



**WHANGANUI
DISTRICT COUNCIL**
Te Kaunihera a Rohe o Whanganui

**Long-Term Plan
2024-2034
Hearings**

Wednesday, 15 May 2024

Tabled information

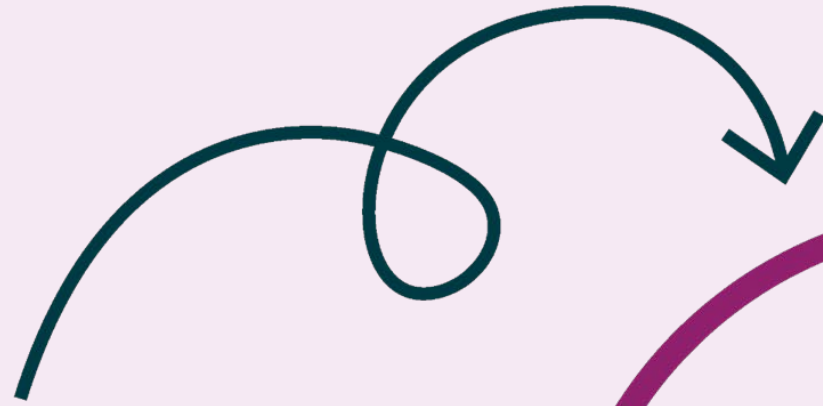
LONG-TERM PLAN 2024-2034
HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS
Wednesday, 15 May 2024

Time	Zoom	Name	Organisation	Topic
9.30am			Housekeeping	
9.35am		Ingrid Culliford	Chamber Music Whanganui	
9.45am		Vicky Humphreys		
9.55am		Joan Rosier-Jones		
10.05am		Jo Buckingham		LTP, Parking, Rates Remission policies
10.15am		Jo Buckingham		
10.25am			Morning tea - 15 minutes	
10.40am		Minnie Baragwanath	Minnie B Consulting and Global Centre of Possibility	
10.50am		Bill Fleury	Waitahinga Group	
11.00am		Ian Jones		
11.10am		Gregory Morris		
11.20am		Denis McGowan		
11.30am		Trudy Reeves		
11.40am		Marion Sanson		
11.50am		Terry Coxon	Virginia Lake Trust Inc.	
12.00pm			Lunch	
1.00pm		Joy McGregor & Bev Kirkwood	Whanganui Floral Art Group	
1.10pm		Robert Baxter	Nathan St. Neighbourhood Support Group	
1.20pm		T.R. Harris		
1.30pm		Jim Ennis		
1.40pm		Fred Frederikse	Whanganui Musicians Club	
1.50pm		Ian Moore		
2.00pm		Tatjana Hanne	Stratford District Youth Council	
2.10pm			Break - 5 minutes	
2.15pm		Te Aroha McDonnell	Ngati Hau representative to Te Runanga o Tamaupoko	
2.25pm		Michael Punch		
2.35pm		Dr Mandy Shaver		
2.45pm		Margaret Johnson	Friends of the Opera House	
2.55pm		Kevin Wilkie		LTP & Fees & charges
3.10pm		Tom Seaman		
3.20pm			Afternoon Tea - 15 minutes	
3.35pm		Graham & Lyn Pearson		
3.45pm		Dr Roger Shand	Montgomery Reserve Group	
4.00pm		Michael Organ & Jillian Evers	Bashford Antiques Limited	
4.10pm	Zoom	Katarina Wade		
4.20pm		Din Bandara/Robert Scott/Craig Harris	First Rung	LTP & Development Contributions
4.35pm	Zoom	Vaughan Dennison / Darryn Birch	Homes for people	LTP
4.45pm	Zoom	Annette Main	Tramways Whanganui Trust	
4.55pm			Break - 5 minutes	
5.00pm		Mary-Ann Beverley Ewing	Whanganui Regional Heritage Trust	
5.10pm		Fergus Reid	Whanganui Tech Services LTD	
5.20pm		Murray Lazelle and Anne Keating	Whanganui Musicians Club	Group submission
5.30pm		Murray Lazelle		Individual submission
5.40pm		Whanganui Heritage Restoration Trust		
End of Day Two				

Leading a future of Possibility!



**The status quo
is not benign**



**The status quo
is deeply
inaccessible**



Whanganui?

City of Possibility

Whanganui, the first City of Possibility, leads in possibility design and innovation for a global market of **2 billion consumers** with a **\$US13 trillion spending power**.



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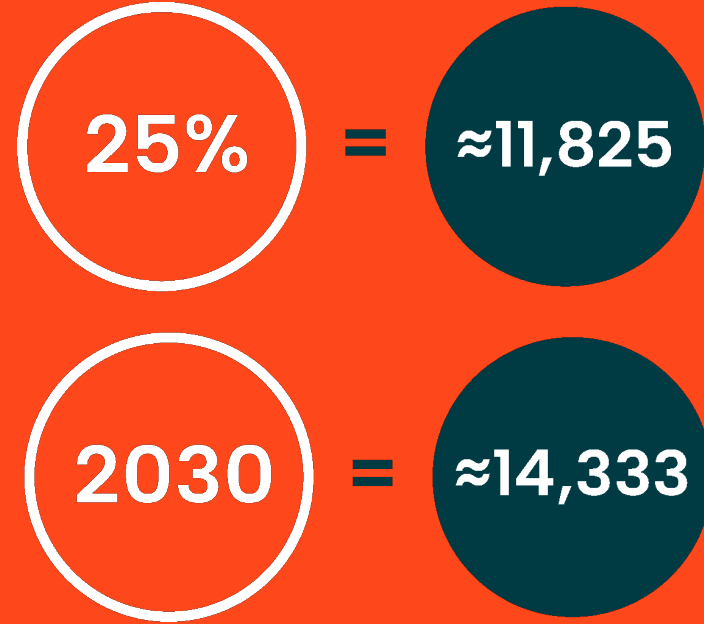


Why Whanganui?

- UNESCO City of design
Te awa tupua
- Leading Edge Strategy
- Bold leadership
- High disability population
- GCOP and Minnie B now resides here



**June
2020 =
47,300
total population**



(second highest population of disabled residents in Aotearoa)

ALL



CITY OF POSSIBILITY

'with' possibility partners:

- Whanganui Council
- Whanganui and Partners
- UNESCO
- Thrive
- Iwi
- UCOL
- Local developers/ entrepreneurs
- Philanthropists
- Local and global Investors
- Central Government
- Chamber of Commerce
- ACC
- Horizons Regional Council
- Etc...





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- Possibility Ambassador
- Operations manager
- Operating budget





Over 25 years, Whanganui becomes:

- World leader in design and innovation
- Thriving economy
- Thriving community
- Culture of design, innovation and a possibility mindset now and into the future.





Contact Minnie

minnie@minnieb.co.nz

minnieb.co.nz



@withminnieb
#with



Submission by Virginia Lake Trust Inc: Whanganui District L.T. Plan: 15 May 2024

Your Worship & Councillors.

With me is a fellow Trustee, Nobby Bullock & I am Terry Coxon the Trust Chair. As you are aware we are a bunch of hardworking volunteers who spend 2 mornings a month around the lake and since the Trust inception in 2000, we have raised and spent on this Council facility about \$700,000. We have skin in the game in respect of Virginia Lake.

We do not want Council to in any way damage "The Total Lake Package" that is this place. This package includes a reserve with wonderful and unusual flora and fauna, abundant wild fowl, a Winter Gardens with a constant tropical floral show to complement the green of the lake surrounds and an Aviary where caged birds can mix with the public as a contrast to our web footed friends nearby.

Thankfully you have agreed to leave the Winter Gardens but want to destroy the Aviary for very modest savings. We think you are using a sledge hammer to crack a walnut.

We believe there are other more appropriate measures that could be adopted & support the submission of Mike Street, one of our Volunteers who does weekend work in the Aviary. Andy, the man who seems to run this facility is a bird fancier and caged bird breeder in his own right. Has any thought been given to striking a deal with him to run it independently of Council with potential savings? We find it hard to in fact rationalize what are the true Aviary costs! Has Council got any idea as to the actual usage of Virginia Lake and all its adjuncts? Is there any more popular Council facility in this town? Also it would be nice to know what your intentions are in respect of the Café! (The first tenant to set up in the old caretaker's house was one of our Trustees!)

Thank You

Terry

[REDACTED] z

From: [REDACTED] z
Sent: Monday, 13 May 2024 4:28 pm
To: 'andrew.tripe@whanganui.govt.nz'; 'charlie.anderson@whanganui.govt.nz'; 'philippa.baker-hogan@whanganui.govt.nz'; 'glenda.brown@whanganui.govt.nz'; 'josh.chandulal-mackay@whanganui.govt.nz'; 'Helen Craig'; 'jenny.duncan@whanganui.govt.nz'; 'ross.fallen@whanganui.govt.nz'; 'kate.joblin@whanganui.govt.nz'; 'michael.law@whanganui.govt.nz'; 'charlotte.melser@whanganui.govt.nz'; 'peter.oskam@whanganui.govt.nz'; 'rob.vinsen@whanganui.govt.nz'
Subject: Royal Whanganui Opera house
Attachments: jim Ennis background.docx

Hello Councillors

I am writing to you because of my concern on the current status and management of the Opera House.

Firstly my background.

I have attached a separate document with all the details.

I apologise for its length but please read it.

My concern at the moment is the following.

- 1 The significant increase in hiring costs is driving local users away from the Opera House. I am aware of at least 3 users who have indicated they may not return
- 2 Adequate experienced technical service is not being provided for local users..
- 3 Additional unnecessary expenditure is occurring on new lights and switchboard.
- 4 Existing lighting and the high tech switchboard have been removed.
- 5 Production sets such as Peter Pan have been destroyed.
- 6 Should the council be selling alcohol to the public

With the theatre only providing a fraction of its previous capacity for technical the costs should be reduced to encourage local usage.

The friends are now only providing free labour their involvement in the past in the running of the theatre arranged much of the external funding for improvements.

The existing flyfloor carried many heavy loads in the past without any failure. Experienced fly crew were provided to ensure safety.

Now that the flyfloor has been removed there is no going back and I support option 3 to build a new stage house

I would welcome a meeting with the Council and discussing these issues in person.

Regards



Jim Ennis

Mobile [REDACTED] 6

Home [REDACTED]

Firstly my background.

I am a Civil Engineer, a Fellow of Engineering New Zealand and worked for the Whanganui District Council for some 45 years. I was the General Manager of Professional Engineering Services, a Business Unit of the Council, which was bought out by OPUS, and I continued as a senior manager with OPUS until I retired in 2007.

I was involved with the Opera House from 1970 nearly 55 years. I was the stage director for most of Amdram's productions including shows like My Fair Lady, Peter Pan, Les Misérables, Barnum and many others. All of these shows required flying heavy scenery, lights and often people.

FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL WHANGANUI OPERA HOUSE

In 1989 the Council were considering disposing or selling the Opera house; after a public meeting the group Friends of the Opera House was formed.

It was agreed with the Friends of the Opera House would take over running the theatre with a Board running the day to day management.

I was appointed Chairman of the Board which consisted of a councillor, a council staff member, a member of the Friends and two others. The Board employed staff and they became council employees.

Under a memorandum of understanding the Council would provide a building fit for purpose

The friends provided ushers technical staff and invoiced the cost of these to users.

The friends also owned and operated the ticketing system.

For local users there was always a preliminary discussion for a show which involved the manager, the technician me and a representative of the Friends.

The Friends would usually provide assistance with set construction and often a reduced charge for staff to encourage local productions.

The Friends were an integral part of the theatre and constructed and arranged funds for a significant number of projects.

These projects included new enlarged orchestra pit, upgraded dressing rooms, kitchen in the annex, new large annex storage area, new manager's and ticket office, new toilets, bar and sweet stall and fire sprinkler system.

The friends bought the sound system and a significant amount of lighting equipment.

The theatre operated very successfully under this arrangement

DISESTABLISHMENT OF THE BOARD

In 2016 Kym Fell was appointed as CEO to the Whanganui District Council and disestablished the Board – there was no consultation – no discussion. Event Co-ordinators were employed and the Manager, John Richardson, resigned.

Since this time four technical people have resigned or in my case trespassed because of problems with management.

I believe the present technician lives in Palmerston North and is a contractor.

The Friends continue to provide volunteer services to shows for technical and ushering staff but have no involvement in day to day running.

For many years members of backstage crew held keys for internal parts of the theatre and I had keys to the outside of the building all these keys have now been withdrawn by management

OPERATIOINS

Fergus Reid was appointed lead technician and he and I worked well together.

I also provided lighting service to all high school and intermediate shows including teaching school lighting operators.

I advised on all rigging including light rigs for travelling shows to ensure the flying system was not overloaded.

I often stood in for Fergus to help out.

I have operated the lighting system for all Opera Week shows for many years.

For the January 1923 opera week show I was told by Dana that I would not be operating the lighting this was against the wish of the client who I worked with for many years they preferred me to operate.

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THE FRIENDS' BAR TRUST

When the Friends took over the day to day running of the Opera House a Trust was also formed to run the bar. Also if there was a function in the Opera House outside of normal shows would provide alcohol under its license.

When the present manager was appointed they did not want to use this service and arranged a special license for functions. Eventually, when the Trust long time volunteer bar manager resigned, and there was no co-operation from the Opera House Manager to help the Trust we relinquished the licence.

The Trust still owns all of the bar equipment including the fridges and the portrait of Sara Brody which hangs in the annex.

SAFETY CONCERNS

Under the new management I was extremely worried about safety for cast and crew.

The flying structure has been replaced with a scaffolding system which carries some lights but not cloths etc. This system also restricts the stage area.

In my opinion this was an overreaction the system had carried many heavy loads for many years without failure.

Common sense would indicate that if the system was as bad as reported then there would have been failures.

The only problems occurred when inexperienced fly crew were allowed to operate as with the current technician

During the rigging for Phantom, after the fly floor had been replaced with scaffolding, I was concerned that several times in my opinion safety was compromised and the contracted staff did not have the necessary skills.

For example:

- The contracted technician waited until the scaffolding was signed off then removed some of the bracing bars.
- A section of the orchestra pit covering was dropped accidentally into the pit.
- Items purposely dropped from the fly floor as part of the show narrowly missed cast because the fly crew could not see the floor.
- The contracted technician attempted to fly polystyrene tomb stones using nylon run over scaffolding pipes this was later abandoned..
- The bracing was removed from the walking structure which left it unstable and the pillars and chain along the front were insufficient to prevent a fall. This was later partly corrected.
- The winch that was used to fly the chandelier did not have automatic stops and the operator could not see the roof or the floor.

I was extremely worried about the safety of the cast and crew, family and life-long friends, so when it was proposed to use some of the old wooden battens as props flown on ropes across the scaffolding pipes the fly crew were unhappy and I expressed my concern, I was told to butt out.

Next day I was trespassed from the Opera House for 2 years. The CEO has refused to discuss this.

The community have been deprived of my expertise and experience which was provided at no cost.

LIGHTING EQUIPMENT

The need to remove all of the lighting is also questionable. The main lighting switchboard has been removed and is now stored in my garage.

Many thousands of dollars' worth of operational lighting equipment much of it bought by the friends has been removed.

I understand a new lighting board has been purchased because of new LED lights.

The board is a Strand 520i and was given to the theatre by Kenderdyne PLS lighting. It is capable of running 2000 channels 1000 cues and I was using it for all forms of lighting including LED and moving lights. I would be happy demonstrate it at any time.

OTHER EQUIPMENT

I was horrified to learn that all of the back cloths had been removed and that the entire Peter Pan set had been destroyed. Many of the cloths and the sets belong to Amdram. and others

Fortunately an Amdram member and I were able to retrieve the back cloths.

THE REVOLVING STAGE

I built and designed the revolving stage in 1971 for Amdrams' New Zealand premier production of *Fiddler on the Roof*. The stage has been widely used and has been in almost every large theatre in the country. It is 9m in diameter is electrically driven in either direction with variable speed. The outside sections may be left off to give a 6m diameter.

Some years ago the stage was hired by Whangarei theatre and against local advice was sold to Whangarei.

When Amdram wanted it for another show it was found to be in poor condition in a farmer's shed.

John Richardson and I negotiated a deal with Whangarei where the ownership would be shared with Whangarei it would live in Whanganui but could be used by Whangarei at no cost and they would cover transport to and from.

The revolve was restored and placed in a container with costs funded by the Friends Bar Trust who retain the Wanganui ownership. It has been used for several shows in Whanganui including Opera Concert.

Assembly of the revolve can take between one half to 2 days depending on which from is used and whether all of the outside staging is used. For some reason the current management has taken a dislike to the revolve and has told at least one organisation that it is not available because it takes too long to install. It was stored at the Opera house to avoid transport costs at management request I have now removed the container.

Surely the decision to use it should be the hirers as they must make the arrangements and fund the cost. I am the expert when it comes to assembly.

I apologise for the length of this document and would be happy to discuss any aspect of it with councillors.

Please discuss the operation with some of the local users my only wish is that the theatre remains available for local and outside users.

The Whanganui Regional Heritage Trust: Submission on LTP 2024

As a Trust, we would like to thank the Council for this opportunity to present our views on Heritage topics in the LTP.

There are 6 items that affect heritage in the LTP:

1. The Repertory Theatre. We believe that Option 2 is the best option here. By investing in the permanent stabilisation of the retaining bank for 60 cents per property per year, so the building can be sold, this is the least we can do to help save this building.
2. Mainstreet Hanging Flower Baskets: The WRHT believes that the WDC should follow Option 2. The flowering hanging baskets are a tourist attraction. Visitors are charmed by them and local people feel proud of and proprietary about them. The flowering baskets complement and enhance the Heritage buildings in our CBD area.
3. Winter Gardens. We support Option 1.
4. Level of Community Grant Funding. The WRHT is in favour of Option 1 but we believe that the criteria for Community Grant Funding should be widened to include other organisations rather than just focused on community health, safety and wellbeing. This emphasis on social needs means that many worthy organizations do not fit the criteria yet they contribute to the community's well being in immeasurable amounts. Such examples are the Musicians Club, the Repertory Theatre, the Whanganui Literary Festival and the Quartz Museum.
5. Hotel and Car park. Whanganui is a significant heritage centre. It's authenticity is unarguable. From an heritage perspective, building a new 60 room hotel in the centre of the city, causes us concern about the lack of information on the impact of the hotel and car park. About the site/s, the size, the height of this proposed idea and it's impact on heritage values and character of surrounding buildings and streets. Greater consideration and consultation is needed.
6. Royal Whanganui Opera House. I know that you have already heard from Bruce Dickson, my fellow Trustee on his submission on this matter. The integrity of the heritage building is important. We understand that the current situation cannot remain. We can see the need for an improved flying system to service performances suitable for the venue. However, further consultation and investigation into keeping the existing theatre building but enhancing its capability needs to be exhausted before either Options 2 or 3 are seriously considered. It is realistic to assume that the cost of Options 2,3 & 4 will increase beyond that envisaged once building work starts. Please consult, investigate, research all other options before we commit to the gold-plated Rolls Royce version.

Conclusion: The Heritage Trust is available as an advice group to assist with advice as Council works through the various options that affect heritage. It may pay Council to update its economic study on the value of heritage. This would aid future applications to Lotteries etc in support of community projects such as the Opera House enhancement.

Whanganui Musicians Club
Building Committee May 2024
LTP Submission

Fred Frederikse

PROPOSED MAINTENANCE - Roughly in order of priority.

~~Remove shed (a) - Dahlia Soc. move their vases etc to shed (b)~~

The June 2022 Conservation report (Bruce Dickson) proposed the demolition of shed (a) for two reasons: (1) Promote heritage values by removing more recent accretions. (2) Fire engineer proposed improving fire egress by removing shed (a).

ACTION required: Agreement between WDC and WMC about changing lease boundaries.

Once the new lease and boundaries have been established the first on our maintenance list is the replacement of the 19th century sewer line with a **modern plastic sewer**. This should be carried out in conjunction with refurbishing the existing toilets and the conversion of one of the toilets to a **wheelchair usable toilet (and shower)**. This will require focused fundraising. ACTION required: Agreement between WDC and WMC about the design of the sewage line and stormwater separation all the way down to Ridgeway St, and who pays for what.

SECURITY: Construct a security fence along the new boundary. We have recently been subject to another breakin attempt and we propose to improve our security on two levels (a) a **perimeter security fence** and (b) strengthen our **second line of defence** inside the building: green room/stage runway, lock door from club hall leading to the KOMITI room etc. To be designed in conjunction with **EGRESS**: wheelchair ramp from the fire doors facing Watt St. Wheelchair ramp to club hall main entrance.

~~Continue rewiring~~ the building (with the assistance of Four Regions we have three-quarters rewired the building, working from east to west): replace halogens, add lighting bar and rewire alcoves in club hall; rewire the practice room. *wire in electric heaters.*

Dedicated practice room: Locking door to club hall and some renovation and organisation

Tune up the **stormwater line**: add another dropper at the south corner of the club hall, inspection eyes and clean leaves, replace rusting courtyard rainwater head.

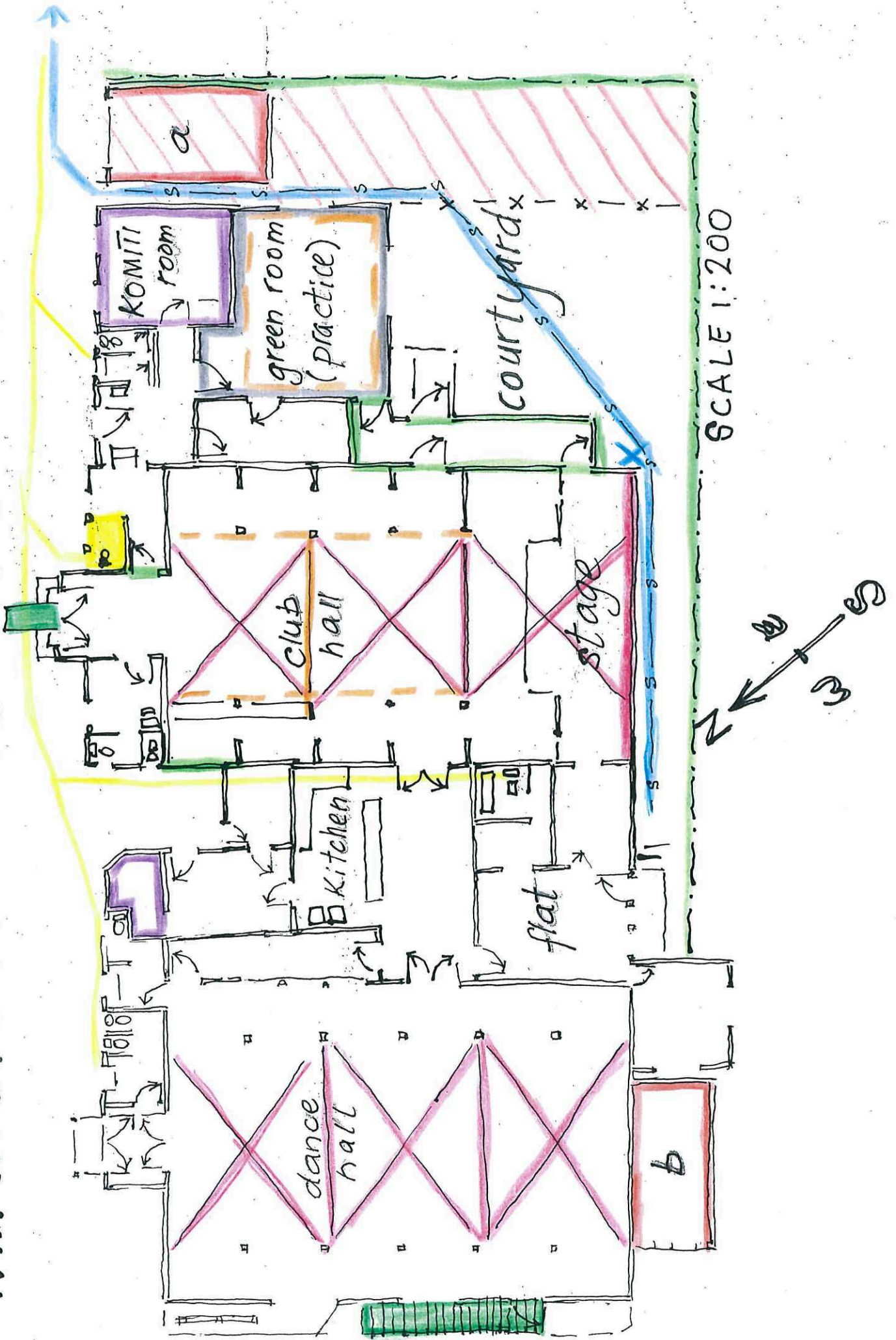
Savage Club memorabilia sorted and archived (in conjunction with Whanganui Museum) and stored in the kitchen drygoods store. Some Savage memorabilia will continue to be displayed in the KOMITI room. Renovate kitchen and flat.

Create a structural **"ceiling diaphragm"** in both club and dance halls, for stiffening and improving earthquake structural resilience. **Repile back wall** of the club hall and level stage. When the halls were originally built sand was pushed over the hill facing Victoria Ave and the toe of the hill has been dug into during the construction of car parking. Cutting and filling the slope contributed to the instability of back of the club hall - but there are simple solutions.

Decorate the club hall and stage retaining a "heritage theme" in conjunction with Whanganui Museum (the halls were the original Wanganui Museum).

Paint building *The late Bill Millbank (Sargeant Gallery Director)*
Suggest the "Savage Club" hall be a "Folk Art Museum!"

WHANGANUI MUSICIANS CLUB



T. R. HARRIS -

Wanganui

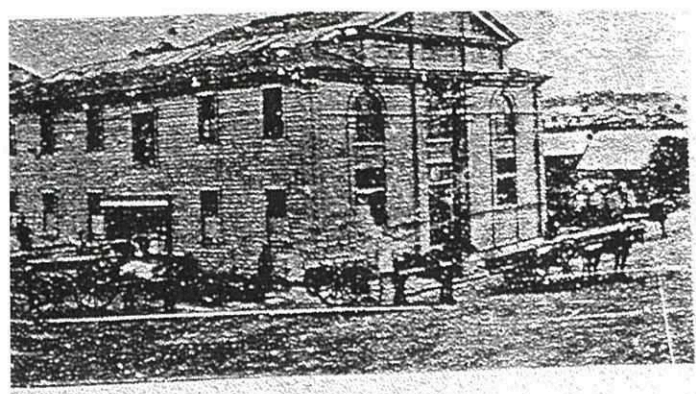
Harris, T.R.



Dublin Street nothing much appears to have changed over the last 54 years. 'Commarket'

I was a Butcherboy
in the Farmer's Meat
(pictured) in 1956 when
there were houses on
this land. previously.

photo courtesy J Munn



Premier Fish and Oyster Saloon,

TAUPO QUAY,

For all kinds of Fresh Fish, Smoked Fish, and Oysters.

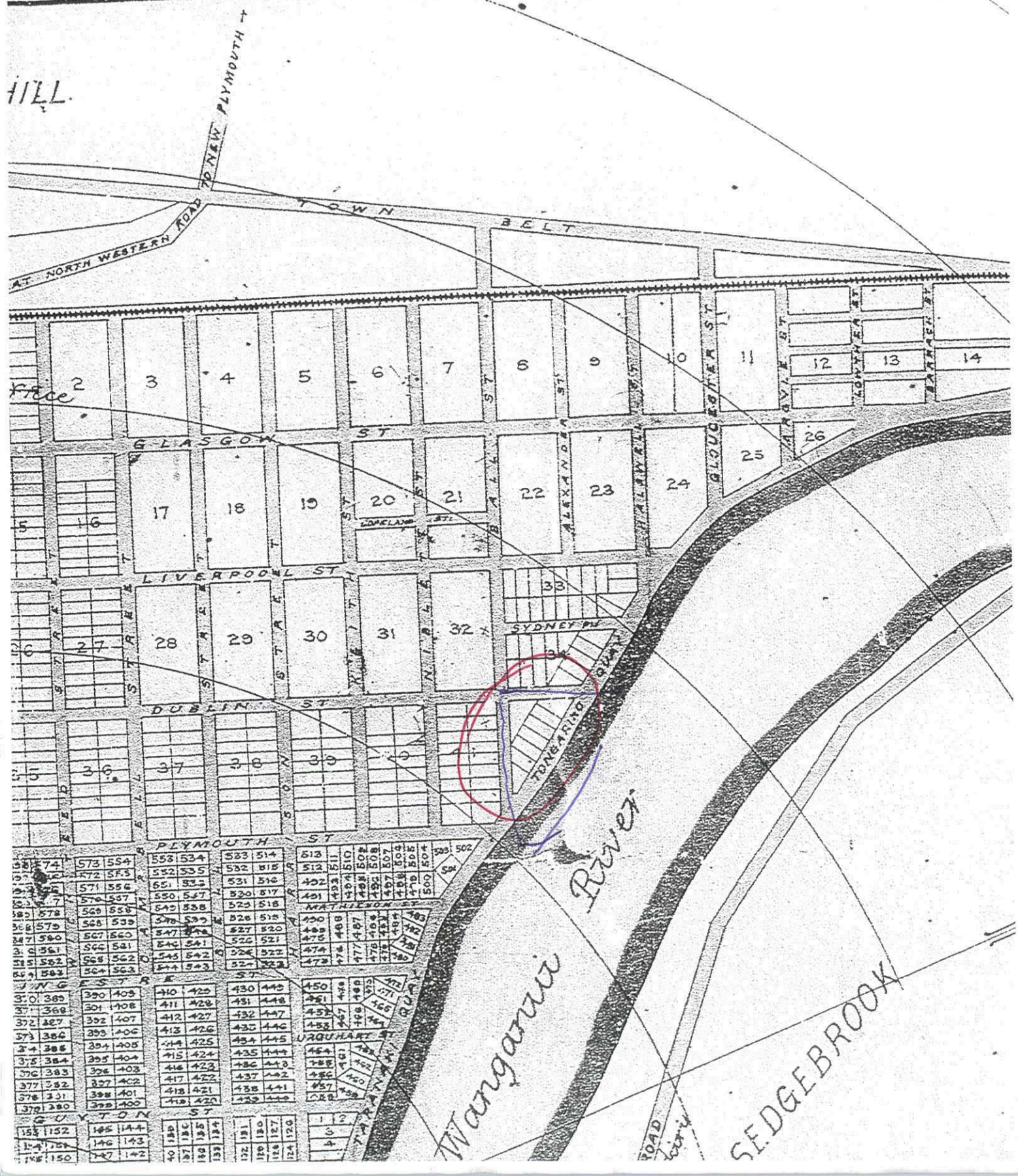
FISH LUNCHEON AND SUPPERS A SPECIALITY.

Telegraphic Address:—

"YARROW," Wanganui.

BOILERM
Shafting
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FACTORY AND TIMBER COY., LTD.



SUBMISSION –TO WDC
LTP 2024

Madam Chair / Mayor Andrew / Councillors / Ladies & gentlemen

My name is Denis McGowan – I've been a resident of Whanganui since (1947)- I wasn't born here but I consider myself local.

I'm now retired having had an Architectural practice in the city since 1974 I also practiced as an Arbitrator & Mediator for the last 21 years assisting the settlement of building disputes.

My architectural practice as well as specialising in RMA – Planning, Fire Design & other building related matters was also commissioned to assess & reinstate many fire or flood damaged buildings.

I have been the principal designer & project manager on many public & private commercial & residential buildings in the city & around NZ as well as some overseas. I have designed & built many buildings as investments so I have some understanding of the practical side of building construction, fundraising & investment risk.

Even though I am a member of the Whanganui Regional Heritage Trust the following comments are mine alone & not those of the Trust – although – I can say confidently that in most heritage matters we are on the same page.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this submission.

The public at large holds a large amount of local & professional experience & it makes sense for Councils to tap into & take advantage of it.

Thank-you also for the work you do as Councillors I don't envy the decisions you have to make. Only one thing is certain – regardless of your final decisions there will always be a group of people strongly opposed.

I have marked up my preferences on Councils Submission Document & I do not intend to comment on every item except by way of a couple of general comments & then a few specific comments relating to 4 targeted items.

In the end your decisions are not about money so much as a decision about priorities. There will never be sufficient finance to complete everything on the wish list, but competing priorities will be with us for ever.

My strong preference is to look after the kids (IE educational items in the widest sense of the word) & protect those items giving opportunity & enjoyment to those people who cannot afford to provide their own.

Therefore I support : retention of : Library services / Whanganui East Pool / hanging baskets / Rural rubbish drop off points / Glassworks / Winter Gardens & increases in funding Community Grants & core infrastructure.

I am neutral as far as the Virginia Lake Aviary is concerned.
I would like to see more data & arguments – for & against - based on the science behind caged birds.

The following items are, in my opinion, special cases & need additional & careful consideration:

1 Whanganui East Pool.

Its community value, through its recreational & learn to swim potential, is extremely important & its history of ownership, construction & local fundraising makes it more so. To suggest that kids bike to Springvale Park for recreational swimming or learning sessions is courting danger by exposing kids to un-necessary risk.

I would like to see more research done to explore cheaper options to repair & enhance the existing pool – I think they exist. Councils stated preferred option 1 suggests it can be closed at no cost but no additional costs have been established for its replacement – which is inferred. There is something missing in the accounting.

I reject option 1

2 The Opera House

I fully support the protection of its heritage value.

As a theatre in traditional Victorian style it has an intimacy between performers & audience & a design style which together produce outstanding acoustics.

Any confident speaker or competent singer can project to every seat without electrical amplification.

Those characteristics together with its architectural style must be retained.

I support however option 2 upgrade to render the building more "fit for purpose" than it is currently. It will address the immediate H&S issues & give more support to the back stage elements of large productions.

It will never be perfect but will help.

Subject to careful scrutiny at the design phase, to control potential overspending,

I support Option 2

3 The Repertory Theatre

Has inherent difficulties which have been ignored for far too long.

It enjoys Heritage status mainly because of its previous life as a City Library but its many transformations into a theatre – essentially by removing support walls & creating a larger open seating area has increased its earthquake risk.

Previous Councils – as owners – have abrogated their responsibilities to maintain the fabric of the building & have ignored all the H&S upgrades required by changes in building codes especially structural integrity & Fire Code.

I understand why previous Councils have suggested a sale of the building - only to the Repertory Theatre or some associated Trust simply to get rid of the problems. These, however, will continue including:

- The land cannot be sold
- The need for major structural upgrade.- Earthquake strengthening.
- Upgrade of services & fire protection
- On-site parking is not possible
- Land-slip protection at the rear – is required.
- The cost of insurance in the hands of an independent “owner” is prohibitive.

The Rep Theatre has over the years carried out minor, but collectively significant, repairs & maintenance at its own cost.

In 2008 I was commissioned in conjunction with the BPL Group Engineers to investigate & report on various aspects of the building – its ownership & contingent liabilities.

All the problems identified then, still exist – only the costs have changed. They have asked for a formal lease to establish tenant / landlord responsibilities, or a purchase of the building alone subject to an underlying land lease, neither eventuated at the time.

I understand one has been established subsequently but has either lapsed or requires reconsideration. They deserve better & some longer term certainty.

In 2022 the Theatre group also commissioned a Conservation Plan & I was asked to formally comment on that. Nothing much had changed since 2008.

The Theatre Group & its building serve a very useful community role, as a small theatre for productions / musical performance & meeting space. It has a large amount of overdue maintenance but in addition its major risk is that in the case of total or significant partial loss, by any cause, it would be impractical to replace it.

The pragmatic answer in my book is to accept it for what it is while maintaining it to a safe standard.

To achieve this Rep. Group needs some certainty.

I suggest a formal lease for 3-5 years linked to a clear commitment from Council that if sufficient funds are found to complete the structural upgrade a further lease period of 25 years will be available.

This will provide some level of certainty for Repertory & incentive to proceed with fund-raising & gives it time to fully test & demonstrate the necessary level of community support.

I reject Councils option 1

4 Hotel & Carpark

Councils preferred option (1) is fraught with difficulty & risk. (See the Audit NZ Independent Report)

I understand & support Councils interest & desire to provide more tourist accommodation in the city, we need it.
but Council should ask itself 2 questions.

1 Why are developers not banging on the Council's door with proposals & planning applications. (I would suggest that the profit is too low &/or the risk of failure too high)

2 Why does Council believe it can fund, develop & manage a facility like this when experienced outside commercial operators are not prepared to? I suggest a facility such as this with its attendant risk is not Councils core business & borders on irresponsibility.

Having said that, Council does have a role to play in creating outside interest. The USA model in attracting major investors can work in this situation.

In the past various USA states have invited bids from major car manufacturers to construct an assembly plant simply to capture jobs & attendant economic benefits.

In our case Council could identify the land & give financial support by way of rates remissions or other incentives & call for expressions of interests from commercial developers. Other T's & C's would apply.

An added benefit is that Council gets a chance to sort out its planning issues in advance & to create new building development where it is most appropriate.

I don't need to point out that the cost savings accrued in not proceeding with this building project can be used to support other projects & facilities which are on the endangered list.

I reject Councils option1
in favour of Option 2

Thank you for listening – these comments are by necessity very brief.
I'm happy to expand on any of the points above in the future
or to answer any questions.- now.

2024 Whanganui District Council LTP Presentation Material

Roger Shand

Good afternoon your Worship and Councillors.

Thank you for this opportunity to present my thoughts on this Long-Term Plan Review

I have lived in, and worked from, Whanganui most of my life.

I am a Coastal Scientist with a particular interest in landscape formation and management, through my company Coastal Systems Ltd.

My comments today relate to **Asset Sales** and in particular **Reserve Divestment**.

Reserves are invariably targeted by government agencies in search of revenue, and over the past 30 years I have appeared before this council and others many times to defend the conservation of such property.

Page 19 of the Consultation Document in part reads:

“...some assets including reserves are not used to their full potential including many that are passive, generating minimal or no revenue... To receive income these need to be sold.”

This raises several matters, and I will begin with **definitions**.

In a broad sense, **Reserve covers** a range of areas from manicured Parks to inaccessible natural areas.

Planners refer to such land-use zones as “Parks and Open Spaces”, and

Managers make a further distinction between “Active Reserves” where ongoing and often extensive council input occurs (such as regular gardening and lawn moving), and “Passive Reserves” where there is minimal or even a complete lack of council input.

This Council has proposed that the **WORTH of a Reserve be based on “full potential use and revenue generation”**. However, these are problematic.

While “USE” for Active Reserves can be defined by numbers of people present, “USE” for Passive Reserves, where the public are all but excluded or where undergrowth

prevents foot traffic, cannot be assessed in this way. And the REVENUE REQUIREMENT IS NOT RELEVANT at all.

Rather, the **WORTH of a Reserve** must be based on **VALUES**.

For many people, whether they realise it or not, natural areas have value simply by being there.

Driving or walking by such areas can slow and relax us, resulting in:

Increasingly valuable responses, in our increasingly busy world.

The Consultation document goes on to state that:

“First the council wants to understand how comfortable you are with selling assets”.

To begin I must commend the council for such a polite introduction – a definite improvement to previous approaches used in 1993, 2005 and 2013 when the first the public knew of such asset sales were newspaper advertisements and a date when council would decide their fate.

However, unless this council decides not to proceed with Reserve Divestment, in due course a list of proposed areas to sell will be published and the various communities be jerked into action.

Petitions will be made, media photos taken, and ultimately individuals and groups will address council - at forums just like this - which to most people is a difficult and harrowing experience.

PREVIOUS COUNCILS have already gone down this path and picked off the areas for which sufficient value was NOT DEMONSTRATED.

However, FEW SALES eventuated for their time and effort.

CONTENTION IS THIS: that the process of determining “how comfortable the community is with selling Reserves” has already been carried out, AND the answer has been a definite “no thanks”.

Furthermore, in 2017, at the conclusion of the last such Reserve Divestment process, the then Mayor Hamish McDouall stated that **“COUNCIL FORAYS INTO RESERVE SALES MUST NOT OCCUR AGAIN”**. I was present at the meeting and have described his statement as a **PROCLAMATION** as this was a watershed moment. Many had hoped officers would note this in their 10 year LTP diaries and there would be no future mention of selling Reserves. BUT ALAS to that.

And to those of you who wonder if **public attitudes may have changed** during the past several years, i.e. Are Reserves are longer valued, I would argue that the opposite is more likely the case. Evidence shows that some of our rapidly increasing population has come here specifically because of the slower pace and our Reserves and Open Spaces.

And in the future, **the continued existence such passive spaces offers enhancement potential** as the financial fortunes of our city once again improve – as they most surely will.

Finally I must note, many of our Reserves only exist because of the considerable and sustained efforts of **past residents** - including the late Cr Sue Westwood (QSM) and Mrs Vonnie Page (NZOM), and retired Planner Mr Jeff Mitchell-Anyon to name but a few.

And so to my requests

- I ask that the council **leave our Reserves and Open Spaces** for the wellbeing of the present and future generations, and find savings elsewhere.
- I also ask that **Mayor McDouall's proclamation** that no further Reserve sales occur be formally adopted by council resolution and incorporated into policy.

Yours Sincerely



Dr Roger D Shand