
NORTH KUMUTOTO DESIGN BRIEF

1. Purpose of report

This report recommends the adoption of a revised design brief guiding the remaining development of the North Kumutoto area of Wellington's waterfront.

2. Executive summary

North Kumutoto is an important part of Wellington's waterfront. It acts as public gateway to the waterfront from the north. It offers recreation, cultural and employment opportunities. It has strong connections to the central business district and links north to Shed 21, the Railway Station and CentrePort. The area's development aims to enhance these factors.

The design brief sets the parameters for development of the area. It is consistent with the Waterfront Framework and reflects the Environment Court decision on Variation 11. Its adoption will also provide for the implementation of the agreed Waterfront Development Plan that includes:

- developments on sites 9 and 10
- open space enhancements in the surrounds and on site 8
- commercial proceeds contributing to the open space works.

The brief has been based on the refresh of the 2002 Queens Wharf Design Brief. Changes reflect: the factors above; the development progress and improvements over the past decade; other minor updates to content and reference.

Key focus areas of the brief include:

- An emphasis on pedestrian priority and access to and through the area.
- The development of Site 8 as public open space.
- The expectation that Sites 9 and 10 will be developed with new buildings
 - at a reduced scale to those previously anticipated in Variation 11
 - with a setback of at least 9m on the seaward side of Site 10.
- New developments are to have a strong relationship with heritage buildings and public open space, and are to help frame and emphasise view shafts.
- Ground floor uses of buildings will be predominantly and clearly accessible to the public adding to the vitality and activity of the waterfront.

The brief also makes clear that any 'preferred' building proposals are subject to public consultation and then the consenting process. An outline of the approach to such consultation is noted in the covering report.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Note that the North Kumutoto Design Brief is based on the North Queens Wharf design brief (2002) with updates to reflect:*
 - *the Environment Court decision on Variation 11*
 - *the Waterfront Development Plan*
 - *progress made in developing the area since 2002*
 - *other minor changes to update content and references.*
3. *Adopt the North Kumutoto Design Brief (as attached in Appendix 1) to guide the remaining development of the area.*
4. *Instruct Wellington Waterfront Limited to undertake a process to select preferred developments for sites 9 and 10 inline with the design brief and the Waterfront Development Plan.*
5. *Note that any 'preferred' building developments will be subject to public consultation and consideration by the council before proceeding to the consenting phase.*

4. Background

The Waterfront Framework sets out the overall principles for development of the area. Wellington Waterfront Limited implements development proposals on behalf of the Council. The implementation is guided by a Development Plan and design briefs.

The creation of open space at site 8 and building developments on sites 9 and 10 were agreed by Council as part of the current Waterfront Development Plan.

A refresh of the 2002 North Queens Wharf design brief has been undertaken to provide guidance and certainty over developments in the area. Renamed as the North Kumutoto design brief it sets out building and open principles and the limits of building heights reflecting the Environment Court's decision on Variation 11.

In April 2012, the Environment Court released its decision on Variation 11. The decision included specific recommendations for Council in regards to the development of North Kumutoto. In summary, the key elements of the Court's decision were:

- Site 10: a building height up to of 22m (rather than the previous 30m height) and the 'form' should be adjusted so it reads as more than one

building with a setback greater than 9m on the seaward side for much of its length.

- Site 9: generally satisfactory but building height should be adjusted down relative to site 10 - making it 16m and 19m high (rather than 16m and 25m as proposed in Variation 11).
- Site 8: should be developed as public open space.
- Public accessibility: the 60% ground floor accessibility rule was held to be an effective method of opening-up the waterfront and enhancing its use as a recreational and social space and should apply in the area.

With the Waterfront Development Plan agreed, the adoption of the revised design brief allows for the plan to now be implemented. This includes public consultation on any 'preferred' proposal for each site ahead of the consenting process.

5. Discussion

5.1 Purpose of the design brief

The North Kumutoto Design Brief provides direction and sets clear outcomes for development in the area known as North Kumutoto – the area adjacent to the waterfront between Shed 13, the Meridian Building and Shed 21.

The brief sets out the design principles and parameters for the development of new buildings and public open spaces. It provides a level of certainty as to the location of open spaces and the scale of buildings. Although the principles and development parameters provide direction and guidance, they also allow flexibility for parties to be creative in exploring ideas for the development in the area.

The brief aims to fulfil the general objectives outlined in the Wellington Waterfront Framework and forms a basis on which WWL engages designers/developers on proposals for the sites. The principles set out in the brief are high-level and as such can be supplemented by site specific principles and guidance developed as part of the development proposal process.

Any development proposal will need to comply with the design brief. Preferred proposals will be reviewed by the Technical Advisory Group and by council. They will also be open to public consultation.

5.2 Design brief changes and content outline

An assessment of the 2002 North Queens Wharf brief confirmed its consistency with the Waterfront Framework and held that it still provides a clear set of principles on which to guide development. It was recommended that with some amendments it could be brought up to date to recognise the Variation 11 decision as well as development progress. The revised brief therefore retains

much of the content of the 2002 brief but amendments have been made so that it reflects the Court's recommendations in terms of the development of the remaining sites.

It has also been updated to reflect development progress in the area. This includes the development of the Meridian Building, Kumutoto Lane (the lane running alongside the harbour side of Sheds 11 and 13), the new public space/plaza areas between buildings and the new pedestrian connections across the quays into the precinct.

Other minor amendments have also been made to bring the brief up to date (ie map references and labels).

In summary, the main elements of the North Kumutoto design brief cover:

- **General design principles** in line with the Waterfront Framework vision and matters such as: the relationship of North Kumutoto to the city and the scale of built development; the need for a range of uses that support safety and 24-hour use; the general character of the area and the relationship of new development with heritage buildings.
- A set of more **site-specific issues** that cover the need for new buildings and open space development to:
 - enhance the area's links with the city and to key sites to the north e.g. Shed 21 and the railway station
 - provide sympathetic relationships to heritage buildings, other aspects of the area's history and the development of contemporary culture
 - provide for enhanced pedestrian access and priority
 - provide appropriate parking and vehicle access
 - assist with orientation and enhance views
 - integrate with the promenade.
- **The remaining areas for open space development**, including the clear identification of the development of Site 8 as a public open space.
- **Principles for the development of open spaces** that cover: inter-relationships with other waterfront spaces and the wider city context; ensuring a diversity of uses that contribute to vitality, safety, recreation, shelter, comfort and social inclusiveness; enhancing spatial definition, enclosure and shelter, edge activity and features that provide distinctive character; safe pedestrian movement; flexible design to allow for multiple and changing activities.
- **The remaining sites to be developed with new buildings** (Sites 9 and 10), including the revised lower building heights and footprints required by the Court.
- **Principles to guide the development of the remaining new buildings** that cover: relationships to heritage buildings; façades that

provide a level of active edge; visual interest with recognition of different viewing distances; coherence with the surrounding context, and size/shape relative to neighbouring buildings; relationships to open spaces; responsiveness to changing uses; space definition and surveillance; ground floors predominantly and clearly accessible to the public; service facilities integrated or along secondary frontages; exceptional architectural design and environmentally sustainable.

5.3 Consultation and Engagement

The waterfront is important to Wellingtonians. It has been the landing point for migrants, a place for trade, for people to congregate and recreate, and home to cultural institutions.

The importance of the area is reflected in the consultation and debates that have occurred and in the engagement steps that are required as part of decisions on future developments. These steps include:

- writing to all submitters to the most recent proposal on site 10 to outline the process and the next opportunities for input
- commitment to engage with Waterfront Watch on an ongoing basis
- broad public consultation on any preferred developments on sites 9 and sites 10
- public participation as part of the consenting process of any recommended developments on the sites.

The revision of the design brief has included conversations primarily with representatives of Waterfront Watch and TAG. The key issues covered included:

- the importance of the promenade
- the ability of ground floor activities to contribute to public life on the waterfront
- the need to preserve / enhance views within the area, view shafts and for outcomes to ensure visual connections to the harbour and hills beyond were possible from the quay
- the value of open spaces offering activities (eg for children and performance areas).

Waterfront Watch also expressed the desire for the area to be retained as open space.¹

5.4 Financial considerations

The revised design brief is consistent with the Long Term Plan and Waterfront Development Plan. These have budgeted proceeds from Sites 9 and 10. Decisions that delayed agreement to a design brief or reduced the scale of anticipated developments would impact on the timing and achievement of the anticipated revenues.

¹ Representatives are likely to share their views as part of public participation at this meeting.

The commercial proceeds of the development of these sites will be used in part to fund public space developments in the area, for example the development of Site 8.

5.5 *Climate change impacts and considerations*

Climate change impacts and implications for waterfront development are part of the considerations when developing concept and detailed development proposals for sites. This includes consideration of the impact of sea level rise on the proposed development and mitigation measures, as well as the incorporation of sustainable building design. The Meridian building is an example of this – it was built using environmentally sustainable design principles and has a 5-star green rating from the NZ Green Building Council.

6. Conclusion

The design brief for North Kumutoto provides design guidance and direction on the development of this area in order to meet the objectives of the Wellington Waterfront Framework. It has been revised to reflect the Environment Court's decision on Variation 11, development progress and improvements across the area, and the development activities confirmed as part of the Waterfront Development Plan.

It clearly signals the reduced scale of development expected on Sites 9 and 10, and the development of Site 8 as public open space. It also emphasises the key principles applying to new building and public space developments. Agreement to it provides for WWL to initiate the implementation phase ahead of public consultation on any preferred development proposals that comply with the brief.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1) Strategic fit / Strategic outcome

The outcome provides for implementation of the council's agreed policy position.

2) LTP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

Waterfront development sits under Activity 6.1 Urban Planning, Heritage and Public Spaces Development. The commercial proceeds of this development will pay for public space developments.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

Maori have had a long connection with the harbour and waterfront that continues today. There are several sites of significance for iwi around the waterfront.

4) Decision-making

This is not a significant decision.

5) Consultation

a) General consultation

The Environment Court's decision on Variation 11 provides specific recommendations to Council on the future development of North Kumutoto. The Waterfront Development Plan also provides clear expectations in terms of the further development of this area.

The revised brief makes it clear that public consultation on the development of North Kumutoto will occur throughout the development proposal process.

b) Consultation with Maori

Representatives from Council's mana whenua Treaty partners – Wellington Tenth Trust and Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira were involved in the development of the Wellington Waterfront Framework and will be consulted when specific development proposals come forward for consideration.