

Southern Regional Office
New Zealand Historic Places Trust
P.O. Box 4403
Christchurch

Ph (03) 365 2897
Fax (03) 374 2433
Email: jhamilton@historic.org.nz

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Re: Long Term Christchurch Community Plan

The New Zealand Historic Places Trust Pouhere Taonga (HPT) wishes to make the following comments in relation to the Long term Community Plan:

Development Contributions Policy (Clause 6.6.3 p 26, Vol 2 of 2)

The HPT notes that the heritage remissions have been removed from the development contributions policy. These should not be removed as it is important to give incentives for the retention of heritage fabric. If alternative incentives are to be offered instead these should be stated up front in the policy.

Discretionary Projects – City Mall Renovation (p 4)

The HPT considers that this project is important for central city revitalisation and retention of heritage fabric. Unless the mall is vibrant the inner city can slowly fall into decay, with less maintenance being undertaken on heritage buildings and therefore increased chance of heritage building demolitions. A vibrant central city is important and the mall renovation project is critical to achieving this vibrancy. As such this project should be elevated as a must do project.

Discretionary Projects – Avon River Strategy (p 4)

The HPT considers that this project is important for central city revitalisation and that revitalisation in turn has a potentially positive flow-on effect for heritage retention. It provides an opportunity for heritage interpretation and enhancement of important heritage bridges. As such this project should be elevated as a must do project.

New Bus Exchange (p 4)

While acknowledging the need for and supporting a new bus exchange the HPT Branch committee is concerned at what happens to the current bus exchange building. The HPT wants to see this building retained and sees expansion as an opportunity to improve the streetscape with sympathetic infill where there are currently "holes" in the streetline in the vicinity of the Bus Exchange. This would enhance the urban fabric in a manner that is more in keeping with the historic character of the central city, which consisted of buildings right up to the street frontage.

New Civic Offices (p 4)

While acknowledging the need for and supporting a Civic building the HPT is concerned at what happens to the current civic building (a listed heritage building). The HPT wants to see this building retained with an appropriate use.

Botanic Gardens Project (p4)

We support this project which provides an opportunity to enhance the interpretation of a major historic area.

Community Outcomes – City Development (p 9)

The HPT supports the protection of heritage being listed as an important sub-outcome under 'City Development'. However we are concerned that this appears not to be backed up by any proposal to improve funding and the removal of heritage remission (referred to above) sends a contrary signal to this goal. We would like to see a commitment to extend the identification and listing of heritage buildings with appropriate funding to achieve this. We would also like to see funding and/or other incentives to assist owners of heritage buildings carry out appropriate earthquake strengthening. The community outcome of higher awareness, although desirable, seems rather weak in comparison with e.g. the outcome for urban and regional parks where the aim is maintenance or increase of area per capita. No further attrition of protected buildings, especially Category I buildings would be better evidence of achievement.

Regulatory Services

The HPT notes that the CCC will continue to change and update its City Plan. The HPT believes that the definition of alteration and partial demolition should be amended as a matter of priority. Changes also need to include updated listings.

Heritage Capital Fund

The policies surrounding this fund need to be reviewed to account for the special needs of heritage. The Council has a responsibility to protect and conserve listed heritage buildings and some of this money should be available for grants. Two buildings which merit special attention at present are the former Sunnyside Administration building and the Odeon (formerly the Fullers Opera House) in Tuam Street. Both are Group 2 heritage items meaning that both buildings are places of 'national or regional importance, the protection of which is seen as very important where this can reasonably be achieved'.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission which has been prepared with input from the Canterbury Branch Committee of the Historic Places Trust representing 3800 members. The HPT wishes to be heard.

Regards

Jennie Hamilton
Area Co-ordinator