

Historic Places Wellington Inc Statement to WCC Strategy Committee: 6 August 2026

Felicity Wong, Chairperson HPW

A preliminary comment about local body amalgamation. There was the Wellington Provincial Council in the mid nineteenth century, followed by the historical focus on developing specific separate entities such as Hutt County Council which incorporated Khandallah and Karori etc. That was followed by break away boroughs such as the Onslow Borough Council to be followed some decades later by amalgamation into Wellington City Council (in 1919 for Onslow Borough, and in the 1950s for Johnsonville).

So, Wellingtonians have been in the amalgamation debate before.

Agenda item 2.1 Capital projects

HPW welcomes the report showing closer financial oversight and information that several important projects are on track for completion within budgets. These include the Begonia House, Town Hall & City to Sea Bridge. HPW acknowledges Cr Diane Calvert's specific efforts in that regard.

Agenda Item 2.3 State Highway Update

HPW is concerned about the potential for urban blight. It is concerned about deterioration and needless demolitions on the ground before anything happens to actually construct works. HPW is specifically concerned about:

- empty but historic houses on Patterson Street owned by NZTA;
- 7 Patterson Street in particular, the historic homestead of William Waring Taylor,
- Large Elm and Pōhutukawa Trees on Cambridge Reserve;
- Saintry Mother Aubert's Creche in Pukeahu National War Memorial Park (proposed for relocation); and
- GHQ Building, the oldest remaining military administration building in NZ, and link to Mt Cook's military history;
- So many other historic buildings have already been demolished from Mt Cook and its environment (e.g. Stables; Drill hall; Garrison Hall; Gunnery Annex and the Catholic complex of St Pats School and St Joseph's church);
- Massey University had earlier proposed GHQ be used as for its design/arts faculty gallery space and GHQ's facade strengthened accordingly.

Agenda item 2.4 Dangerous Buildings

HPW supports the Dangerous Buildings policy but notes unfortunately it can only relate to taking action when there is an actual danger present and does not extend to "demolition by neglect" or lack of urgent maintenance.