
FEEDBACK ON THE PROPOSED DESIGN BRIEF FOR FRANK KITTS PARK

1. Purpose of Report

To provide the Subcommittee with a summary of the feedback received during consultation on the proposed design brief for Frank Kitts Park and outline the process for the next stages of design development.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended the Subcommittee:

1. *Receive the information*
2. *Approve the draft design brief for Frank Kitts Park subject to any changes as a result of the oral submissions*
3. *Note the process for the next stages of design development.*

3. Background

The intention to redesign the park is part of the Waterfront Framework, which was adopted by the Council in 2001 to guide the development of the waterfront.

Key aspects of the proposed design brief include:

- creating a Chinese Garden
- improving connections between the waterfront and the city
- improving the connection between the park and the water itself
- improving the connection between the park and the southern end of the TSB Bank Arena (formerly the Queen's Wharf Events Centre).

Consultation on the design brief opened on 12 October 2006 and closed at 5pm 23 November 2006. The consultation lasted for six weeks, which is longer than the time conventionally used for this process. Late submissions were accepted.

Sixty seven submissions were received by the closing date, and two submissions were received during the week following the deadline. A summary of all the submissions is attached as Appendix One to this report and a full copy of all submissions is in Report 1.

The plan was advertised in the Dominion Post, the Wellingtonian and on the Council's website. The Council made the draft brief and submission form available at the Council reception desk at 101 Wakefield Street and at Wellington city libraries. Copies were also available on request and were provided to the Council's Call Centre to mail out when requested and the information could also be downloaded from the Council's website.

Wellington Waterfront Limited also advertised the consultation through their monthly newsletter and copies of the consultation document were made available at their Project Information Centre on Queens Wharf.

Two signs promoting the proposal to redesign the park, the consultation process and where to obtain submission forms were installed at each end of the Frank Kitts Park promenade.

4. Consultation

4.1 Methodology

This analysis summarises the key issues from submissions made on the proposed design brief for Frank Kitts Park. The scope of the analysis aims to be broad enough to inform the Subcommittee's decision but sufficiently focused to be accessible and meaningful.

Of the sixty nine submissions, fifty-eight were made by individuals and six were made by groups; five submissions did not indicate whether they were making the submission as an individual or on behalf of a group. Submissions were received in three ways:

- online through the council website (51%)
- in hard/paper copies (35%) that were a mixture of formal submission forms, letters and faxes
- emails (15%) sometimes accompanied by attachments.

The website and formal submission forms did include a privacy statement which outlined that all submissions (including name and contact details) are published and made publicly available to elected members and the public. Those sent via emails, faxes and letters, that is, without the submission form, were followed up to ensure that the submitter was aware of this privacy statement. If the submitter was unhappy about

having their contact details made available publicly they were required to contact officers by 4 December 2006. This approach was adopted in consultation with the Issues Resolution Office.

A database was established to record and summarise the matters raised through the submissions.

Initially twenty four submissions were incomplete in the following way:

- they didn't state whether they were for or against the proposal
- they didn't make any comments at all, that is, they were blank submissions
- they didn't state whether or not they would like to make an oral submission.

Although there is no legal requirement for Council to do so, all incomplete submissions were followed up after the closing date either via email or letter, as this was considered to be best practice and to add value to the process. As a result of this follow up process eleven submissions remain incomplete in one of the three ways described previously.

The two late submissions received were both accepted.

The summary below outlines the key matters raised by the submitters.

4.2 Summary of Written Submissions

Design Brief – overview

There were forty two submissions that responded positively to the design brief of which twenty two supported the design brief completely, and one submission supported all aspects other than the location of the Chinese Garden.

Fifteen submissions were against the design brief, largely because they felt that Frank Kitts Park worked well in its current form, and that Waitangi Park was a better location for the Chinese Garden, as originally proposed.

Four submissions gave general/conditional support of the proposed design brief.

The remainder of submissions didn't say if they were specifically for or against (two) or, as noted previously they didn't contain any information at all (six).

Chinese Garden in Wellington

No submissions objected to the idea of having a Chinese Garden in Wellington, but there were mixed views over its proposed location.

Ten submissions specifically considered that the Chinese Garden would contribute to Wellington being a more creative and innovative city, identifying the contribution that Chinese people have made to the wider community. It was considered that a Chinese Garden would enhance the cultural aspects of the city.

Chinese Garden location at Frank Kitts Park

Thirty six submissions supported the concept of a Chinese Garden in Frank Kitts Park. Thirteen of these submissions felt that the park provided a better location than the originally proposed Waitangi Park. They felt that this would allow better design and enable water features to be incorporated which is important to Chinese culture. Eight of these submissions believed that constructing a Chinese Garden at Frank Kitts Park would occur sooner than if it were constructed at Waitangi Park (due to the uncertainty surrounding the transition building), and at less cost.

Four submissions believed that a Chinese Garden located at Frank Kitts Park would be more accessible to office workers, offering a tranquil relaxing setting during the lunch hour.

Six submissions considered that the location of a Chinese Garden at Frank Kitts Park would create a loss of “open and green” space. Five submissions considered that having a Chinese Garden would free up space at Waitangi Park, which they viewed as being positive.

Chinese Garden location at Waitangi Park

There were eight submissions that thought Waitangi Park was the appropriate location for the Chinese Garden as consulted on and approved in the Waitangi Park Design brief. One of these submissions also suggested that the Chinese Community have been treated poorly over the entire affair with the Frank Kitts Park location not doing justice to the beauty of a Chinese Garden.

Changing design of Frank Kitts Park

Thirteen submissions considered that Frank Kitts Park works well in its current state and aside from some minor improvements/tidy up should be retained as it is. They identified the area as being well established and a good workable environment. Five of the twelve submissions expressed concern over money being spent on a change that was not required.

Two submissions did not support the concept of another pedestrian bridge believing that pedestrian safety and routes can be achieved through minor footpath improvements and re-directing of vehicular traffic routes.

Playground

Five submissions considered that the current playground equipment located at Frank Kitts Park is iconic and should be retained. Two submissions specifically mentioned that they place a high value on its being a safe and “child friendly” park.

Amphitheatre, walls/battlements

Six submissions considered that the amphitheatre works well for community and cultural events/entertainment and as an area for people to sit and have shelter from the wind. By contrast, one submission considered that the existing amphitheatre does not work well and is not successful.

Two submissions supported the concept of removing or lowering the battlements to create a more open area. They felt that the current design creates a corridor/closed in feeling which they consider negative.

Edges, connections and views

Four submissions addressed the matter of how important quality pedestrian connections is, highlighting the value of views and sightlines between the city, park and the water.

The footpath edge between the park and Jervois Quay was identified by three submitters as needing to be addressed and requiring careful consideration.

TSB Bank Arena

Three submissions specifically commented on the TSB Bank Arena. One commented that the relationship between this building and the open area needs to be carefully considered while two expressed the opinion of demolishing the building to make way for more open green space. Two of these submissions queried the future use of the arena in light of the future indoor stadium.

Public Engagement

There was one submission claiming that the public engagement process was flawed. Reasons given for this included that the design brief was too general including broad concepts with little or no meaningful detail. They believed that there would be little learnt from this process.

To ensure that the community is fully informed of the proposal and to ensure that the public makes a meaningful contribution to the process three submitters believe that firm drawings and models need to be made available to the public before making a final decision. These submitters were concerned that mistakes that they considered had been made with Waitangi Park would be repeated, due to the public not being made adequately aware of what was planned for Frank Kitts Park.

Due to the Chinese Garden now no longer being considered as part of Waitangi Park, one submitter believed that the design brief for Waitangi Park should be re-consulted on as it had changed from what had been originally approved.

Other

Other points raised by submitters for the Subcommittee to note were:

- The proposed redevelopment should be viewed as an opportunity to strengthen existing aspects of the park. An example of this is the dragon boat and waka storage under a raised area of the park. The redevelopment provides the opportunity to re-orient the storage and provide access on the wall adjacent to the lagoon
- Different modes of transport (including pedestrian, skateboard, rollerblade and cycling) should be maintained along the waterfront and should be taken into consideration in the new design. This includes formal and informal paths
- Night time lighting

- Other possible locations for the Chinese Garden could be the former “Chinatown” in Frederick and Haining Streets, the Jack Illot Green or the Botanic Gardens
- One submission expressed caution on the potential of visual clutter occurring as a result of all the matters raised/identified in the design brief.

4.3 Discussions with Council Officers

A meeting was held with Council officers from the Recreation and Events Directorate, to seek their input on the design brief. Feedback offered by Council officers echoed many of the points made in the public submissions and also included addressing health and safety issues by the children’s playground and improving the lighting in some areas of the park. It was noted that the appropriate Council officers should be involved during the development of the design.

5. Changes Indicated

5.1 Written Submissions

From the summary of key points, it can be seen that approximately one-third of the submitters were completely in favour of the design brief. Further to this, 60% of the submissions were in favour of the Chinese Garden being located within Frank Kitts Park, a key element of the proposed redevelopment. Less than a quarter of all submissions opposed the design brief, and more particularly the proposal to locate the Chinese Garden within it.

Given the overall endorsement of the proposal, and that there are no widely held views which are contrary to the design brief, it is not recommended that any aspects of the design brief be changed.

5.2 Oral Submissions

Seven submitters requested the opportunity to make an oral submission, and the names of the submitters, and the times at which they have been invited to speak have been previously detailed in Report 1.

As noted above, based on the written submissions no changes to the draft design brief are recommended. However, members of the Subcommittee will listen to the oral submissions and make any changes to the plan that they consider necessary as a result.

6. Future Design Development and Public Engagement

The oral update from WWL will traverse this in more detail however it is intended that the process will involve:

1. Request for Expressions of Interest open to all landscape architecture firms interested in producing a concept design for Frank Kitts Park.

2. Qualifying firms invited to submit concept designs as part of a competition.
3. Proposals exhibited for public feedback.
4. Jury appointed to select a winning concept.
5. Report back to the Waterfront Development Subcommittee with Jury decision.

7. Conclusion

The consultation process allowed individuals and groups to provide their thoughts and suggestions on the proposed design brief for Frank Kitts Park. No changes to the design brief are currently indicated, subject to the outcome of the oral submissions.

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Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

The Waterfront Development Plan would contribute to the following Council outcomes:

More Liveable – Wellington will be a great place to be, offering a variety of places to live, work and play within a high quality environment.

Stronger sense of place – Wellington will have a strong local identity that celebrates and protects its sense of place, capital-city status, distinctive landform and landmarks, defining features, history, heritage buildings, places and spaces.

More Eventful – Wellington will maximise the economic value from promoting and hosting high-profile events.

More Prosperous – Wellington’s urban form, and flexible approach to land use planning in the central city, will contribute to economic growth and prosperity.

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

C378 Wellington Waterfront Project.

A312 Wellington Waterfront Operations.

CX131 Wellington Waterfront Development.

In accord with the 2006/07 LTCCP.

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 including Waitangi Lagoon and Te Aro Pa.

4) Decision-Making

This is not a significant decision.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken on the design brief and the results are included in this report. All affected parties will be included, and any feedback will be reported to the Subcommittee.

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 that underpins the Waterfront Development Plan.

6) Legal Implications

There are no implications from this report.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This report is consistent with existing WCC policy on waterfront development.

Appendix One