

**Before the Independent Hearings Panel
At Wellington City Council**

Under Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991

In the matter of the Proposed Wellington City District Plan

**Statement of evidence of Dr Farzad Zamani on behalf of Wellington City
Council (Urban Design)**

Date: 6 April 2023

INTRODUCTION

- 1 My full name is Farzad Zamani. I am employed as the Urban Regeneration and Design Manager at Wellington City Council. Prior to this I held the position of Manager of the Council's Urban Design Team (RMA). This is a position that comes under the umbrella of my current role.
- 2 I have prepared this statement of evidence on behalf of the Wellington City Council (the **Council**) in respect of technical related matters arising from the submissions and further submissions on the Proposed Wellington City District Plan (the **PDP**).
- 3 Specifically, this statement of evidence relates to Heritage Design Guides. This statement of evidence also addresses the general submission points received on the Heritage Chapter, incorporated at Part 2 of the PDP.
- 4 I am authorised to provide this evidence on behalf of the Council.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 5 I hold the qualifications of Bachelor of Architecture, Master of Architecture (Design) and PhD in Urban Design.
- 6 I have worked for Wellington City Council for 2 years and 9 months. Previously, I have worked both in private practice and academia for more 5 years.
- 7 I am a member of Urban Design Forum National Committee, NZIA, Urban Development Institute of New Zealand and I am a certified hearings commissioner.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- 8 I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Practice Note issued by the Environment Court, which came into effect on 1 January 2023. I have complied with the Code of Conduct in preparing my evidence and will continue to comply with it while giving oral evidence before the Environment Court. My qualifications as an expert are set out above. Except where I state that I rely on the evidence of another person, I confirm that the issues addressed in this statement of evidence are within my area of expertise, and I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from my expressed opinions.

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN

- 9 As the manager of the Council's Urban Design Team (RMA), I have been involved in the development of the PDP since I joined the Council in October 2020. I have led the review of the Design Guides and have provided urban design advice to the District Planning Team throughout the period of the District Plan Review.
- 10 In addition to preparing the suite of Design Guides, the team has assisted with the development of specific objectives, policies, rules and standards throughout the zone-based chapters of the District Plan and has provided advice regarding the Heritage Design Guide to the District Planning team.

SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 11 My statement of evidence addresses the following matters:
- i. Submissions relating to Design Guide G2. and responding to the heritage context.
 - ii. Submissions seeking to remove G10 and the issue regarding alignment of windows next to a heritage building.
 - iii. Submissions seeking to remove G11 and the issue regarding height and scale relationship with the heritage context.

- iv. Submissions relating to remove G16 and the issue regarding heritage shop front.
 - v. Submissions relating to amend G40 and the issue regarding exoskeletons.
 - vi. Submissions relating Area Specific Design Guides
 - vii. Summary and Conclusions
- 12 In my evidence I speak to each of these issues at a high level, and do not comment on individual submission points.

MATTERS RAISED IN SUBMISSIONS:

SUBMISSIONS RELATING TO DESIGN GUIDE G2.

- 13 Wellington Heritage Professionals [412.83 (opposed by The Retirement Villages Association of New Zealand Incorporated FS126.247 and Ryman Healthcare Limited FS128.247)] seeks that G2 of the Heritage Design Guide is retained as notified.
- 14 I agree with the submission of the Wellington Heritage Professionals [412.83] and disagree with the further submission in opposition by The Retirement Villages Association of New Zealand Incorporated [FS126.247] and Ryman Healthcare Limited [FS128.247] for reasons that I believe the context, its analysis and appropriate response to it, are critical aspects of designing in and around heritage buildings and areas.

SUBMISSIONS RELATING TO DESIGN GUIDE G10.

- 15 Foster + Melville Architects Limited [141.4] considers that G10 in the Heritage Design Guide should be amended to reflect that the relationship between aligning key elements is important but is not a measure of a good design.
- 16 I believe in many instances, due to practicality, constructability, and new methods of construction, aligning the external elements may not be possible or desirable. In most cases this can lead to coherent and easy to read built environment, but this may not be applicable all the time.
- 17 Therefore, I concur with proposed change to move G10 to an 'additional consideration'.

SUBMISSIONS RELATING TO DESIGN GUIDE G11.

- 18 Foster + Melville Architects Limited [141.5] considers that the relationships outlined on Page 20 are too prescriptive, will lead to confusion, and should be deleted.
- 19 Considering that the text and images on page 20 are non-statutory, and clearly state that they are demonstrations to achieve better outcomes, I disagree with the submission as these texts and images can assist the

designer with better integration and transition between new and heritage buildings.

- 20 Therefore, I support the texts and images on page 20 to be retained as notified.

SUBMISSIONS RELATING TO DESIGN GUIDE G16.

- 21 Foster + Melville Architects Limited [141.7] seeks that G16 is deleted. The submitter considers that while it is appropriate to restore and reconstruct shopfronts, particularly where heritage fabric remains, this should not be imposed on buildings where little, or no heritage fabric remains.

- 22 Where little or no heritage fabric remains, this design guide will not be relevant.

- 23 Therefore, I support G16 to be retained as notified.

SUBMISSIONS RELATING TO DESIGN GUIDE G40.

- 24 Foster + Melville Architects Limited [141.8] seeks that G40 is amended to reflect that the strengthening of certain buildings in Wellington poses considerable challenges, and the guidelines need to be flexible to enable a variety of engineering solutions, noting in some cases an external support structure is the only option.

- 25 I agree with the first point of the submission, however, I do not believe that there will be any case that “external support” is the only option. In many cases, it may be the cheaper option. External support, while financially may be more feasible, however, it significantly detracts from the heritage values and architectural features of the building.

- 26 There, I believe it is appropriate to retain G40 as notified.

SUBMISSIONS RELATING TO AREA SPECIFIC DESIGN GUIDES

- 27 Wellington Heritage Professionals [412.95] seek that the Area Specific Heritage Design Guides in the ODP also be included.

- 28 I disagree with the submission point, as the description of heritage areas are already included in the heritage assessment of these areas.

- 29 The proposed design guides are written to cater for all the heritage buildings and areas; therefore, the area specific heritage design guides will become redundant, or they can lead to confusion.

- 30 Therefore, I believe Specific Area Design Guides are not necessary and are already covered in the Proposed District Plan.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSIONS

- 31 I have prepared this report in support of Heritage Design Guide changes and decisions made after receiving and reviewing the submissions and further submissions on the PDP.
- 32 I do not support removal of G2., as the contextual analysis is critical to an appropriate response to the heritage context.
- 33 I agree with amendment of G10, to provide some flexibility for when alignment of external elements does not lead to a better outcome.
- 34 I do not agree with submission points on G11, G16 and G40, and I believe they need to be retained as notified.
- 35 I do not agree with reinstating Area Specific Heritage Design Guide, as I believe this is unnecessary.

Date: 04 April 2023

Dr. Farzad Zamani

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Farzad Zamani', with a large, sweeping flourish at the beginning.