

Hutt City Council Strategy, Long Term and Annual Plan Committee – 27th February

Your Worship the Mayor, Councillors

Thank you for the opportunity to speak about the potential loss of funding for repair and reopening of Petone Wharf.

Others will cover the importance of the Wharf to Petone and the Hutt Valley. There are a small number of aspects I wish to address.

- 1. The loss of Good Faith with the community if funding is cut...** When the Council allocated \$12M for wharf repair in its 2024 LTP, people were rapt. The Council had actually listened and finally made a decision for the widest community. Council has continued to act in good faith as the early project stages proceeded.....The Council consulted with the Save Petone Wharf and potential construction people before engaging one of the best engineers in Wellington to work with officers and come up with a Value for Money approach. It sought costed registrations of interest, so it has checked both feasibility and cost. These early investigations have been done in exemplary fashion and shared with community representatives. Together a way was worked out to obtain early consents so the work could commence. **This relationship has been a good example of the Council's active engagement community outcome¹.** Now, at exactly the time that the project was to be advertised for tender, it was paused and may be cancelled. A huge slap in the face for us and our commitment. Please honour your LTP and the community relationships around it.
- 2. Misinformation/omissions in the Agenda Reports** – most concerning are the statements on p112 and 113 of your Agenda that the Wharf will still be a vulnerable structure. Based on the work by Adam Thornton, and advice from engineers, the Wharf will be stronger and more resilient than it has been for decades with strong support structures and additional seismic breaks. Becas (engineering experts) has advised it is well above predicted Sea Level Rise. We do not know where this misinformation has come from. Further, the engineering requirement is to have a wharf that requires no significant maintenance for 25 years, and this will be achieved. This contradicts the statement on p 113 that future CAPEX budgets for repairs and renewals may be significant. This seems to be the basis for the \$2.29M additional operating expenditure to 2034 in Table 7, p 117 of the Agenda. There is a major omission in relation to Petone Wharf in the commentaries in the Agenda. I have been unable to find any acknowledgement of its significant heritage values and its heritage listing in the District and Regional Plans. This aspect should not be overlooked or glossed over.

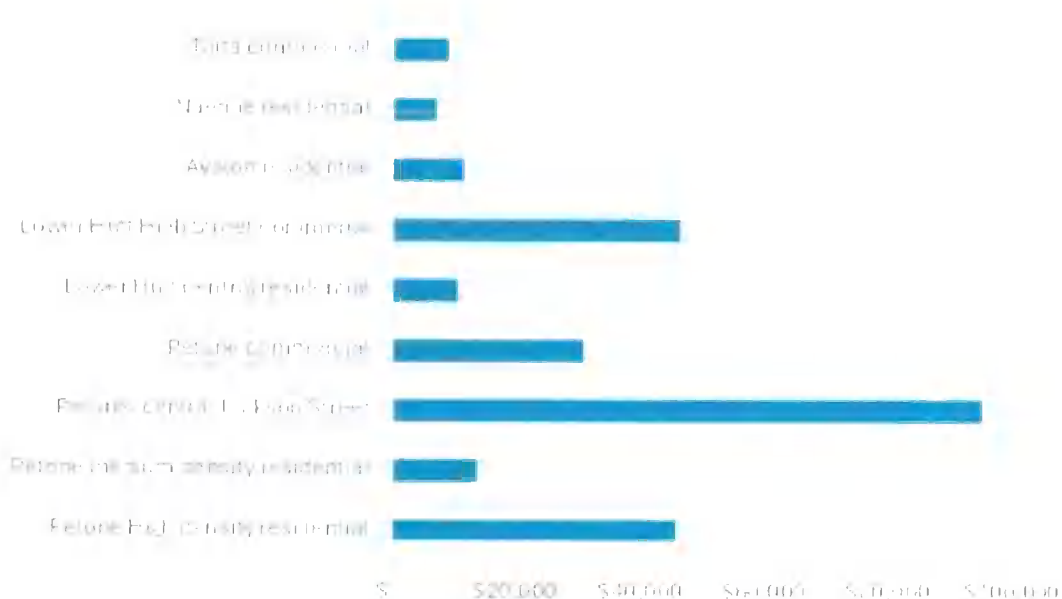
¹ Te Whiringa - Our Engagement Framework (undated, but relatively new)

3. **Petone – present and future** ...since the 1990s Petone has had no significant capital investment and the whole area looks neglected. Yet Petone is experiencing faster population growth than the district as a whole, and more than pulls its weight in terms of rates. We have had a quick look at that, with information shown in graph form below. Not only are our rates higher on a m² basis for residential, but our commercial/industrial areas are as well. We are simply asking for the Council to honour its earlier commitments and stop deferring expenditure. The Wharf is first up and should be proceeded with immediately.

Finally, I wish to say that the community does have some potential remedies if Wharf funding is rejected or delayed. This is not a favoured option, but it does exist. I have been very closely involved in last year’s Civic Trust Judicial Review against Wellington City Council’s decision to demolish the City to Sea Bridge. That decision was reversed this month and repair work is now being done. For Petone Wharf, if the Council’s earlier unanimous decision to commit to its repair and reopening is reversed, a very good Judicial Review case could be made based on the Wharf’s heritage status, its current vulnerable and closed condition, and previous community consultation.

Sylvia Allan, JP FNZPI

Rating revenue per 1000 square metres, based on small but actual examples



More than just walking and fishing...

