

OPEN Briefing regarding the Draft Heritage Policy

Date of Briefing: 7/10/2020 – 5.43pm-6.15pm

Attendees

Elected Members: Mayor Barry, Deputy Mayor Lewis, Cr Brown, Cr Edwards, Cr Hislop, Cr Milne, Cr Mitchell, Cr Shaw, Cr Sutton, Ms P Hanna, Chair Petone Community Board

Staff: Ms J Miller, Chief Executive, Ms A Blackshaw, Director Neighbourhoods and Communities, Mr K Puketapu-Dentice, Director Transformation and Resources, Ms A Welanyk, Director Transformation and Resources, Ms W Moore, Head of Strategy and Planning; Mr Joseph Jefferies, Senior Environmental Policy Analyst, Mrs H Clegg, Minute Taker.

Apologies / Absences

Elected Member Apologies: Cr Bassett, Cr Briggs, Cr Dyer, Cr Rasheed Absent: None

Key Objectives of the Brief

The purpose of the briefing is to update members on progress of the Draft Heritage Policy.

Discussion

The Head of Strategy and Planning advised of progress on the Draft Heritage Policy.

- Process commenced in 2018 in response to demolition of buildings in Petone.
- Extensive public consultation concluded that people wanted heritage buildings retained and used, with a strong policy implemented for heritage protection.
- Engagement with mana whenua is slow and ongoing.
- Draft Policy includes a draft definition of heritage value.
- The Heritage chapter was the first to be reviewed in the Lower Hutt District Plan review.
- Currently there are no budget for financial incentives for heritage protection.
- Vision is to develop a celebration of the Lower Hutt story, connecting people with the past.
- Further public engagement is planned to commence in Heritage Week, with both the draft Heritage Policy and the Lower Hutt District Plan Heritage Chapter review.

In response to questions from members, the Head of Strategy and Planning advised:

- Officers will be checking that the terms of the Vogel House rates rebate were being complied with. She noted this was the first instance this rebate had been granted, and that the reduction in rates revenue through the use of this rebate was not reimbursed from the Heritage Fund.
- The Heritage Fund was not widely publicised, advertised or used, and was aimed at assisting with small bills eg cost of engaging an engineer to inspect a heritage building, or to obtain a geotechnical report.
- Petone 2040 has a focus on heritage, through the character provisions. Deputy Mayor Lewis added that Petone and Alicetown consisted of many blocks of period houses, which were a tourist drawcard.
- Plan Change 52 had been instigated to protect the clock tower in Naenae.

- There was no uniform national approach to heritage protection at local authority level, especially regarding financial incentives.
- Officers would welcome suggestions for financial incentives.
- Heritage protection was often viewed as a liability rather than an asset. Officers were currently working on how to incentivise owners to see and celebrate the heritage values of their property, with a report coming to council in due course.
- The Heritage Policy will provide guidance for the District Plan Heritage Chapter, including specific retention, protection and conservation measures.
- Workshops on the District Plan Heritage chapter review would occur in due course.
- Council owned the heritage War Memorial building. It was possible Council also owned other heritage listed buildings, and that that information could be provided if required.
- That the Heritage chapter was the first chapter to be reviewed because:
 - issues and direction had arisen out of the Plan Change 43 process;
 - heritage was a topic likely to galvanise interest;
 - heritage was not a hugely technical topic.

Pam Hanna advised that many heritage buildings had been lost in Petone, and that both Council and Heritage NZ had failed to act swiftly to protect buildings in the past. She added protection was a confused landscape, with Heritage NZ, RMA and Lower Hutt District Plan provisions available.

The Senior Environmental Policy Analyst advised that:

- An inventory to identify and list heritage buildings for the Lower Hutt District Plan review would occur and that previous documentation on the topic will form part of the base information package.
- The Lower Hutt CBD modernist buildings and the Naenae centre were examples of more modern heritage buildings/areas.
- Both a National and a Regional Policy Statement (NPS, RPS) had been released since the initial Heritage Building list had been compiled, and the chapter review would need to reflect these.
- The NPS on Urban Development contained a section which protected heritage buildings and areas from urban intensification.
- Without a Lower Hutt Heritage Policy, the Lower Hutt District Plan Heritage chapter would take guidance from the NPS and RPS, along with the public engagement exercises.

Next Steps

- Extraordinary Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee meeting late October (could coincide with LTP subcommittee meeting 27 October) OR Approved for engagement Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee – 17 November
- 28 October and all November – back for decisions in late February; timely decision making for District Plan review; coincides with Heritage Week to launch engagement; covers any LTP implications and enables further consultation on these OR 18 November to 22 December – runs up hard on LTP work and leaves little time for assessing financial impacts prior to consultation on LTP; will delay District Plan review progress.
- Members to send suggestions for financial incentives for heritage protection to the Head of Strategy and Planning, for inclusion in officer's report.
- Workshops on the District Plan Heritage chapter review would occur in due course.

Briefing Materials

Attachment 1 – Powerpoint Presentation