

Submission to LGWM Golden Mile Consultation

Inner City Wellington (ICW) appreciates the way prior consultation has been sought to achieve these concepts and is pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to their development for the future of the Golden Mile.

Our constituents are residents and property owners who live in the 'suburbs' of Te Aro and Wellington Central so this area is our main neighbourhood thoroughfare. We know we share it with the thousands of Wellingtonians who come into the city to work and play, but our perspective is that of our daily living environment. We are the largest suburban population (17,439 compared with sprawling Karori 15,234 – 2018 census) with a density (138 persons per hectare in Dixon St mesh block -2018 census) already equal to that of areas like Kensington and Chelsea (Grenfell Towers) in London. While we know Wellington is not comparable in size to London, we can compare relevant statistics like population density and access to adjacent green space for that level of density.

WCC planning suggests this density in the Central city will increase dramatically in future. We do not have any yard or garden space for exercise or gardens and very few apartment blocks have any community space. Latest developments include both new-builds and conversions focussed on single or two room apartments which exacerbate the problems of density.

We strongly submit that WCC planning begin to take account of this different perspective in a meaningful way. We want our Golden Mile to continue to be attractive to non-residents but their issues and perspective should not outweigh that of those who live here.

Along with physical safety in walking our streets, we are particularly concerned about the lack of green space and public amenities in this area. Midland Park is great, but we need other spaces like this every third or fourth block along the Golden Mile. These can be in the immediate vicinity in the side streets, but they need to be sheltered, green, and not overtaken by commercial enterprise.

ICW strongly submits that WCC should plan for what is now our city's largest suburb to be able to meet WHO guidelines

'As a rule of thumb, urban residents should be able to access public green spaces of at least 0.5–1 hectare within 300 metres' linear distance (around 5 minutes' walk) of their homes'

https://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/342289/Urban-Green-Spaces_EN_WHO_web3.pdf?ua=1

We are also concerned that planning takes into account the needs for improved Resilience in our central city. Along the Golden Mile there are insufficient spaces for people to congregate in the event of fire or the need to evacuate in an earthquake, and this deficit is exacerbated when you add any requirements for physical distancing which may become necessary if we have to fight Covid community transmission again, or in the face of new pandemics which now seem more likely.

Although probably not within the current brief, we would also argue that given the residential population size, ideally there should also be at least a couple of accessible, small, warm Community hubs within buildings with tea/coffee making facilities, some seating, and preferably also toilets and baby change rooms. The Mt Victoria Hub is a good example here.

ICW makes these general comments which are supported by our Association's position statements on Sustainable Development and our wish to see our city developed within a framework that clearly demonstrates that 'people and planet' matter.

We would also remind WCC of their obligations in terms of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. From these perspectives, and our comments above, we support all three concepts as moving in the right direction, but we would hope WCC can garner sufficient public support to move immediately to Concept 3.



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