



Wellington Heritage Policy

September 2010

Absolutely

POSITIVELY

ME HEKE KI PŌNEKE
WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

Wellington

‘Kia whakatomuri te haere ki mua.’

‘To walk into the future, our eyes must
be fixed on the past.’

(Māori proverb)





Introduction

Wellington's historic heritage buildings, sites and trees are a precious and finite resource. They are important in shaping the character of the central city and each of the suburbs, and are part of what makes Wellington unique.

Wellington City Council adopted the former Built Heritage Policy in June 2005. Since then, there have been changes made to legislation and Council policy that impact on the city's heritage management. The Wellington Heritage Policy 2010 retains the goals and objectives of the previous heritage policy, and incorporates minor – but important – technical amendments. Operational and management detail has been removed from the policy. Overall, the changes provide for a heritage policy that is current and up-to-date, with a focus on built and non-built heritage and trees.

The Wellington Heritage Policy 2010 was adopted by Council at a meeting on 25 August 2010 and it came into effect on 15 September 2010.

Protection and use of the city's historic heritage resources are fundamental to the sustainable management of Wellington's natural and physical resources. It's an important priority for Wellington City Council to identify areas of the city which represent cohesive 'collections' of heritage places. This is specifically acknowledged in the Policy's objectives 1 and 2.

The Resource Management Act 1991, Section 6 states the following:

"In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development,

and protection of natural and physical resources, shall recognise and provide for the following matters of national importance:

- The relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga.
- The protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development."

This Heritage Policy is the background statement about the Council's intent to carry out the responsibilities required by legislation. The Council has a responsibility to ensure that the city's heritage work has a robust policy to provide a focused direction for the future.

The Council's definition and interpretation of historic heritage will align with that provided in the Resource Management Act 1991 as follows "Historic Heritage' as defined in Section 2, Interpretation of the Resource Management Act 1991:

means those natural and physical resources that contribute to an understanding and appreciation of New Zealand's history and cultures, deriving from any of the following qualities:

- archaeological
- architectural
- cultural
- historic
- scientific
- technological

it includes:

- historic sites, structures, places, and areas
- archaeological sites
- sites of significance to Māori, including wahi tapu surroundings associated with the natural and physical resources."

Background

In preparing the Wellington Heritage Policy 2010, the following factors are relevant to the protection and management of Wellington's heritage:

- the compact and integrated urban layout
- the historic street patterns
- the underlying pattern of Māori settlement
- traditional and ritual Māori land-use patterns
- the distinct character of communities, neighbourhoods, urban quarters and suburban centres, including people, buildings, sites and trees

- the pivotal role – and diverse and vibrant character – of the central city
- the symbols, images, places and buildings that identify mana whenua and the people of Te Whanganui-a-Tara/Wellington City and tell their collective history.

The Council will work to ensure that all new growth respects these values and, if possible, enhances them.

Conserving heritage is an integral component of a 'creative city'. It demonstrates how the city values the diversity of its environment. It provides a sympathetic human scale and form to the urban environment and enhances the wellbeing of its citizens. It can also make a significant contribution to the economy, through employment, tourism and the provision of interesting and alternative work and recreation spaces.

Issues

Protecting the city's heritage is not about locking it up. Constantly acknowledging the past provides the population with an enhanced sense of place, sense of belonging and sense of pride in the heritage of the city, in both urban and rural areas. The continued use of heritage buildings is essential to the city's survival and should not be at the loss of important heritage fabric. The challenge is to protect the most valued heritage places in an evolving environment while meeting the needs of a rapidly changing community.

Rationale

The Council, which itself owns and manages a number of the city's significant heritage buildings and sites, has prepared the Wellington Heritage Policy 2010 to reinforce its continued commitment to the city's heritage for current property/land owners, mana whenua, the community, visitors to the city and future generations.

It provides direction to Councillors and Council staff in their day-to-day role in heritage management. It will be implemented through the development and review of the Council's planning tools and processes, including the District Plan and Annual Plan as well as the Council's relationships with mana whenua, the owners of heritage places and the wider community.

Structure

The Wellington Heritage Policy 2010 consists of an overall vision, three high-level goals and six objectives. Each objective has a number of actions which relate to what is important to achieve the objective. These objectives provide the direction and framework for what the Council wants to achieve in the next five years. The Council's vision conforms with the ideals of the Council's Long Term Council Community Plan and the Resource Management Act 1991.

Vision

Wellington is a creative and memorable city that celebrates its past through the recognition, protection, conservation and use of its heritage for the benefit of all the community and visitors, now and for future generations.

Goals

The Wellington Heritage Policy 2010 is based on the following goals:

- **Recognition** – Wellington's heritage is recognised as contributing to our understanding of our cultural diversity and awareness of sense of place.
- **Protection, conservation and use** – Wellington's unique character is enhanced by the protection, conservation and use of its heritage.
- **Sustainable economic use** – Wellington's heritage is acknowledged as contributing to a vibrant economy.

Monitoring

Implementation of the Wellington Heritage Policy 2010 will be monitored and its benefits assessed to ensure the objectives are being achieved. Monitoring of the Council's Long Term Council Community Plan will be based on the three goals listed above, and will be reflected in the Annual Report. Monitoring of the Resource Management Act will be reflected in the District Plan, with changes made accordingly.



Heritage Policy Objectives

Objective 1 – Recognition

To continue to recognise heritage places as essential elements of a vibrant and evolving city

Actions

Identification

- Adopt a heritage-area approach to identify important areas within the urban and rural areas of the city that will contribute to the community's sense of place.
- Continue to identify heritage places with significant heritage value to ensure their protection, promotion, conservation and appropriate use for present and future generations.
- Recognise buildings with significant interiors to ensure their protection, promotion, conservation and appropriate use for present and future generations.
- Acknowledge the contribution surroundings make to the heritage value of places.
- Establish and implement clear criteria for identifying individual places and heritage areas.
- Identify nationally significant places in Wellington at risk from natural disaster or war for inclusion in a Heritage Disaster/Emergency Management Plan.
- Continue to liaise with Council departments, New Zealand Historic Places Trust (NZHPT), government and non-government agencies, professionals, property owners and the community in identifying the city's heritage.

Inventory

- Maintain and expand a comprehensive inventory of the city's heritage.

Research

- Ensure that places continue to be fully researched, documented and recorded for regulatory and non-regulatory purposes.
- Continue to liaise with Wellington City Archives, Wellington Public Library and other research and archive institutions to ensure information about heritage places in the city is accessible.
- Support the New Zealand Archaeological Association in its continuing archaeological surveys as an important method and programme of heritage identification and verification.

Objective 2 – Protection

To protect the city's heritage from adverse effects that may compromise the heritage values of a place, including physical deterioration, earthquake risk and inappropriate subdivision, development and use

Actions

District Plan

- Recognise those places with significant heritage value through listing in the District Plan, either individually or as part of a heritage area.
- Continue to monitor and update the objectives and policies in the Heritage Chapters in the District Plan that are relevant to heritage to ensure they deliver on this policy and meet the requirements of sections 6(e) and 6(f) of the Resource Management Act 1991.
- Continue to work across Council to promote the provision of advice and information to owners of earthquake-prone heritage buildings.
- Continue to review provisions in the District Plan to ensure they take into account the heritage value of listed items, the heritage significance of areas, the values of sites of significance to Māori and archaeological sites.



- Continue to extend the protection of heritage values to suburban areas through regulatory and non-regulatory mechanisms, and identify more heritage areas.

Other statutory provisions

- Ensure administration of other legislation, including the Building Act 2004 and the Smoke-free Environments Act 1990; take into account the heritage values of a place when assessing building and resource consent applications for heritage buildings.
- Make use of other statutory provisions, including the use of encumbrances, heritage orders and covenants that provide for the management and preservation of heritage places, including those specified in the Historic Places Act 1993, Reserves Act 1977, Local Government Act 2002 and the Conservation Act 1987.
- Promote appropriate levels and methods of earthquake strengthening that minimise the negative impact on the heritage fabric of a listed building.

Objective 3 – Public awareness

To promote and celebrate the city's heritage

Actions

Promotion

- Undertake promotional activities to highlight the contribution heritage conservation makes to the built and non-built environment.
- Make information about the city's heritage resources available to owners, stakeholders, the community and visitors.
- Explore opportunities to promote important heritage properties in Council ownership.

Community and stakeholder partnerships

- Establish effective partnerships with owners and stakeholders to ensure better management and sustainable use of the city's heritage.
- Liaise with other heritage stakeholders in the development and provision of conservation guidelines that promote the city's heritage.
- Co-sponsor and coordinate workshops periodically with heritage stakeholders to provide technical advice to participants, including owners, about appropriate conservation practices and techniques.
- Work with local communities to establish trails, run guided tours of the community, and hold workshops and other programmes that identify and interpret the city's heritage.

Objective 4 – Conservation

To ensure that best practice in heritage conservation is followed by Council staff, heritage practitioners, owners and occupiers of heritage buildings and archaeological sites, and to minimise the loss of heritage values

Actions

- Adopt a set of guiding principles for conserving the city's heritage to ensure that the heritage values of a listed place are retained.
- Advocate the appropriate conservation of heritage places with developers, owners, the community and other stakeholders to ensure new uses are consistent with heritage values.
- Develop, with Wellington City Council Emergency Management Office (WEMO), an Emergency Management Plan for nationally significant heritage buildings in the event of damage caused by a natural disaster or technical disaster or war.
- Require the preparation of an appropriate plan (eg heritage inventory, maintenance plan or conservation plan) for any heritage place subject to a major development that could affect the heritage values of that place.
- Endorse and promote the use of international best practice methods to guide heritage planning and work.



Objective 5 – Sustainable economic use

To encourage and support economic growth that preserves and enhances the distinct character of communities, neighbourhoods, urban quarters and suburban centres through the sustainable use of the city's heritage assets

Actions

- Encourage the sustainable use of heritage buildings for present and future generations.
- Encourage the sustainable use of sites of significance to Māori and archaeological sites to ensure they remain for the benefit of future generations.
- Support owners and managers of heritage items by continuing the Built Heritage Incentive Fund, targeting specific heritage projects that are consistent with the fund's criteria. The fund will continue to support:
 - providing grants for conservation work, including stabilisation, repair or restoration, for at-risk significant heritage items
 - providing grants to property owners to assist with fire protection and maintenance and repair work that will aid the conservation of a heritage building
 - funding for professional services (eg to undertake conservation plans, heritage inventories, condition reports, earthquake-prone building engineers' reports) for listed heritage buildings, structures and archaeological sites.
- Continue to provide free conservation advice and technical assistance to owners of heritage buildings.
- Continue to promote a fees waiver for non-notified resource consent applications for conservation work on listed heritage buildings and structures, and heritage buildings in listed heritage areas.
- Provide an accelerated approval process for listed heritage items where an appropriate plan has been prepared to international conservation standards.

- Promote alternative approval processes for resource consents that are considered to have a minor impact and consents of a more complex nature.
- Investigate the use of appropriate financial instruments, covenants and other voluntary mechanisms for the protection of heritage places.
- Work with the tourism and business industries to discuss ways in which the retention of heritage items can be promoted and encouraged.

Objective 6 – Council effectiveness

To provide effective support for the implementation of the Council's objectives and aspirations for the city's heritage

Actions

Management

- Integrate heritage management into other Council-related functions by promoting an across Council approach to heritage and provision of up-skilling workshops for Council staff.
- Continue to develop strong relationships with relevant mana whenua to assist the effective management of heritage places of significance to Māori.
- Maintain and develop relationships with key stakeholders and interested parties, eg mana whenua, New Zealand Historic Places Trust, Greater Wellington Regional Council, property owners, appropriate government and non-government agencies and local community groups, to ensure wider heritage goals are met.
- Publicise the Council's heritage role and related activities, eg conservation work on Council-owned buildings and sites.
- Continue to provide technical advice and information to the public, specifically heritage property owners, regarding work required under the Building Act for upgrading of earthquake-prone buildings.
- Ensure Annual Plan funding to support heritage activities.

