Before a Board of Inquiry

Under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)

In the matter of a referral to a Board of Inquiry under section 147 of the RMA of a notice of requirement and applications for resource consents by New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) for the Basin Bridge Proposal

Statement of evidence of Warren David Ulusele

Date: 13 December 2013
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Qualifications and experience

1. I am employed by the Wellington City Council (the Council). My current position is Manager of the City Planning & Design business unit. This business unit is responsible for the Council’s duties and functions under the RMA and includes the District Plan Policy, Resource Consent and Compliance teams. In addition to our RMA functions, our business unit includes the Urban Design and Heritage teams.

2. My qualifications are a BA (Geography) from Victoria University. I am an affiliate member of the NZ Planning Institute. I have over 20 years' experience in planning issues (in terms of resource consents and policy issues) for the Council.

3. Previous roles at the Council include Portfolio Manager Council Controlled Organisations, Acting Planning Group Manager and Principal Planner.

4. The role of Portfolio Manager position involved a combination of investigating and managing strategic initiatives on behalf of the Council and monitoring the performance of companies and trusts, where the Council has a controlling interest.

5. The Acting Planning Group Manager position reported to the Director of Strategy and Planning and involved management responsibilities extending across the Council's three 'RMA teams' i.e. the resource consents, District Plan policy and compliance teams.

6. The role of Principal Planner involved performing various planning functions across the Council's RMA functions, but primarily involved the management of significant (high profile, complex and/or considered to be of strategic importance) resource consent applications. In the course of my duties as the Council's Principal Planner, I have represented the Council on a range of resource...
consent applications relating to large scale projects. Some examples being:

6.1 Waitangi Park – a large scale ‘brownfield’ redevelopment of the underutilised area previously known as Chaffers Park into a central venue for outdoor public events and recreational use.

6.2 Wellington Waterfront – various new buildings and public space developments within the Wellington waterfront area such as the ‘Site 7’ building, the relocated Greta Point Tavern at North Queens Wharf, and the re-development of Shed 21, Odlins building and the Taranaki Wharf public spaces.

6.3 Rugby League Park – redevelopment of a sports facilities in Newtown, which involved the redevelopment of open space area located within the Town Belt, and subject to the requirements of the Town Belt Management Plan.

6.4 Stebbings Valley – a large scale greenfield residential development within the city’s northern area. This was the first stage of development to provide for long-term growth as identified within the Northern Growth Management Framework.

6.5 Meridian ‘Westwind project’ – large scale wind turbine project located within the rural areas of Makara and Terawhiti Station.
Executive summary

In my evidence I have undertaken an overarching assessment of the Basin Bridge proposal in the context of the wider strategic planning framework. Drawing principally on the planning instruments of particular relevance, my overall conclusion is that the proposal will be an appropriate ‘strategic fit’ in relation to these planning instruments.

A number of strategic transport planning documents are addressed in Mr Swainson’s evidence. However, from a wider strategic planning perspective, an integrated land use and transportation system has a critical part to play in supporting the Council’s long term vision for future growth and functions for the City. Central to this Council’s vision is the concept of a ‘growth spine’, encouraging future development in and around the City’s well-connected network of ‘Centres’.

The constraints of the transport network and the key improvements required to support the City’s (and region’s) growth are recognised in several strategic planning documents. The Basin Reserve area is identified as a significant ‘pinch point’ within the strategic roading network. The success of the ‘growth spine’ will rely on targeted investment in supporting public transport and to roading infrastructure, with the Basin Reserve improvements being a key project.

The roading improvements and associated mitigation measures which are incorporated within the Basin Bridge proposal will:

10.1 improve existing transport infrastructure;

10.2 ease congestion and improve transport inefficiencies around the Basin Reserve;
10.3 support a reliant and efficient public transport system and enhance the environment for walking and cycling around the Basin Reserve;

10.4 improve connections between the Wellington Central City and other Regional Centres, as well as other key destinations along the region’s transport corridor (including Wellington Regional Hospital and Wellington International Airport);

10.5 have flow on benefits to achieving other strategic planning outcomes, including the planned improvements for the Adelaide Road corridor (under the Adelaide Road Framework); and

10.6 assist in supporting the purpose and functions of the Basin Reserve (as a sportsground), particularly through the construction of the Northern Gateway Building.

11 In my opinion, the Basin Bridge proposal will broadly align with the outcomes sought by the relevant strategic planning instruments. However, I am of the view that further treatment and mitigation measures, as recommended by other WCC/BRT witnesses, will be required for the effects of the proposal to be acceptable.

12 Whilst I generally agree with the recommended conditions of consent, I include within my evidence a number of suggested amendments and provide high level commentary on the adequacy of these conditions as they relate to the interests of Wellington City Council (in enacting its functions).

13 Turning to the matters raised within the Section 42A report by Mitchell Partnerships¹, it is my opinion that the Wellington City

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Council's Climate Change Action Plan (2013) is not particularly relevant to the Basin Bridge proposal. However, it is noted that this document recognises that the Basin Bridge proposal provides a significant opportunity to: relieve traffic congestion; improve public transport to the southern and eastern suburbs; enhance the walking and cycling environment; and, support and reinforce the development of Wellington as a compact city.

**Code of Conduct**

14  I have read the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses in the Environment Court Practice Note. I agree to comply with this Code. The evidence in my statement is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying on the evidence of another person. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I express.

**Involvement in the project**

15  I have had no involvement with the proposal prior to the application being lodged with the Environmental Protection Authority.

16  I have read the application material and received briefings on the background to this application.

17  I am familiar with the site generally and have visited the site and surrounding areas specifically to consider the proposal.

**Scope of Evidence**

18  The key focus of this brief of evidence is to assess the ‘strategic fit’ of the Basin Bridge proposal in the context of the Council’s ‘Strategic Planning Framework’. In doing so, I will principally draw on the following statutory and non-statutory planning instruments:

18.1  Urban Development Strategy (2006);
18.2 Transport Strategy (2006) - which is addressed in more detail in Mr Swainson’s evidence;

18.3 Centres Policy (2008);

18.4 The Adelaide Road Framework (2008);

18.5 Central City Framework - Wellington Towards 2040: Smart Capital (2013).

18.6 Wellington Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region (RPS) ; and

18.7 Wellington City District Plan.

19 In this brief of evidence I will describe the proposal; discuss the strategic planning documents above and their relevance to the proposal; and, provide an overarching assessment of the ‘strategic fit’ of the proposal in relation to these planning instruments.

20 I will then comment on the relevance of the Climate Change Action Plan 2010 (now subject to a 2013 edition) to the Basin Bridge proposal, as suggested within the Section 42A Report by *Mitchell Partnerships*\(^2\) and finally, condition issues.

Proposal

21 The Basin Bridge Proposal is described in detail within the Assessment of Environmental Effects (AEE) prepared by NZTA dated June 2013\(^3\). Its main focus is to improve traffic movements around the Basin Reserve (‘the Project Area’) through providing grade separation between east/west bound traffic flows and


\(^3\) Basin Bridge Project, Volume 2, June 2013, New Zealand Transport Agency.
north/south bound traffic flows. The proposal also includes a number of supplementary road improvements and associated mitigation measures.

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The main components of the proposal can be summarised as follows:

22.1 The construction, operation and maintenance of a two lane, multi-modal bridge which provides a direct connection between Paterson Street and the Buckle Street Underpass. The bridge structure will be approximately 263m in length (or 320m if abutments are included) and will be up to 10.5 m high (measured to the top of the guardrail). Light poles are to be provided on top of the bridge to a height of 8 metres. The bridge will accommodate one-way west-bound traffic travelling on State Highway 1.

22.2 A new shared pedestrian and cycle way on the northern side of the bridge, segregated from vehicular traffic. The shared pathway will diverge from the main bridge structure near the corner of Ellice Street and Hania Street and will then reconnect with the footpath at Paterson Street.

22.3 A new three storey (13m high) building, up to 65m in length, located within the Basin Reserve (‘The Northern Gateway Building’). New entry facilities and further landscaping is proposed at ground level. The C.S. Dempster Gate (at the northern entrance of the Basin Reserve) will be relocated to the southern entrance to a site to the west of the J.R. Reid Gate.

22.4 New terraced landscaping between Buckle Street and Cambridge Terrace which will link with the National War Memorial Park (under construction).
22.5 The construction of a new single storey building underneath the bridge structure at the corner of Kent Terrace and Ellice Street. A four storey (17.4m) high planted trellis (‘green screen’) will be attached to the roof of this building.

22.6 New and upgraded local roading works and associated mitigation measures, including:

22.6.1 The opening of an additional (third) lane through the Buckle Street underpass.

22.6.2 An additional right turn lane into Buckle Street from Taranaki Street.

22.6.3 The entrance to Buckle Street from Sussex Street will be reduced from two lanes to a single lane.

22.6.4 Dedicated bus lanes will be provided on Dufferin Street, Rugby Street and Sussex Street.

22.6.5 The realignment of the eastbound route of SH1 between Hania Street and Brougham Street.

22.6.6 Modifications to the western end of Ellice Street and a link road between Ellice Street and the Dufferin Street/Paterson Street intersection. A shared pedestrian and cycleway will also be provided.

22.6.7 A new location for to the bus drop-off on Dufferin Street and a separate pick-up area on Rugby Street for Wellington College and St Mark’s School.
22.6.8 Modifications to the intersection with Vivian Street/Pirie Street/Kent Terrace/ Cambridge Terrace. An additional left turn lane will be provided on Pirie Street to Kent Terrace. Peak hour clearways will also be introduced on Vivian Street between Tory Street and Cambridge Terrace.

22.6.9 Modifications to the Adelaide Road/Rugby Street intersection. There will be a single lane entry into Adelaide Road (and an additional bus lane). Rugby Street will also be reduced from three lanes to a single lane where it passes the J.R. Reid gate at the Basin Reserve.

22.6.10 A shared pedestrian and cycling area will provide access to the Basin Reserve and there are associated changes to the island between Kent and Cambridge Terraces.

Strategic Context for Urban Development and Transport

23 The City’s transport network, its constraints and the key improvements required to support growth have long been a key consideration in planning for the City’s growth and development. The strategic direction for urban development and transport within the Wellington Region are encapsulated within the: Urban Development Strategy (2006); Transport Strategy (2006); Centres Policy (2008); The Adelaide Road Framework (2008); and, Central City Framework - Wellington Towards 2040: Smart Capital (2013).

and change for Wellington City in the next 30-50 years. The Transport Strategy seeks to ensure that Wellington’s Transport system supports the city’s vision for its future growth and functions. Both strategies were developed in parallel with one another and are ‘closely integrated’. Together they set out an integrated land use and transport vision for the city.

25 At the centre of both strategies is the concept of a ‘growth spine’ which encourages growth in housing and employment in key centres linked by a public transport spine between Johnsonville and the Wellington International Airport. The overall intent of the growth spine concept is to encourage further development in key growth areas, supported by improvements in public transport and roading infrastructure.

26 The growth spine concept seeks to ensure that the City’s network of established ‘Centres’ remain well-connected and to encourage future development in and around these Centres where the benefits are considered to be the greatest. The Council’s Centres Policy (2008) has been adopted as a way to manage the desired location and scale of growth of these Centres accordingly to their determined future roles and functions (i.e. the ‘Centre Hierarchy’).

27 The Project Area is located on the junction of two of these Centre areas, being the ‘Central City’ (a Regional Centre) and ‘Mt Cook’ (a Town Centre). The Council’s most recent strategic policy direction for these two Centres is encapsulated within the ‘Central City Framework’ (2013) and the ‘Adelaide Road Framework’ (2008), respectively.

28 The Wellington Regional Policy Statement (RPS) is considered to be the dominant statutory planning instrument for the Wellington region. It provides an overview of the resource management issues significant to the region and outlines the objectives, 

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policies and methods required to achieve the integrated management of the region's natural and physical resources. The issues to be addressed in the RPS include: Regional form, design and function (including the integration of land use and transportation); and, the efficient use and development of the strategic roading network, being infrastructure of regional significance (and national significance in the case of State Highway 1).

The provisions of the Wellington City District Plan give effect to the overall intent of, and the objectives and policies of, the RPS. Consistent with the corridor pattern of the RPS, the District Plan reinforces a 'Roading Hierarchy' within the Wellington area. It also provides a 'mechanism' for guiding future development along the 'growth spine' and provides a statutory framework to which individual developments will be assessed.

These strategies and policy documents ('planning instruments') are discussed in further detail below.

**Wellington City Urban Development Strategy (2006)**

The Wellington City Urban Development Strategy (2006) sets out the Council's long-term approach to managing growth and change for Wellington City in the next 30-50 years. A key aim for this strategy is to achieve a more compact, connected and safer environment for Wellington City. The strategy deliberately extends beyond the 'normal' 10 year planning and funding cycles. However, its focus for implementation is for the next 10 years (2006-16).

‘The Challenge', being the primary focus of the Urban Development Strategy, is framed as follows:

5 The 10 year planning and funding cycles coincide with the [then] Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP).
To ensure that future growth and change reinforces the physical and spatial characteristics that make Wellington so distinctive; focuses on high quality urban design and development; and contributes to the stimulating and intense urban experience Wellington offers.

The solution offered in this Strategy is:

33.1 To direct growth to areas already well connected, offering high levels of amenity and having some (or all) supporting infrastructure.

33.2 These conditions exist in and around the city centre, some suburban centres, key transport routes and in specific parts of the City's northern suburbs (and along key transport routes. In effect a 'growth spine'.)

In setting the long-term direction for future growth, the strategy aims to direct growth to areas where the benefits are considered to be greatest. Under the heading 'The Solution', it is recorded, that:

For Wellington, benefits are greatest when most new growth is directed to areas that are already well-connected, offer high levels of amenity, and have some (or all) of the supporting infrastructure. These conditions exist around the central city, some suburban centres, key transport routes, and in specific parts of the City's northern suburbs…

The Strategy estimates that 60% of all new housing developments will be directed along the 'growth spine' with 85% of new housing development located within the central city area or within walking distance (600m) of inner suburban centres. The ‘Growth Spine’, as identified within the Urban Development Strategy, is outlined under Figure 1 below. The strategy also recognises that the successful realisation of this strategy will

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require, among other things, targeted investment in supporting road and public transport infrastructure.

Figure 1: ‘Growth Spine’ – A 50 Year Growth Concept

Our 50-year growth concept


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Through the implementation of the Urban Development Strategy, the Council aspires to help make the city, within the next 10 years (2006-16): 

36.1 **Safer and more liveable** - by increasing lifestyle choices and the quality of places.

36.2 **More sustainable** - by using less energy, generating less pollution, and being more resilient.

36.3 **Better connected** - by strengthening road and public transport linkages.

36.4 **More prosperous** - by directing growth to areas where the marginal costs are lower and allowing building owners and developers to respond readily to changing market needs.

36.5 **More compact** - by building on the contained urban form that residents value.

36.6 **More memorable and distinctive** - by enhancing urban amenity and sense of place.

The Urban Development Strategy proposes a number of outcomes including:

1.1 (c) **Better connected:** Wellington will be easy to get around, pedestrian-friendly and offer quality transport choices on a highly interconnected public transport and street system.

Good access from homes to shops and services, places of work and recreational destinations is essential in any successful city economy. This will be reliant on recognising the roles of all types of transport (car, bus, train, cable car, ferries, commercial vehicles, walking and cycling). Ensuring the city is better connected will mean:

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an increasingly pedestrian- and cycle-friendly city, where more trips can be made safely using active modes ensuring that local, city-wide and regional road and passenger transport systems function effectively for people and freight.

Transport Strategy 2006

38 Mr Swainson addresses this document in more detail but I note that the Wellington City Council’s Transport Strategy (2006) is a transit-orientated strategy which seeks to ensure that Wellington’s transport system supports the city’s vision for its future growth and functions. The role of the city’s transportation system in this regard is stated within the ‘Introduction’ section of the Transport Strategy, where it is recorded that\(^\text{10}\):

Wellington is a dynamic and growing city, and transport has an important part to play in supporting and directing that growth. Transport is more than just about getting around: it affects the liveability of the city, it affects economic growth and it influences where people choose to live. Ultimately, these factors affect our international competitiveness, and our long term future as a city.

39 Like the Urban Development Strategy, the Transport Strategy aims to reinforce the desired pattern of future development for the city and its contained urban form. It is further stated that\(^\text{11}\):

We are a compact city with short travel distances and a good level of connectedness. Nevertheless, other aspects of the transport system are less positive. Imbalances exist in our strategic roading network, resulting in choke points from Ngauranga to the CBD in the north and between the airport and the CBD in the south.

Centres Policy

40 The Council’s Centres Policy was adopted in 2008 to provide a policy framework to guide the future development and management of the City’s networks of established Centres in an integrated way. The policy recognises that Centres are key

\(^{10}\) Transport Strategy, Page 2, Wellington City Council, 2006.

economic hubs of the City and significantly influence both traffic demands and the urban form of the City through the concentration of services and economic opportunities that they provide.12

This policy introduces as a land use tool a ‘Hierarchy of Centres’ (attached as Appendix 1) as a way to manage the desired location and scale of growth within these Centres. In outlining the ‘Purpose’ of the Centres Policy, it is recorded that:

The Centres Policy considers in an integrated way the varied roles of the centres, to provide guidance on how they should be managed and developed in the future, and to assist in coordinating the Council’s activities and programmes in and around these centres. It will be supported and implemented through more detailed policies (including the District Plan and centre plans), the Council’s infrastructure investment decisions and specific projects and initiatives.13

Of particular relevance to the Basin Bridge proposal are the following factors:

42.1 All of the City’s high frequency public transport routes pass through or close to these Centres.14 The policy recognises that enhancing primary connections between Centres (and their surrounds) is essential to maintaining the role and functions of Centres, particularly for the Central City.

42.2 The City Centre is recognised as playing a dominant role as the primary centre within this Centres Hierarchy, both citywide and for the region as a whole. Council’s most recent strategic direction for the City is outlined

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12 Centres Policy, Page 1, Wellington City Council, 2008.
13 Centres Policy, Page 1, Wellington City Council, 2008.
14 Centres Policy, Page 1, Wellington City Council, 2008.
within the **Central City Framework**, discussed in further detail below.

42.3 Mt Cook is identified as a Town Centre. The long term vision for future growth and development of this Centre is encapsulated within the **Adelaide Road Framework**, discussed further below, within which the Adelaide Road area is identified as live/work area.

42.4 Even when the primary form of transport ‘to’ these Centres are private motor vehicles, the concentration of services and activities provided within Centres are likely to mean that fewer vehicle trips are required rather than multiple journeys.

**Adelaide Road Framework**

43 The Adelaide Road Framework was adopted by the Council in 2008. It outlines a vision for the future growth and development of the Adelaide Road Corridor over the next 20 years. Its primary focus of this Framework is the area of Adelaide Road (and surrounding Streets) between Wellington Regional Hospital/John Street and Basin Reserve. It is identified as a key growth area along the growth spine within the Urban Development Strategy.

44 Adelaide Road is a key arterial route between the Basin Reserve (and CBD beyond), the Wellington Regional Hospital and the City’s southern suburbs. The long term vision for the Adelaide Road growth area is\(^{15}\):

> A high quality mixed-use area that is a more vibrant, attractive, better connected, accessible and safer place which meets the needs of all people living in, working in, and using the area.

45 A key outcome sought by the Framework is to improve Adelaide Road’s function as a transport corridor for multiple forms of

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\(^{15}\) Adelaide Road Framework, Page 11, Wellington City Council, 2008.
transport (roads, footpaths, cycleways and public transport routes). It is stated that\textsuperscript{16}:

Adelaide Road is an important arterial transport route connecting the central and northern areas of the city to the southern and eastern suburbs. As such, the area is heavily dominated by cars and other through-traffic.

There are significant ‘pinch’ points at the Basin Reserve and John Street/Riddiford Street intersection that suffer from high levels of congestion at peak times, hindering movement within and through the area. Ensuring good accessibility for traffic (including emergency vehicles) to the hospital is another important transport issue for Adelaide Road.

The Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan proposes improvements to the road around the Basin Reserve to improve traffic flow and better provide for public transport, walking and cycling. The vision for the Adelaide Road corridor has been designed to integrate with the improvements signalled in the corridor plan.

Although the Adelaide Road area has the highest public transport patronage in the city and large numbers of people walk or cycle through the area, it is a poor environment from a safety and ‘amenity’ perspective due to congestion, traffic access management, intersection control and vehicle speeds. In terms of pedestrian cross-connections, existing steps and walkways linking Adelaide Road to higher areas (eg Tasman Street) are well used but have safety, way-finding and access problems.

The improvements proposed within the Adelaide Road Framework are envisaged to be co-ordinated with, and connect to, the proposed Basin Reserve improvements. Therefore, modifications to improve the efficiency of the state highway network will have flow-on benefits for the Adelaide Road Corridor. These benefits include improving traffic flows around the basin reserve area (particularly at peak times); providing greater space for dedicated public transport lanes; and, improvements to public space which enhance the environment for walking and cycling\textsuperscript{17}.

\textsuperscript{16} Adelaide Road Framework, Page 18, Wellington City Council, 2008.

\textsuperscript{17} Adelaide Road Framework, Page 6, Wellington City Council, 2008.
Wellington Towards 2040 is a non-statutory document that sets out the Council’s most recent policy direction for the future development of the City over the next 30 years. It is based on Council’s ‘holistic’ aspirations for Wellington and an understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the City.\textsuperscript{18} As a ‘vision’ document, it provides the overarching framework that future decision making and resource allocation will be assessed under for the Council’s future activities\textsuperscript{19}.

This strategy document is supported by four city goals and sets out the pathway for Wellington’s future, being based on becoming:

48.1 A People-Centred City

48.2 A Eco City

48.3 A Connected City

48.4 A Dynamic Central City.

Wellington 2040 adopts an holistic interpretation\textsuperscript{20} of a ‘Connected City’ in this context, but the need for efficient and effective infrastructure to connect Wellington to the rest of the world. Physical connections – by sea, air, rail and road – will continue to be vital to the flow of goods, people and services in and out of the city.

\textsuperscript{18} Wellington Towards 2040: Smart Capital, Page 8, Wellington City Council, 2013.

\textsuperscript{19} Wellington Towards 2040: Smart Capital, Page 42, Wellington City Council, 2013.

\textsuperscript{20} Connections will be physical, allowing for ease of movement of people and goods; virtual, in the form of world-class ICT infrastructure; and social, enabling people to feel connected to each other and their communities.
The ‘Central City Framework’ has been developed in support of the four city goals. This framework recognises the contribution of the central city as the economic engine and cultural heart of the city and region. Its overall intention is to build on the City’s strengths, respond to future trends and challenges, and provide a framework for long-term improvements to the central city. To this end, a number of ‘areas of opportunity’ have been identified for specific parts of the city and project areas.

One area of opportunity relevant to the Basin Bridge proposal falls under the heading ‘Streets’. The Central City Framework seeks to have a highly interconnected and pedestrian friendly street network. Improvements to the city’s street structure are intended to:

51.1 provide ‘ease of movement’ with better access across and within the city;

51.2 support a reliable and efficient public transport system;

51.3 make streets more attractive and pleasant; and,

51.4 support the safe and efficient transport of people and goods.

The ‘Central City Framework’ identifies specific ‘areas of opportunity’ of particular relevance to the Basin Bridge proposal. One of these areas includes providing a framework for future improvements to particular city streets. Both Buckle Street and Vivian Street are identified as an ‘East-West Connector’. In relation to these streets, it is stated that:

\[\text{21 Central City Framework, Page 32, Wellington City Council, 2013.}\]

\[\text{22 Central City Framework, Page 37, Wellington City Council, 2013.}\]
Buckle Street

Buckle Street frames the southern end of the CBD. It is a core element of the (capital city) processional route, being the address for the memorial park and the Carillon. Massey University also fronts the street. These will need to be critical considerations in the detailed design of the Ngauranga to Airport roading upgrade.

Vivian Street

Vivian Street (adjoined by Pirie and Buller streets) provides a direct line of sight and is the only continuous road across the valley. Design intentions include:

- enhanced pedestrian connections at the edges to the Town Belt and Victoria University
- ensuring that entry points relate to commuting routes
- improvements to pedestrian comfort.

The Central City Framework also identifies another ‘area of opportunity’ in developing an interconnected ‘Green Infrastructure’ network throughout the city. Kent and Cambridge Terraces are identified as a future ‘North-South Boulevard’ providing a connection between Waitangi Park and the Basin Reserve. Whilst accommodating public transport and private vehicles, these boulevards are to be designed to provide for pedestrian and cyclists comfort. It is stated that:

Kent and Cambridge Terraces

The intention is to combine a number of the median islands into a linear park. Alternative concepts will also be explored, such as placing the park at the eastern side of the road providing a clear edge to the central city.

Another ‘area of opportunity’ of relevance to the Basin Bridge proposal includes improvements to ‘Systems Infrastructure’.

Under the heading ‘Movement’, it is stated that:

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23 An interconnected network of open spaces and natural areas, such as parks, reserves, wetlands and native plant vegetation.

The state highway and the way it integrates with the city requires attention, not only to mitigate the current proposals but to ensure that as the transport agency plans further projects we have a proactive role.

- Work with NZTA to ensure integration of Memorial Park and the Basin Reserve infrastructure projects.
- Open-space design for unused areas adjacent to highway such as the Willis, Ghuznee and Arthur Street intersections.
- Develop a strategy to reduce motorway impacts and introduce boulevard strategy along the quays.

Wellington Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region

55 The Wellington Regional Policy Statement (RPS) became operative 24 April 2013. The stated purpose of the RPS is to:

provide an overview of the resource management issues significant to the region, and stating the policies and methods required to achieve the integrated management of the region's natural and physical resources...

56 In her foreword, Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) Chair, Fran Wilde, notes that 'the 2013 RPS has a greater emphasis on the integrated planning of our city and urban spaces, particularly in relation to transport, which has such a major impact on land use and on the land itself'.

57 Under eleven different topics, the RPS identifies a number of resource management issues which are of regional significance. In my opinion, two particular topics of relevance to the strategic planning assessment of the Basin Bridge proposal include; Regional form, design and function; and, Energy, infrastructure and waste.

58 Under the heading: 'Regional form, design and function', the RPS recognises that the region is generally well compact, arranged around a strong corridor pattern. However, there are a number of

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pressures and inefficiencies in this corridor pattern, as summarised in the RPS below:\textsuperscript{26}

This corridor pattern is a strength for the region. It reinforces local centres, supports passenger transport, reduces energy use and makes services more accessible. There are, however, parts of the region where growth pressures exist and where the region’s current compact form is beginning to fray at the edges, reducing transport efficiency and the ability of some centres to grow as community service and employment areas. The region also has limited east-west transport linkages, which means freight and commuter movements are focused along the north-south corridors, increasing congestion on some major routes.

59 In support of, and in response to, this regionally significant issue, Objective 22 of the RPS seeks to achieve:

A compact well designed and sustainable regional form that has an integrated, safe and responsive transport network and:

(a) a viable and vibrant regional central business district in Wellington city;
(i) Integrated land use and transportation;
(j) improved east-west transport linkages;
(k) efficiently use existing infrastructure (including transport network infrastructure);

60 In relation to the topic 'Energy, infrastructure and waste', it is noted that the roads affected by the Basin Bridge proposal are part of the Strategic Transport Network and are recognised within the RPS as a being regionally significant infrastructure. The RPS acknowledges that:

This infrastructure forms part of national or regional networks and enables communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and their health and safety.

61 Objective 10 of the RPS sets out to ensure that the social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits of regionally

\textsuperscript{26} Wellington Regional Policy Statement, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Pages 67-68.
significant infrastructure are both recognised and protected. Policy 8 of the RPS requires District and Regional Plans to include policies and rules to protect regionally significant infrastructure from incompatible subdivision, use and development. Policy 39 seeks to ensure that the benefits of regionally significant infrastructure are recognised when considering resource consents or Notice of Requirements.

At a regional level, the roading improvements associated with the Basin Bridge proposal will improve existing transport infrastructure which is of regional significance (and national significance in the case of the area of State Highway 1 affected by the proposal). It will improve transport inefficiencies around the Basin Reserve; improve connections between the Wellington Central City and other Regional Centres, as well as other key destinations along the region’s transport corridor (including Wellington Regional Hospital and Wellington International Airport). Improvements to this infrastructure will assist in enabling communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and their health and safety.

Wellington City District Plan

The Wellington City District Plan was made operative 27 July 2000. It is an ‘effects based’ plan that details specific objectives, policies and rules for each specific ‘Area’ (zone), adopted to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources in Wellington. The District Plan has since been subject to a ‘rolling review’. Of particular relevance to the Basin Bridge

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27 Wellington Regional Policy Statement, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Page 37.
The Basin Bridge proposal will be located within several different ‘Areas’ of the District Plan, namely: the Central Area; the Inner Residential Area; Open Space A Area; and, the Suburban Centre Area (renamed ‘Centres’ under Plan Change 73). The relevant objectives and policies for each of these areas, as well as other relevant Chapters of the District Plan have been previously identified within the ‘Key Issues Report’ by the Wellington City Council. However, it is noted that the extent of the project area within the Suburban Centre/Centres’ Area is limited areas of legal road, rather than any specific ‘site’. Accordingly, the objectives and policies of the corresponding Chapters of the District Plan and Plan Change 73 are not considered to be particularly relevant.

The objectives and policies of the District Plan which I will principally draw on are those which relate to the Central Area, where the majority of the Project Area is located. The relevant objectives and policies of the Open Space Area of the District Plan are also relevant, particularly with respect to the construction of the Northern Gateway Building. These are discussed further below. The Residential Area objectives and policies are referenced below insofar as they relate to impacts of development within the Central Area on the general amenity of adjoining Residential Areas.

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29 Plan Change 73 was notified by WCC on 28 September 2010 and involved a comprehensive review of the Suburban Centre Area of the District Plan. Consequently, the Suburban Centre Area was split into two distinct zones, ‘Centres’ and ‘Business Areas’. The Basin Bridge proposal will adjoin the Mt Cook Centre. The decision on Plan Change 73 is subject to a ‘global’ appeal.

Although the District Plan’s Heritage Chapter is also relevant, heritage issues are covered in greater detail by the evidence of Mrs Rickard.

Of particular importance to the Basin Bridge proposal is the Central Area Objective 12.2.15 (‘Access’) which seeks: ‘To enable efficient, convenient and safe access for people and goods within the Central Area’. This is reinforced by this objectives corresponding policies, including:

**Policy 12.2.15.1** - Seek to improve access for all people, particularly people travelling by public transport, cycle or foot, and for people with mobility restrictions.

**Policy 12.2.15.2** - Manage the road network to avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of road traffic on the amenity of the Central Area and the surrounding Residential Areas.

**Policy 12.2.15.3** - Manage the road system in accordance with a defined road hierarchy.

**Policy 12.2.15.4** - To permit appropriate extensions to the existing road network, and make provision for these.

The Basin Bridge proposal will have significant public transport benefits, improve the efficiency and reliability of public transport systems through relieving congestion around the Basin Reserve. The proposal will also have associated walking and cycling benefits, improving connections between east-west and north-south. The proposal will improve access for all people travelling around the Basin Reserve (and specifically those travelling by public transport, cycle or foot).

The ‘Hierarchy or Roads’\(^{31}\) are shown on Map 33 (the wider City Network) and Map 34 (the Central Area). This roading hierarchy reflects the strong corridor pattern of the strategic roading network within the Wellington area. The relevant streets are identified as follows:

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\(^{31}\) The road hierarchy classifies different road in accordance with their function
69.1 **Motorway/State Highway 1**: Sussex Street; Dufferin Street; Rugby Street; Buckle Street; Vivian Street; and the portion of Kent Terrace between Pirie Street and Buckle Street.

69.2 **Arterial Road**: Cambridge Terrace

69.3 **Principal Road**: Adelaide Road

70 Although the specific location of the proposed roading infrastructure (e.g. the Basin Bridge) will differ slightly from the areas identified within these maps, the specified function of these roads will remain consistent with this Road Hierarchy. In any case, despite these minor differences, making provisions for ‘appropriate’ extensions to the roading network is consistent with Policy 12.2.15.4.

71 The proposed roading improvements will be located on the fringe of, and in some cases within, the Inner Residential Area. The particular sensitivities of the interface between the between the Central Area and the adjoining Residential Area is recognised by Policy 12.2.15.2. Through the management of the road network, this policy seeks to ensure that the adverse effects of road traffic on the amenity of both the Central Area and the surrounding Residential Areas are avoided, remedied or mitigated. These would include the effects of noise on the surrounding residential environment.

72 A similar policy also exists in relation to the Residential Area, with Policy 4.2.12.2 seeking to manage the road network to avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of road traffic within Residential Areas. Traffic noise is not controlled directly through any rules or standards in the District Plan. However, it is specifically noted in the explanation under Policy 4.2.12.2 that

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'Some degree of traffic noise should be anticipated in residential areas abutting a State Highway'. ³³

Another key theme of the Central Area Chapter of the District Plan, intended as a principle to guide future development is to 'enhance the quality of the public environment'. It is described that: ³⁴

The quality of the public environment helps make a city more liveable. A high quality public environment is safe and healthy, easy to move around in, rich in quality urban design that enhances people's experiences, and consistent with appropriate environmental standards. The quality of the public environment is affected by the function, location and character of public space, as well as by the buildings and structures that define the edges of public space.

This guiding principle is reflected within Objective 12.2.6 which seeks to ensure that new building works maintain and enhance the amenity and safety of the public environment of the Central Area, and the general amenity of any nearby Residential Area. The following policy is particularly relevant to the Basin Bridge proposal:

**Policy 12.2.6.18** Maintain and enhance the streetscape by controlling the siting and design of structures on or over roads and through continuing programmes of street improvements.

Policy 12.2.6.18 recognises that streets, and the structures on or over them, contribute to the visual appearance of the streetscape and public environment within the Central Area. Such structures should be high quality, particularly in areas where there are high pedestrian counts, and should take into account the impacts of any such structure(s) on neighbouring properties (including nearby Residential Areas).

³⁴ Wellington District Plan, Chapter 12, Page 12/3.
Both the roading network itself (Policy 12.2.15.2) and the associated buildings and structures that will support the proposed roading improvements can impact on the general amenity of the adjoining Residential Area. It is acknowledged that several submitters (including residents of Paterson, Dufferin, Ellice and Hania Streets, and the Grandstand Apartments) have expressed concerns about the change in their surroundings and the impacts on the character of the southern end of Mt Victoria.

The District Plan objectives and policies of the ‘Open Space Area’ are also relevant, particularly in relation to the proposed Northern Gateway Building within the Basin Reserve.

Open Space areas throughout the City are categorised into three broadly distinct areas which align with their general function. These categories are; Open Space A (Recreational facilities); Open Space B (Natural environment); and, Open Space C (Inner Town Belt). Distinctions are made between these open space areas in order to better facilitate the management of buildings and activities, and associated effects, within the different open space areas. However, the objectives and policies of the Open Space Area apply to all of these categories.

Guidance on the management of the ‘Open Space A’ area is provided under Section 16.2 of the in the introduction to the Open Space chapter of the District Plan which explains that:

Open Space A land provides passive and active recreational opportunities. This frequently involves developed sports fields, the provision of buildings or structures (for example, squash courts, clubrooms and storage sheds) to provide support for the use of the open space playgrounds and formal parks. It is recognised that structures generally detract from open space. However, the primary focus is on the need for recreation activities to be able to access open space areas. In order for people to be able to use and enjoy open space, it is

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35 Wellington District Plan, Chapter 17, Open Space, page 16/2.
acknowledged that facilities or similar structures may need to be built. Provision also needs to be made for equitable access to and use of all recreation facilities by all users and spectators with mobility restrictions (whether younger or older persons), such as by strategically located carparking and by wheelchair-useable paths which are both sensitively designed and properly maintained.

80 Of particular relevance to the Basin Bridge proposal is Objective 16.5.1 which seeks to 'maintain and enhance' open spaces of the City.

Policy 16.5.1.1 - Identify a range of open spaces and maintain their character, purpose and function, while enhancing their accessibility and usability.

81 In accordance with this policy, the proposed Northern Gateway Building should be designed to maintain and support the purpose and function of the Basin Reserve (as a sports ground). The building must ensure equitable access for all users (including users and spectators with mobility restrictions) and enhance the usability of the facilities. The Northern Gateway Building should also respect the associated visual amenity values, open space qualities, and built heritage values of the Basin Reserve. The effects of the Basin Bridge proposal on built heritage values are considered in greater detail within the evidence of Mrs Rickard.

82 It is my opinion that with the appropriate treatment and mitigation measures recommended by other WCC/BRT witnesses, the effects of the proposal on the public environment of the Central Area and general amenity of the adjoining Residential Area and Basin Reserve will be acceptable. The interface between the Central Area and Residential Area is intended to be 'transitional' area and the scale of new buildings or structures should reflect this aspiration, whilst responding to its specific context and setting.

83 The proposed Northern Gateway Building within the Basin Bridge must be carefully considered, particularly in terms of its impacts on open space qualities and built heritage values.
Overall Assessment of Strategic Planning Framework

84 Drawing principally on the statutory and non-statutory planning instruments discussed above, it is my opinion that the Basin Bridge proposal fits appropriately within the Council’s ‘Strategic Planning Framework’. While there is overall consistency with the objectives in these documents, I accept there will not be a total alignment with all of the objectives. However, I am satisfied that on balance, the proposal does meet and attain the key objectives.

85 The vision for future long-term development and growth for Wellington over the next 30-50 years is directed along a transit-orientated growth spine (an integrated land use and transportation vision). The overall intent of the growth spine concept is to encourage further development in key growth areas, supported by improvements in public transport and roading infrastructure including the state highway network.

86 The roading network around the Basin Reserve is recognised as a significant ‘pinch point’ along the growth spine. Improvements around the Basin Reserve are of strategic significance in achieving the growth objectives envisaged by the relevant planning instruments discussed above. With population growth and future development, the Council’s ‘strategic planning framework’ envisages increased competition for road capacity for a variety of transport modes, as well as increased pressure in maintaining levels of service for both public transit and private vehicle users.

87 The primary focus of the Basin Bridge proposal is to improve traffic movements around the Basin Reserve through providing grade separation between east/west bound traffic flows and north/south bound traffic flows. At a regional level, these roading improvements will ensure that road and passenger transport systems function effectively for people and freight. It will also ensure safe and efficient access ‘to’ (and ‘from) the city centre from other ‘Centres’ (and beyond). The location of the Basin
Reserve is also pivotal in connecting other regionally significant infrastructure to the growth spine, including the Wellington International Airport and Wellington Regional Hospital.

The proposed roading improvements around the Basin Reserve are also likely to have significant benefits for Adelaide Road, Kent Terrace and Cambridge Terraces by improving traffic flows at peak times, providing more room for dedicated public transport, and improving the environment for walking and cycling facilities. The Basin Bridge proposal will align with and support the outcomes sought by the Adelaide Road Framework.

The Basin Bridge project also supports the Council’s aspirations envisaged within Wellington 2040 and the Central City Framework. Specifically, it will support the ‘ease of movement’ across and within the city; support a more reliable and efficient public transport system; and, support the safe and efficient transport of people and goods.

Although primarily a roading project with cycling, walking and transport benefits, the associated landscaping and public space improvements assist in developing the city’s ‘green infrastructure’ and connections between specific open spaces (including National War Memorial Park and the Waterfront).

The proposal will respond to issues of regional significance as identified within the RPS. Specifically, these include: regional form, design and function (including the integration of land use and transportation); and, the efficient use and development of the strategic roading network. The Basin Reserve area is recognised as a significant ‘pinch point’ and the project will ensure the efficient use of existing roading infrastructure.

The concerns by submitters in relation to the quality of the public environment, noise and visual effects are acknowledged, particularly those located within the adjoining Inner Residential Area. It is my opinion that appropriate treatment and mitigation
measures are required in order to mitigate the effects of the proposal on the public environment of the Central Area and general amenity of the adjoining Residential Area.

93 The design of the Northern Gateway Building to be located within the Basin Reserve must be carefully considered. Not only should the proposed building maintain and enhance the purpose and function of the Basin Reserve, but the new building and associated structures should respect the open space qualities and built heritage values present within the Basin Reserve and be of a high quality design.

Climate Change Action Plan 2013

94 The Section 42A Report\textsuperscript{36} by Mitchell Partnerships, suggested that Wellington City Council addresses the relevance of the Wellington City Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2010. From their assessment, they suggest that:\textsuperscript{37}

\begin{quote}
\begin{center}
it seems to be focused on the actions of the WCC with respect to responding to climate change – rather than regulating how third parties should respond.\end{center}
\end{quote}

95 It is noted that Wellington City Council has since adopted its most recent edition of the Climate Change Action Plan in October 2013. This document represents the Council's commitment to the reduction of greenhouse gases and planning for the effects of climate change\textsuperscript{38}. Although the Climate Change Action Plan 2013 is not particularly relevant to the assessment of the Basin Bridge proposal, a number of specific statements are made in relation to this proposal.


\textsuperscript{38} Climate Change Action Plan 2013, Wellington City Council, Page 7.
The Climate Change Action Plan (2013) identifies seven ‘Action Areas’, the most relevant of these relates to ‘Land Transport and Shipping’. The Action Plan identifies progress made between 2010 and 2012 in relation to this action area, and sets out the Council’s priorities between 2013 and 2015. One of these identified priorities for 2013-2015 is to ‘Improve public transport and road networks and encourage walking and cycling’.

Of particular relevance to the Basin Bridge proposal, it is stated that:

City Councillors have requested an emphasis on travel demand management, emergency and freight priority, better facilities for walking and cycling, and improved public transport to provide real transport choices for more people.

The Council will also identify opportunities to enhance walking, cycling and public transport alongside Roads of National Significance projects within Wellington...

Consistent with the Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan, construction of the Basin Reserve bridge is planned within this period [2013-2015]. The bridge is seen as a significant opportunity to ease congestion and improve public transport to the southern and eastern suburbs.

Another identified priority of specific mention is to continue to support the development of Wellington as a compact city, which will reduce pressures of travel demand and the number of car journeys.

Conditions

NZTA have provided a draft set of conditions as part of the lodgement documentation (Chapter 35). Subsequent to this the Board have commissioned a Section 42A report that provides a comprehensive review and analysis of the relevant conditions.

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39 These six other ‘Action Areas’ include: Adapting to a changing climate; Buildings and energy; Waste; Council operations; Forestry; and, Aviation.

Generally I agree with the proposed conditions, but I do have some suggested amendments. The purpose of the following is to provide high level commentary of the conditions as it relates to the interests of Wellington City Council (in enacting its functions).

99.1 Except for the proposed building on the corner of Kent Terrace and Ellice Street, and the Northern Gateway Building, it is requested by the applicant that outline plan waivers will apply to the balance of the works. While this is acceptable it does mean that a higher level of detail and certainty as the outcomes to be achieved by the proposed conditions is required.

99.2 In particular, given the scale of the proposal, the need to guide the final design and construction of the project, the use of management plans, as adopted by the applicant, is an appropriate one. However, I consider that the observations made in the section 42A planning report that 'there needs to be some precision in defining matters that must be included and mitigation outcomes that must be achieved via the implementation of the management plan' (pg 80, Paragraph 4.0.6) are pertinent. It is my view that the wording of the proposed conditions needs to be prescriptive enough so that affected parties and stakeholders alike have sufficient confidence that the potential adverse effects associated with the project will be appropriately managed/mitigated. An example of where this lack of specificity applies is in relation to the NES conditions which refer the reader back to the various management plans which in turn just refer to contaminated land as a matter to consider within the Management Plans.

99.3 Conditions DC14, DC31, and DC34 set out a process for the certification of the various management plans. These stipulate, that in the situation in which Council does not respond within 20 working days, a 'certification
by default' process is invoked. The Council strongly opposes the wording of this condition as it potentially removes the review process of the management plans which is the very purpose of these conditions.

99.4 In other large roading projects that the Council has been involved in, there has been a requirement to provide the Council with a work programme prior to lodgement of Outline Plans. This was designed to assist staff to resource for the upcoming works. I consider this would be beneficial for this project also.

99.5 Condition G8 and DC4 - I do not consider it appropriate to have a 'dispute resolution' condition which suggests a process to deal with 'inaction as to the implementation of conditions' by NZTA. This is an enforcement matter for the Council and suggesting such a condition is contrary to the Council's statutory enforcement powers.

100 In terms of specific issues, which have been addressed by the other witnesses on behalf of the Council and BRT, I am seeking that the following condition issues are also addressed.

101 Urban design conditions requiring:

Northern Gateway Building composition and form

101.1 Ensure screening elements are architecturally integrated and of a quality that is consistent with the building itself.

101.2 Ensure the north facade presents a positive frontage to the street.

101.3 Ensure the south facade has formal articulation including occupiable balcony spaces developed within a coherent composition, and which ensure that the interior
of the building and its users engage with the Basin Reserve Cricket ground.

101.4  Setback the facade at roof level to maintain expression of a 'floating' pavilion roof while at the same time building at or close to the north-west and south-west corners at the uppermost floor level of the building.

**Northern Gateway Building ground level and screening**

101.5  Express and design the undercroft as a high quality entrance space.

101.6  Provide effective visual screening that can close off the ground level undercroft openings of Northern Gateway Building during matches.

101.7  Provide fencing/barrier and gates that will maximise views through to the ground outside match times, and allow for physical access control as required.

101.8  Provide screening if and as necessary to provide for shelter in excessively windy conditions in the undercroft.

**Design resourcing and process**

101.9  The architects (for the Bridge, and for the Northern Gateway Building) and landscape architects (for the open space) selected to design these parts of the project should be those with a recognised track record of designing high quality projects of this scale, type and or significance.

101.10 The design consultants should be engaged to provide full architectural/landscape architectural services through all stages of design and construction in order to ensure the requisite design quality is achieved in the constructed outcome.
101.11 A robust and iterative independent formal design review process should be established to ensure that the design outcomes are of the necessary high quality.

101.12 In addition to the building and location-specific conditions, apply the WCC's Central Area Urban Design Guide as a more general set of criteria against which to assess quality.

102 Heritage conditions:

102.1 The HMP should include:

102.1.1 Opportunities for on-site learning, through the availability of interpretive material about the heritage significance of the Basin Reserve at its entry, during and after the construction.

102.1.2 Full documentation of the removal of the workers cottage at 28 Ellice Street.

102.1.3 Identification of any possible physical effects of the construction works as they relate to vibration, dust, water and possible physical damage of heritage structures.

102.2 Inclusion of the Pavilion (Museum Stand) in the list of structures at DC.21 that require a building condition survey before and after construction.

102.3 Require in DC.29 clear provision in the CEMP for the cleaning of heritage items in the Basin Reserve.

102.4 That in designing mitigation proposals, and in particular, the new Northern Gateway Building, that full consultation on heritage matters is required with WCC.
Traffic engineering conditions requiring:

103.1 A review of the operation of the signals at the Adelaide Road and Rugby Street intersection to provide for a safer and more convenient arrangement to serve the traffic using Rugby Street.

103.2 A review of the peak and non-peak cycle lengths in the detail signal plans for the Kent/Cambridge/Vivian Pirie intersection to provide more crossing opportunities per hour, with a view to improving matters for pedestrians.

103.3 A review of the design of the proposed link road firstly to validate whether it should be provided at all, and if validated, to ensure it is designed in a way that will provide safe, legible and efficient use of the link road without adversely impacting on pedestrians, cyclists and traffic using the state highway.

103.4 WCC approval of the final detailed design of the link road.

103.5 Provision of an additional crossing over the slip road from the roundabout into Cambridge Terrace at a point just north of the roundabout. An informal crossing location could be identified closer to the roundabout so that on those occasions when there are events at the cricket ground, that informal crossing facility would provide some guidance assistance across an occasionally used but high volume pedestrian route which is likely to be used by the public whether or not any crossing facility is provided.

103.6 Provision of a pedestrian crossing in the north-west corner of the Basin Reserve roundabout, where Sussex Street joins Buckle Street to provide for an established
pedestrian desire line. The most appropriate crossing type could be a zebra crossing.

103.7 Redesign, to a smaller radius, the sweeping left hand curve leading from Buckle Street into Cambridge Terrace

Conclusions

104 My conclusions are set out above in the Executive Summary.

Date: 13 December 2013

Warren David Ulusele
List of Appendices:

1 - ‘Centres Hierarchy’