received from Martin Payne and Councillor Paul for absence and from Steven Almond for lateness. Moved Lynn, seconded Arron CARRIED	5:07pm
2.	Conflicts of Interest No conflicts of interest were declared.	5:07pm
3.	Presentations Heritage Team – presented by Mark Lindsay and Moira Smith Mark introduced the heritage team, comprising himself and a team of heritage advisors with backgrounds in architecture, and engineering and archaeology. The team's BAU is to provide independent expert advice to the Resource Consent Team when the consent impacts on heritage listed buildings. They also have a role in monitoring compliance based on resource consents, fielding enquiries from the public, and assessing applications through the Built Heritage Incentive fund (BHIF) of approximately \$500,000. The Heritage team is involved in the review of District Plan, Planning for Growth, Let's Get Welly Moving and are also looking to get more	5:09

strategic; and be more proactive as a team in telling the history of a place and heritage stories through the draft Interpretation Strategy.

Mark discussed the example of the value of ethnic community halls reflecting the community make up, and of investment in heritage led regeneration (investment leads to better economic uses, higher rental returns, and leverage of heritage buildings).

The draft Annual Plan has proposed a \$100k per year increase to BHIF, which acknowledges and gives compensation to restrictions that owners of heritage listed buildings face.

Cultural landscape principals describe how human occupation has interacted with the land and are a strategic priority of the Heritage team. They are looking to take heritage functions into the future – shifting focus from just buildings and more towards social functionality and what heritage means to people, relations between people, places and stories. Sustainability is important and the team is supportive of full cost accountabilities in understanding how heritage contributes to Council's sustainability goals and carbon reduction targets.

Moira discussed the Heritage Team's role in the District Plan. The current District Plan was written in about 2000, and has had rolling reviews where certain sections were updated. It is now moving to a full review of the entire Plan, and publication of a second generation District Plan.

Moira discussed that heritage listings are not just buildings but also includes sites of significance to Māori, heritage trees (like the Bucket Tree in Tawa), heritage areas and heritage objects (like the Cable Car Tunnel).

The introduction of National Planning Standards standardises the format of District Plan across councils. The review of the District Plan in 2020 will include redrafting the plan into the National Planning Standards format. Archaeological sites will be a new item for the WCC District Plan. The team have reviewed a long list of nominations, and created a short-list of places with significant heritage values. They are currently researching these short-listed places to assess whether they are eligible to be scheduled in the District Plan. They will talk with owners later this year, ahead of consultation on the draft District Plan in early 2021.

Members discussed:

- Is there an emphasis on how the economy relates to heritage? Pre-COVID there were lots of arguments for how heritage sites bolster tourism industry,

from environmental perspective we are not so interested in international tourism, do you have thoughts about that during lockdown? *Mark - Rebuilding is a big user of steel and concrete and other materials that use a lot of energy to produce. The costs of restoring or refurbishing are often in labour, and the benefit of heritage restoration is that money often stays in the local economy through wages and taxes. There is tremendous opportunity to look at ourselves as the capital and the city of governance, comparing ourselves to Canberra which is a must see destination for civics education and how it informs the cultural landscape. When you consider the three arms of government, the connections with Mana Whenua and for example Te Rauparaha; there is a good story to tell about our city, especially in the context of history being a compulsory subject in schools. The Pukeahu precinct shows how stories of nationhood and NZ history can be told through our heritage places. And to value what the city represents – expertise and governance. And we could make Wellington a destination for that kind of learning.*

- Is there a process that WCC goes through for weighing up the environmental effects balanced with the operational carbon of old buildings, which are often not energy efficient? Or may no longer be fit for purpose, such as the Central Library? *Moana – Recommend to the group to submit on the library towards end of month. Hedi to schedule Central Library session to ERG agenda. Mark - Generally, in terms of sustainability, there is a wider conversation here than heritage, which is our centre of expertise. Our understanding is that there is not a lot in the current District Plan, but can see this issue coming through strongly in discussions in the draft District Plan design guides. Whole life cycles aren't managed by the District Plan, but this is definitely one of the arguments for retaining existing buildings, including heritage buildings. Our view is that the greenest building is often the one that already exists. In terms of upgrading old buildings to make them energy efficient, this generally uses less materials than if you were building new.*
- Commend officers on social and cultural landscapes and the idea of the civics element in Wellington spaces, definitely support those directions! There are concerns around the National Planning Standards and the way that items are in separated schedules – it's important to still enable connections within those constraints so as to not lose the integrity of the whole.
- Glad that archaeology has been added in heritage as has felt it was missing from Outer Green Belt Management Plan. In the short- to medium-term, how can ERG be of assistance to the Heritage team? *Mark – appreciate your input into the draft Annual Plan process currently underway, the District Plan review, and public consultation on the future of the library etc. Participation in those processes is tremendous and it's valuable from a heritage*

perspective to have the Group's natural environmental perspective on built heritage. Moana – Council is likely to consult with Draft Spatial plan earlier now that Alert Level 1 is coming in at midnight tonight.

- Hard economics and heritage always seem to be opposing but not the case – if we look at full cost accounting models we need to look at difference between cost and value, and the way in which we can understand heritage as part of sustainability and the value added over time. It's not a polarity.
- Is it free to get resource consent if for heritage reason? *Mark – no but Resource Consent fees are reimbursed for successful heritage applicants, so it is essentially free.*

Actions:

- Hedi to schedule in a presentation on the Te Ngākau Civic Square/the Central Library for a future ERG meeting
- Moira to find report that notes the most sustainable ones are ones that are already built, and to circulate amongst ERG. These include [The UK Architect's Journal "retrofirst" campaign](#) and [The Greenest Building: Quantifying the Environmental Value of Building Reuse](#)

4. Improving ERG Efficiency

The group agreed that Google Drive/Google Docs is working for everyone, and did not contribute to a lack of comments on the draft Annual Plan submission.

Discussed the rolling chair model, the group agreed to continue trialling this as it has been tricky over the COVID-19 period. Likely to be easier once we are back to face to face meetings.

Andrew advised that he was stepping down and the group thanks him for his mahi.

Discussed whether the group should narrow its scope, consensus was to continue with a wide scope and to prioritise items that are of high importance, as time constraints are an issue. Important for WCC officers to have questions that they need/want answers to and to come to ERG early as soon as they are able to.

Discussion around the principals based approach which ties all the different portfolios together and that once complete, ERG could create a strategy to describe which direction the portfolio should be leading into. That way when Council staff present to ERG, they already have some ideas of where we think we could or should be going. Some members would prefer for officers to come to ERG during the drafting process, to ERG could have input early, and then have a workshop with ERG during meeting time. Then once

5:54pm

consultation is live, ERG would not need to write a submission, having had input during the drafting stage, and could instead use that time to encourage networks to submit. Clarity on when council officers can come to ERG will be out once the Advisory Group review is complete, this has been picked up again since being delayed due to COVID-19. Confirmed that it is too late for members inducted in December to be included in review.

Important for Chairperson to work with Democracy Services to ensure that agenda contains items that have been prioritized.

5. Portfolio Updates

Transport:

Draft submission on Parking Policy has been deceptively tricky, and been more about effective pricing of parking. Have extension to submit by Wednesday. Appreciate additional comments, basically so far the submission is that ERG strongly supports the policy, and international evidence shows this works well. Seeking additional sharper objectives/principals, wanting to better explain how parking policy fits with District Plan and transport plan, as the way it has been written is not that integrated. Been heavily influenced by writing from Stuart Donovan. Sally and Lynn to look over draft submission.

Michelle is making a personal submission on Let's Get Welly Moving Thorndon Quay and Hutt Road proposal and will scope out and come back to the group about making a submission on behalf of ERG. Hedi to email LGWM team about ERG being missed on stakeholder group meetings.

Innovating streets – five projects closed, feedback mostly positive, council voting Thursday. Even though for COVID-19, it's an opportunity to trial and if the public want it to be permanent WCC can go through process down the track.

Sally to draft a letter of support from ERG to council about Innovating Streets.

Heritage:

Athfield tower being pulled down, some negative press in media. George Porter Towers are not protected under the District Plan. There is frustration that people are reactive at time of decision rather than earlier, which shows the importance of the Heritage Team working with people to see which buildings should be in the database.

Waste:

Landfill sludge pipe is fixed, now mixing sludge with waste rather than soil. Good info from historic landfill sites and what checks they do. Breakage of the pipe has heightened public awareness, and has got people talking about whether landfilling sludge is a good thing.

6:24pm

	<p>Climate Change: People getting where they need to go within 15 minutes due to decreased traffic, WCC have built 70 km of bike lane and looking to making that a permanent fixture.</p> <p>Biodiversity: George to add biodiversity info to draft Annual Plan submission, group to add to Mana Whenua of draft AP submission along the lines of ‘we support continue investing in this area’. Moana – note that Annual Plan includes items that are changing, but the group can still comment of BAU items that aren’t changing.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sally and Lynn to look over draft Parking Policy submission • Michelle to scope out LGWM Thorndon Quay proposal and report back • Hedi to email LGMW team re stakeholder meetings • Sally to draft a letter of support from ERG to council about Innovating Streets. • George to add biodiversity info to Annual Plan Submission • Group to add to Mana Whenua section of Annual Plan Submission 	
6.	<p>Confirmation of Minutes: That the minutes of the March 2020 meeting were taken as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Moved Lynn Cadenhead, seconded Michelle Rush Carried</p> <p>That the minutes of the May 2020 meeting, subject to including detail from Chris, were taken as a true and accurate record of the meeting, Moved Lynn Cadenhead, seconded Eleanor West Carried</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris to provide detail to be inserted into the May minutes, regarding the cost of outbound emissions and cost of outbound tourist dollar in regards to the airport. • Hedi to update published copies of March and May minutes 	6:55pm
7.	<p>General Business</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portfolio leads to ensure that portfolios are tidied. • Lynn to chase Martin re ERG Annual Report and to finish off • Sally to finish off Annual Plan submission, other members to add in anything else prior to midday Tuesday • 20 minutes to talk about Innovation Briefs to be included on July agenda and to have 	6:57pm

	discussion about public/social media presence.	
	The chair declared the meeting closed at 7:03pm.	
8.	Next meeting Agenda items due 3 July 2020 Chair – Arron Cox	

Actions: The following tables the actions, responsibilities and deadlines from previous meetings

Action Points		Responsibility	Deadline
1.			
2.			

General Business		
1.		
2.		

Portfolio Groups	ERG Lead		Council Officer
Transport	Michelle Rush		Joe Hewitt, Team Lead Transport Strategy and Siobhan Procter, Manager Transport and Infrastructure
Climate Change	Chris Watson	Isla Day, Steven Almond	Tom Pettit, Sustainability Manager
Waste	Steven Almond	Clare Stringer	Emily Taylor-Hall, Waste Operations Manager
Water	Chris Paulin		Derek Baxter, City Engineer
Resilience	Lynn Cadenhead		Mike Mendonca, Chief Resilience Officer
Urban Development Agency/Urban Growth	Eleanor West	Sally Faisandier	Vida Christeller, Manager City Design & Place Planning
Mana whenua iwi & Treaty Relations			Nicky Karu, Manager Tira Poutama-Iwi Partnership
Biodiversity/Open Space	Mike Britton	Clare Stringer	Michele Frank, Urban Ecology Manager
Heritage	Lynn Cadenhead	Clare Stringer	Mark Lindsay, Heritage Manager