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11 November 2026

ratingpoliciesreview@wcc.govt.nz

Submission of Historic Places Wellington on WCC Reviewing Rates.

Historic Places Wellington (HPW) is an incorporated society which aims to identify, protect and advocate for heritage places in the Wellington region. We wish to be heard.

1. Changing to a land value rating basis.

Historic Places Wellington is concerned that if a land value rating system is adopted that it will disadvantage owners of heritage buildings who can't, or don't want to, "develop" or intensify their property. It would provide a disincentive to keeping a heritage building - or potentially an incentive to demolish it. If such a rating base is adopted, we would advocate for rates relief for heritage buildings, which would recognise the public benefit in retaining the city's privately owned heritage buildings.

We agree with paragraph 9 of the Open Letter of Wellington businesses of 11 November (although talking more generally about businesses) – these comments also apply particularly to the low-rise heritage areas of Cuba St and Courtenay Place. The very areas that give Wellington some vibrancy and distinctiveness:
"Many of these buildings are low-rise because historic planning rules, heritage protections or the nature of their use have prevented greater density. They were fully developed for their intended purpose when built. In addition, more modern large-format retail, entertainment venues, workshops and light industrial businesses cannot simply be stacked into high-rise towers. Penalising them for being supposedly "under-developed" ignores both history and commercial reality." We would add "seismic risks in Wellington" to the reasons for favouring low rise buildings historically.

5. *Simplify rates relief for earthquake-prone buildings*

Historic Places Wellington supports the proposal that there be rates relief for earthquake prone buildings. The relief will assist building owners to meet remediation costs.

Felicity Wong
Chairperson
Historic Places Wellington Inc