



Minutes of the Newtown Residents' Association meeting 7.30pm 15 May 2023, held at the Community Lounge 200 Riddiford St.

Present:

Rhona Carson (Chair), Steve Cosgrove (Minutes), Jane Patterson, Alan Murray, Michelle Wolland, Tom Law, Steve Dunn, Carol Comber, Peter Cooke, Crame Carroll, Jocelyn Hargreaves, Don McDonald, Stephen Pritchard, Hilary Watson, Sam Somers, DM Laurie Foon. Visitors - Vida Christeller and Seb Bishop from WCC.

Apologies:

Rowena Tun, Marion Leighton, Joyce Gibson, Bryony Hales, Jan Gould, Penny Sturgess, Leonie Walker.

Information from WCC about Newtown Parking Plan, Newtown to Island Bay transitional cycleway and Berhampore village upgrade.

Vida Christeller, Manager City Design, and Seb Bishop from the Engagement Team attended the meeting to talk about these projects. This was a preliminary discussion, to be followed up in July or August, with formal consultation in September. An information sheet was circulated outlining the process. [The link given in the sheet is out of date. Use this instead- <https://www.transportprojects.org.nz/current/berhampore-to-newtown/>]

Newtown Parking Plan: At present there are very few parking restrictions in Newtown or Berhampore, meaning that a lot of the parking is taken up by commuters. The expectation for the future Newtown Parking Plan is that much of the parking will be P120 with Residents exempt, with exceptions as appropriate. The formal consultation about the proposals will be in September.

There will also be consultation in September for extending bus and bike road space between Newtown and Island Bay. Seb drew our attention to a report available on consultation regarding bike lane space. This can be downloaded from: https://www.transportprojects.org.nz/assets/Berhampore-to-Newtown/B2N-BaselineSurvey-Report-22Dec22_FINAL.pdf

Wellington Hospital is working with Council discussing options, particularly regarding parking.

Comments and questions from the meeting -

- Don drew attention to the question of how to deal with continually increasing car numbers. Seb said this plan could incentivise change.
- There was a question about Coupon parking. Response - This might come in the future, but not soon.
- There will be more new buildings that are likely to continue to be built without any parking allocation. There was a suggestion that the 15 Constable Street flats have increased parking pressures in Daniell St and other areas. Government policy means that WCC cannot require parking in new developments.
- It was noted that the variety of parking conditions on notices in Thorndon are sometimes hard to understand. Response - This is being avoided in Newtown, and conditions will be standardised.
- Currently there is little allocation for older people or those with disabilities, and Tradespeople use up Residents' parking spaces. Response - There will be more accessible parks.
- Car sharing in relation to the hospital. Response - 80% of people at the hospital work regular hours. The hospital has seen a measurable drop in the number of staff who drive to work. There is a survey showing these issues.
- Experience in Hanson St suggests that students tend to have multiple cars per flat. Often they have cars to drive to see their family. Perhaps car share can help?

- Wellington Hospital isn't the only source of commuters - there are also cars coming to the private hospitals and Massey University
- Noted that residents' parking restrictions in Mt Cook have 'pushed' parking to Newtown.
- Other practices are people who 'park and ride' from Newtown, or live in the central city and store cars in Newtown.
- There will be a variety of priorities regarding who can purchase resident parking permits and who can get an exemption. The cost of parking permits is \$195 per year which covers the costs of processing the permits.
- Noted that there are a lot more resident parking permits issued than parking spaces available. Response - this will be pulled back.
- Re consultation: There need to be ways to reach all the different sections of Newtown. Seb has been talking with Schools, Hospitals, Berhampore and Newtown shops. Churches, preschools and community housing need to be contacted.
- There was a question about followup, to assess the effects of changes and modify if needed. Response - Currently data is being gathered for a six month evaluation of the effect of the cycle lanes.
- Perhaps some streets could be converted to one way?
- The 30kph limit might mean some areas are safer for cycling.
- Q about Scooters – Response - Scooters are legally allowed on a separated cycle lane, but not a painted lane.
- A recent article in the paper talked about potential flooding in Newtown. The Mas Rapid Transit changes will need a lot of attention to flood control.
- When is Council going to start enforcing the Adelaide Road bus lane? Response- This is a factor of the weather preventing painting of the bus lanes.
- What is the timeline for future connections? The routes on the bike network plan have been around for a long time. Response -Final work might be 2024-2026.
- Rhona commented on how long we have been waiting for the Newtown Parking Plan - this was proposed in 2019 and the WCC Parking Policy was signed off in 2020, but then parking plans were put on hold while the cycle lanes were being developed. We would like to get on with fixing the parking.

What is Reveal? Rhona has had an email saying Reveal will be collecting data along Rintoul St, Luxford St, Adelaide Rd, The Parade, and Reef Street between May 21st and June 9th, but it's not clear what Reveal is and what the investigation is about. Vida and Seb were not entirely sure, but will find out. [Update from Seb - "This is a project that uses penetrating radar to help see what's beneath the road. This will produce an accurate map of all the utilities underground which will be extremely useful as we plan and design projects for our city. You can find out at <https://www.reveal.nz/>"]

Rhona thanked Vida and Seb for coming to the meeting. We will look forward to further information in the coming months.

An update about the Proposed District Plan hearings.

- The PDP is now being considered by Resource Management Commissioners. This is happening in phases, with numerous different streams about different topics. Rhona has made oral submissions on behalf of the Association on Stream 1 - Strategic Direction and Stream 2 - Residential Zones, based on what was in our original submission. Currently those who commented on heritage are being heard - this is stream 3.
- Stream 4 starts on June 20th. [now delayed until June 22nd]. This covers Centres (ie City Centre Zone, Local Centre Zone, etc). Kainga Ora has made a submission proposing that Newtown should be designated a Town Centre, with buildings up to 36m permitted. Many in the Association believe that there is more land designated than is required, and allowing more height won't increase the housing supply but potentially will result in a few large blocks shading everything around them. We intend to argue against the KO proposal.
- Let Rhona know if you would like to be more involved in this topic.
- There is a lot of information on the Council website regarding the Proposed District Plan – see <https://wellington.govt.nz/your-council/plans-policies-and-bylaws/district-plan/proposed-district-plan>.
- There was discussion about various bits of soft ground around Newtown, due to it being built on what was previously swampy ground with streams running through it.

- Discussion about the number of Kainga Ora developments, both underway or proposed. The Owen St development is almost finished, and 2 are planned for Coromandel St. They recently purchased the site at 132 Adelaide Road that currently has a 'Stand with Ukraine' banner, and also have plans for the empty site on the corner of Adelaide Rd and Douglas St. They also have a new development in Rolleston St as well as the extensive Arlington complex. All of this extra housing is very welcome. We hope that adequate green space is included, but it is reported that the Rolleston St complex had a lot of green on the plans but that isn't evident now that it is built.
- Stephen noted that a UK study found that having green space within 15 minutes of a building dramatically improves mental health.

Ideas for celebrating the Newtown Residents' Association 60th Anniversary on Saturday July 29th.

- There was a general sharing of knowledge of the past in our area.
- Perhaps Newtown School Hall could be booked for the day, as a base for displays and activities.
- Newtown history suggestions could be fitted in with this celebration of the Association history, including Pre-European history. Tom noted that before the 1855 earthquake Newtown was going to be the centre of the City, serviced by a harbour where the Basin Reserve is now.
- A draft of the Laura Rosier Newtown history book has been printed, but still needs revision. Perhaps this can be completed and the final version launched at the anniversary.
- Digital New Zealand now provides access to the City Council photo archive.
- There were various other suggestions for making a permanent record of Newtown history.
- People are needed for an organising group for the Anniversary celebrations. Please think about this.

Newtown Community Centre

The Centre was reopened on May 12th. Tom noted that there are Open Days 5-7 Thursday 18th and 2-4 Sunday 21st, all welcome.

The meeting finished at 9:03pm