

20 June 2007

Johnsonville Town Centre Draft Plan
Wellington City Council
Freepost 2199
Wellington

Submission on the Johnsonville Town Centre Draft Plan

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on this draft plan.

Please find attached the submission from Living Streets Wellington.

We do/do not wish to speak to this submission??

Yours sincerely

Kim Keene??

Introduction

Living Streets Wellington is a branch of Living Streets Aotearoa, Inc. Formed in 2002, it is an advocacy group with a vision of “More people choosing to walk more often and enjoying public places – young and old, fast and slow, walking, sitting and standing, commuting, shopping, between appointments, for exercise, for leisure and for pleasure.”

The objectives of Living Streets Aotearoa are as following:

- 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
- To advocate for greater representation of walker and pedestrian concerns in urban and regional land use, urban design and transport planning and, as appropriate, at national level
- To education national, regional and local authorities, drivers, pedestrians and others on the benefits of walking, in order to improve road safety for pedestrians
- To foster consideration for people with special mobility needs

This submission emphasises the importance of walking as transport and recreation, as well as improving access and conditions to create pedestrian-friendly environments.

Feedback Form

Key Goal 1 – Facilitate and Manage Growth

Strongly disagree. Where does the Council get the growth figures from?

Key Goal 2 – Encourage more people to live in the Town Centre

Agree, but public transport will need to be improved significantly (particularly the quality and quantity of the train service) to encourage residents to use the trains and buses, rather than private vehicles.

Key Goal 3 – Develop Johnsonville Road as the Main Street

Strongly disagree as unless the volumes of traffic are diverted, this would not work well in terms of pedestrian and cyclist safety, particularly at pedestrian crossings. Currently it is extremely dangerous for people to cross any main street in the Town Centre. One possible solution would be to install a pedestrian underpass under Johnsonville Road.

Key Goal 4 – Improve Quality Design and Sense of Place

No opinion.

Key Goal 5 – Develop a wider range of Town Centre functions

Strongly disagree. We are unsure why Johnsonville needs more shops and entertainment facilities as better public transport would mean that residents can access facilities in Wellington City. More emphasis on family needs (see summary) would be appreciated.

Key Goal 6 – Retain a Compact Town Centre

Strongly agree

Key Goal 7 –Maximise the potential of Public Transport Systems

Strongly agree. There is a great need for improvement in the current rail station and bus waiting areas as stated in the Draft Plan but we feel that the actual quality and quantity of service needs to be improved before the area's appearance. At present, many trains are late, break down in transit or don't run at all. In peak times they are often overfull. Train staff do not communicate with passengers as to why services are late. This has the negative effect of discouraging intending train users in the future.

Key Goal 8 – Managing Traffic better

Strongly agree. We wish however for more priority to be given to walkers and cyclists who at present compete with large volumes of traffic (some travelling at high speeds and some parking on footpaths, blocking pedestrian access). To combat these problems, more pedestrian crossings, and driver education/enforcement of road rules regarding pedestrian safety would be helpful. Cycle lanes and footpaths away from major roads would also help. In addition, better parking facilities next to Alex Moore Park should be considered.

Key Goal 9 – Improve Community Facilities

Strongly agree.

Key Goal 10 –Improve Public Spaces

Strongly agree. See also Key Goal 5 – an open green space with seats, similar to Wellington Civic Square would be well used as a focal public meeting place.

Key Goal 11 – Widen the economic base of the Town Centre

Agree, if the emphasis is on creating more services than just retail.

Summary

Living Streets Wellington supports some Key Goals as above in the Draft Plan.

However, we do not agree with the proposed long term vision of the Town Centre as being suitable for a massive increase in new shops, entertainment facilities and apartment living . How can streets be “reclaimed for the pedestrian” when this vision will encourage more and more visitors to the centre, mainly via private vehicles? Johnsonville was intended to be a “family” suburb. More emphasis on green spaces, parks and sports facilities would benefit local families far more than an increased range of shops and entertainment facilities.

We would also like to emphasise the importance of careful planning to prioritise walking and cycling as essential contributing transport options and recreational activities. We would be happy to discuss this type of planning further when the new Town Centre Co-ordinator is appointed.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Living Streets Wellington