

# Living Streets Aotearoa



## Submission from Living Streets Aotearoa Basin Bridge Proposal

Contact person: **Ellen Blake**  
Email: [wellington@livingstreets.org.nz](mailto:wellington@livingstreets.org.nz)  
Postal address **PO Box 25424, Panama St, Wellington**  
Phone: **021 1067139**  
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### About Living Streets

Living Streets Aotearoa is New Zealand's national walking and pedestrian organisation, providing a positive voice for people on foot and working to promote walking friendly planning and development around the country. Our vision is "More people choosing to walk more often and enjoying public places".

The objectives of Living Streets Aotearoa are:

- to promote walking as a healthy, environmentally-friendly and universal means of transport and recreation
- to promote the social and economic benefits of pedestrian-friendly communities
- to work for improved access and conditions for walkers, pedestrians and runners including walking surfaces, traffic flows, speed and safety
- to advocate for greater representation of pedestrian concerns in national, regional and urban land use and transport planning.

**Wellington** is the local walking action group based in this area which is working to make city and suburban centres in the region more walking-friendly.

For more information, please see: [www.livingstreets.org.nz](http://www.livingstreets.org.nz)

### Submission

Living Streets Aotearoa object to the Basin Bridge proposal in its entirety.

We would like the Board to reject this proposal.

We are making this submission because we have concerns that this proposal will reduce walkability in an urban environment, where the goal of existing policies and plans is to at least maintain, if not improve the walking environment. The proposal as it stands will decrease walkability in this area.

We submit the proposal:

- will change the urban landscape from the current distinct low ground-level landscape with historic significance to high level modern features which will adversely affect the walking experience in this area. The change from an open space environment to a louring, shaded industrial bridge environment will reduce walking amenity and can not be ameliorated by a few planted trees.
- access is not improved for pedestrians where 'shared paths' are newly created or in place of existing footpaths. This is clearly set out in the New Zealand Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide (NZTA Dec 2007<sup>1</sup>) and in the relevant cycle design guide. Shared paths are less safe for pedestrians than footpaths. We seek that dedicated footpaths are created and maintained as part of this development to maintain the existing 'level of service' for pedestrians, and no shared paths are created.
- levels of noise will increase as vehicles move more quickly through this space, and will be broadcast more widely as noise is generated higher up. This will decrease the walking amenity in this area.
- the bridge structure and buildings proposed will alter wind conditions in this area. Pedestrians walking on the bridge will be affected by high winds. Pedestrians walking around the large proposed new building will also be affected.
- information on the significant pedestrian effects is inadequate and in some cases based on 2009 estimated data.
- this proposal will create a barrier north and south of the bridge, and reduce walkability between the town centre and the development hub along Adelaide Road. Walkability is strongly related to property desirability.
- the piecemeal approach to gaining consents for the Wellington road of national significance means that the full effects of the proposals are not properly assessed.

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<sup>1</sup> The Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide is New Zealand's comprehensive official guide to planning and design for walking. It sets out ways to improve New Zealand's walking environment.

- the 'shared path' proposed on the bridge does not meet the Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide minimum requirements for 'shared paths'. The minimum width for an unsegregated shared path with commuter traffic or mixed use (the situation proposed) should be 3 metres with a 1 metre lateral clearance on either side .

We would like the Board of Inquiry to:

1 Refuse consent for this project.

2 If granting this consent, to:

- ensure pedestrian-only footpaths are created (not shared paths), and maintained where they already exist.

- improve walkability on the bridge by

- mitigating the effects of wind on pedestrians using the bridge, and providing a suitable barrier so pedestrians can not be blown off the path,
- clearly separating pedestrians from all vehicles (including cycles),
- consider covering the footpath,
- and provide an exit/entry point from the bridge on the east of Kent Terrace for those using it as an over-bridge to cross Kent/Cambridge Terraces.

- mitigate the effects of the bridge and approaches on pedestrians at ground level by

- green screening the entire bridge structure,
- good design to prevent adverse wind impacts,
- green planting to reduce effects of air pollutants,
- sound proofing systems to dull vehicle noise,
- information stands to show the historic and heritage sites destroyed by the bridge,
- information about how to walk around the Basin Reserve in a prominent walk accessible location with public transport stops indicated,
- covered areas at pedestrian crossings,
- and 'level of service A' at all pedestrian crossings,

3 If the proposal is approved unchanged, to provide at least the NZ Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide desirable 'shared path' width requirements.

We would like to be heard in support of our submission.