

Submission on the Hutt City draft LTCCP (2006 – 20017)

By

Normandale Residents Association

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(Chairman)

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Preamble

The Normandale Residents' Association (NRA) wish to make the following submission on the Hutt City Council's draft Community Plan 2006-2017.

We have structured this submission to follow the order in which the aspects commented on appear in the summary document within an activity area. Consequently this order does not necessarily conform to any order of precedence that the NRA attaches to the submission, and we have indicated for each point the relative importance that we would accord to it.

Financial considerations

We recognise that the points we have raised are in addition to existing planned expenditure, and wish to note that we do not support a financial strategy in which debt retirement takes precedence over investment in essential capital infrastructure. We also strongly advocate an increase in expenditure on preventative maintenance for infrastructure, rather than a 'just too late' repair approach.

Vision and planning

We would wish the Council to take a leading role in establishing Hutt City in the forefront of city development for the 21st century. To achieve this we commend the recommendations from the community consultation workshop, and the Council for taking this consultative initiative.

Specific areas on which we believe the Council should concentrate are within the scope of city planning and local building bylaws. We strongly suggest that a project is put in hand to investigate the development of the Hutt River as a community resource integrated with the CBD. We would wish to see the development by the Council of better recreational opportunities along the river and view with dismay suggestions that the riverbank be used for more car parking. It was our understanding that the concept of the river as a Regional Park would look long term at removing some of the asphalt car parking and we would not like to see that policy and a key asset of the City compromised. Any development in the CBD needs to be sympathetic to the river; and tall buildings should neither fringe our riverbanks, nor dominate the treescape.

We very strongly urge the Council to make as a priority, the introduction of necessary changes to the District plan and local By laws to require that all new commercial and residential developments comply, as a minimum, with the "Merton Rule¹", and to capture all roof water for use on site. Although as originated the Merton Rule applied only to commercial development, we believe that an extension to residential development is practical in Hutt City through the use of solar water heating and that this, in addition to assisting the local, regional and national environmental impact would also reduce the total cost of ownership for house buyers.

¹ In summary, at least 10% of total energy requirements to be generated on site from renewable resources.

Environment

We consider the protection and maintenance of our bush reserves as being a fundamental part of our City's structure and a key contributor to it being able to meet carbon emission targets as well as essential contributors to the mental, social and emotional wellbeing of residents.

Further to this we would recommend that the Council establish a Street Trees Programme where it would make available suitable trees for planting on berms when such planting is undertaken by community groups.

We would also strongly recommend that the development of 'ecological corridors' of vegetated areas containing pedestrian walkways be created to link existing parks and reserves with each other, the Hutt river, and Belmont Regional Park.

Youth and Recreation

We note the extensive use being made of the half court at Maungaraki. We feel that this demonstrates the need and justification to replicate and extend this type of facility along the Western Hills. Identification of suitable sites should be a planning priority in the coming year.

Major Projects

Activity 7 Roads and traffic

Major projects currently excluded

The **Substandard Roading** allocation is affirmed as a high priority for residents of Normandale and in particular the proposed upgrade of the middle portion of Normandale Road. It is a pity that the lack of funding of this budget will see this project not completed this year as it is the 50th anniversary of Normandale joining the City and one of the key reasons for this happening was to achieve an upgrading of roading in Normandale. This particular portion of Normandale Road featured at that time and will again this year as part of the jubilee celebrations. All those involved being acutely aware that nothing has changed.

We wish to register strong support for the early (1-3 years) implementation of a viable walking and cycling infrastructure, with attendant promotional campaign. We are particularly concerned to ensure that walking and cycling should be seen as the preferred means of transport by schoolchildren, and would suggest that Council take the lead by both providing support for those organising 'walking buses' and by construction of separated cycle lanes on all roads.

Minor projects currently excluded

In accordance with the above point we would also strongly support the construction of the Wainuiomata Hill road footpath / cycleway at the earliest opportunity.

Work not currently mentioned

1. **Traffic separation road islands.** We believe that three of these are needed on Normandale Road to keep vehicular traffic in their correct lanes when cornering. They need to be positioned at
 - On Normandale Road at the intersection with Bridge Street

- On Normandale Road at the intersection with Miromiro Road
- On Normandale Road at the intersection with Poto Road.

2. **Untidy Entrance to Normandale – Normandale Road** - Over the years the Association has asked for some money to be allocated for the maintenance and improvement of the verges on the stretch of road from the over bridge to the intersection with Miromiro Road. Although some money was budgeted for environmental improvements some years ago this was redirected to the entrance of Harbourview. The work currently undertaken is restricted to mowing, and this is progressively covering a smaller and smaller section of the southern berm. The Association and its members have in the past planted and tended shrubs on the Southern verge, but these are now being overgrown with tradescantia. It would be appreciated if some attention could be given to at least tidying the entranceway prior to our Jubilee and some budgetary provision made for upgrading it.

Just around the corner in Normandale Road itself the historic horse trough is overgrown and needs some tidy up work to be done.

3. We would also ask the council to seek a higher priority from Transit for the Melling grade separated interchange.

Activity 4 – Parks and recreation

Major projects currently excluded

Whilst we would support the development of a Mountain Bike Park in Wainuiomata as an ongoing activity for the medium term, we would not wish this to be at the expense of the development and maintenance of biking trails and cycleways for the majority of cyclists. We would consider that the development of a network of cycle trails through reserves and linking to the Hutt River Trail and Belmont Regional Park to be of greater overall benefit.

Minor projects currently excluded

We support the inclusion of the Manor Park playground into this year's budget. No where else in the city residents have to travel approximately 6km to get to their nearest playground

Activity 9 – Wastewater

Major projects currently excluded

In line with our advocacy of the maintenance of infrastructure having precedence over short term cost minimisation and debt reduction, we support the acquisition of the leak monitoring and repair technology for the Trunk sewer outfall as a high priority.

Activity 14 – Local Urban design

Major projects currently excluded

In line with our comments under Vision and planning, we strongly support the development of a CBD Plan and in particular the development of a pedestrian plaza, and more tree planting. We would strongly suggest that this concept is further developed to include direct pedestrian access to the river bank and the development of the riverbank area.

Other activities we wish to be included

Normandale Jubilee

We request \$1 per head (as granted to Eastbourne) for our Jubilee commemoration. This would amount to **\$2200**. The commemoration will involve both permanent memorials, the erection of interpretation signs at points of historical interest in Normandale; the production of a walking trail pamphlet; and a celebration event on the first Sunday in October of this year.