



# North Queens Wharf Brief

■ Waterfront Development Subcommittee

August 2002

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Waterfront Development Subcommittee (WDSC), a subcommittee of Wellington City Council, has developed this brief. The WDSC is charged with developing briefs and monitoring the designs in order to achieve the general objectives of *The Wellington Waterfront Framework* (the Framework). This brief is based on the principles as set out in the Framework.

The purpose of this brief is to give direction for development in the North Queens Wharf (NQW) area and allow Lambton Harbour Management Ltd (LHML) to engage with prospective developers. LHML is the Council's implementation manager for the waterfront.

The emphasis in the Framework is on performance criteria, and in combination with an indicative layout of spaces and buildings and a maximum building envelope, this brief gives a level of certainty as to the location of open spaces and maximum size and layout of buildings. The open space will be maintained in the order of a minimum of 60% of the total area of NQW. The performance criteria allow for flexibility for parties to be creative in exploring ideas for the development in the area. Hence this brief also stipulates a process enabling the WDSC to have an ongoing relationship with the project, so that public confidence can be maintained.

### 1.1 General design principles

The following vision statement has been adopted for the waterfront:

*“Wellington’s Waterfront is a special place that welcomes all people to live, work and play in the beautiful and inspiring spaces and architecture that connect our city to the sea, and protect our heritage for future generations”.*

Unlike the predominantly open space areas of Chaffers and Taranaki St Wharf, this area has a strong connection to the City's Central Business District. This will be reflected with a stronger sense of the adjacent city form being developed through a higher proportion of buildings than on the rest of the waterfront.

New buildings in this area will have a range of uses and could include recreational, retail, commercial, residential and institutional use. Generally, the uses need to support a safe waterfront and 24-hour use.

The character of NQW will be of squares and lanes. Any new buildings will be in scale with the heritage buildings, such as Shed 21 at the northern end and the Queens Wharf Apartments and Sheds 11 and 13 at the southern end.

## 1.2 District Plan

There is obviously a need to undertake work in accordance with the District Plan. At this stage it is envisaged that any Resource Consent application for new buildings in this area will be notified.

## 1.3 Process

Given the degree of flexibility in the interpretation of this brief and to reaffirm that proposed developments meet the requirements of the Framework, the WDSC (through its design advisory body, the Technical Advisory Group (TAG)), will work with LHML to review developers' proposals and monitor the design of schemes. This would be an iterative process.

## 1.4 Phasing

To allow for a richness and diversity of uses and types of development and in response to the development market LHML may phase the development of the various sites over time.

## 2 SITE SPECIFIC ISSUES

### 2.1 Site boundaries

This brief covers NQW, which is all that area of the Lambton Harbour Development Area bounded by Shed 21 in the north through to the Queens Wharf Centre in the south; Waterloo and Customhouse Quays to the west and Centreport's boundary to the east in the northern sector and the water's edge in the southern sector. The area is depicted on the map at the back of this document.

### 2.2 Links to the city

Improving pedestrian access across the heavily trafficked 'quays' is critical to the success of the waterfront development. Wellington City Council is undertaking a quays improvement project in 2003, and opportunities to link with this project should be made. This project enhances the Wellington waterfront route from Aotea Quay through to Oriental Parade. It will provide significant planting of street trees, offer a central median giving refuge for people crossing between the central area of the city and the Waterfront, and increase the number of signalised pedestrian crossings along Jervois and Customhouse Quays.

The main entrance for vehicles on to the waterfront in this area is at Whitmore St. Access is also via the entrance at Bunny St and an alternative could be explored opposite Johnston St.

### 2.3 Heritage and contemporary culture

This area has been long associated with both Maori and European settlement with the Kumutoto stream exiting in this area. The majority of the NQW area was reclaimed as late as 1970. Opportunities to acknowledge that this process has happened should be considered –

an example being at Taranaki Wharf where the original wharf configuration has been re-exposed.

Other aspects of history should also be acknowledged. This could be in the form of traces which include not only the remaining waterfront buildings, but artifacts such as the wharf gates and wharf structures, and the evidence of usage and industrial/maritime wear and tear. These are irreplaceable indicators of the history of the area, and while some may be damaged, they substantially enrich the experience of the waterfront. Physical traces of age and occupation are the collective memory of the waterfront, and are fundamental in retaining and strengthening the identity of the area.

The area needs to be consistent with the maritime character, with fishing and recreational boats continuing to be able to moor alongside the Tug Wharf.

The development of the contemporary culture is ongoing with a change in emphasis from a working port to a recreational and cultural area. Public art should be promoted on the waterfront and be an integral part of the design of any space or a distinct element, picking up on the waterfront context.

### 2.4 Pedestrian access

Pedestrians have priority over vehicles on the waterfront. There are a number of ways of making the waterfront safer and more comfortable, convenient and inviting for people on foot.

There are opportunities to enhance accessibility for all, including the elderly or disabled, and people with prams or wheelchairs by the detailed design of elements such as crossings, paths and ramps.

## 2.5 Parking and vehicle access

Any parking on the waterfront is to support people who visit, live and work on the waterfront. Pedestrians, cyclists, service and emergency vehicles may all share the same space, while still giving pedestrians priority.

The number of parks to be provided depends on the uses of the new buildings. These needs will be covered in resource consent applications.

Vehicle access needs to be provided to assist access for the less able and to service the buildings, wharves and parking areas, but the principle that pedestrians have priority remains.

## 2.6 Orientation

Connections are also about the views, the glimpses of the harbour and hills beyond, along the various city streets. The panoramic views from the promenade and water's edge out to the harbour are also special. There are also the views from the harbour and hills back to the city over the waterfront area.

Existing view shafts down the city streets to the harbour and hills should be enhanced and where possible new views should be created. Framed views are also important to increase the sense of drama and to reinforce the sense of distance and scale.

At grade pedestrian crossing points should be enhanced at each of these intersections.

## 2.7 The Promenade

The promenade is continuous, stretching from the Railway Station and Oriental Bay and follows the water's edge for most of the distance. There is a need to keep a consistency of treatment along its length, so that the promenade is clearly defined.

The promenade exists in different states in the different areas of the waterfront. In the NQW area it is proposed as two paths; that is the waterside path along the Tug Wharf and Queens Wharf breastwork, and landside alongside the reclaimed edge. Opportunities should be taken to provide shelter, seating and activities along the route, in particular along the landside edge where it could be integrated with any buildings such as through a colonnade.

The promenade should be a shared pathway, designed to accommodate a range of uses including strolling, cycling, skating, push-scooters, push-chairs and wheel chairs. The promenade should also be recognised as part of the city and an extension of the wider city flow of pedestrians.

The promenade at the water's edge needs to be enhanced to allow people of all abilities to access the water at various points. This is not a natural edge and therefore it should contribute to the urban waterfront experience in different ways, for example bridges, sea walls, pontoons, piers. Access and berthage for small craft should be improved along parts of the water's edge. This is important to support the use of the inner harbour for recreational water activities such as boating.

### 3.0 THE OPEN SPACES

Streets and lanes are the primary space form within the adjacent central city, and this type of space appears in the NQW area. These linear public spaces are destinations as well as pathways and access routes. Successful streets and lanes are usually well defined, are unified spaces with their own recognisable character and have activity and vitality at their edges.

Six key open spaces are proposed and are summarised in the table below.

Space	Location	Description	Issues
A	The promenade	Linear movement space	Primarily water edge based movement space To relate to promenade along rest of waterfront
B	Whitmore St extension	City connector space	Major entry point to waterfront, conflict between vehicles and pedestrians to be resolved, definition of space needs resolution
C	Waring Taylor St extension	City connector space	Part of the visual link between the city and harbour
D	Johnston St extension	City connector space	Part of the visual link between the city and harbour
E	Area north of Queens Wharf centre	Link space	Relationship between new development and existing buildings and spaces needs careful consideration.
F	Service lane alongside harbour side of Sheds 11 and 13	Linear movement space	Shared surface where pedestrian emphasis to be shared with primary servicing space for NQW

The spaces created by extruding Whitmore, Waring Taylor and Johnson Streets onto the waterfront need careful consideration. These spaces also relate to the District Plan viewshafts which would suggest substantial sized spaces with elongated proportions. The layout of these spaces, if they are to be shaped purely by the viewshaft lines, may lose a sense of enclosure, become exposed and provide few opportunities for shelter. In turn it may be difficult to support diversity, richness and activity in these spaces.

### 3.1 Open space principles

- The open spaces in this area are to be interlinked and to be designed in a coherent fashion that relates to the waterfront and the wider city context.
- Public spaces should support uses that can contribute to the vitality, safety, recreational potential, shelter, comfort and social inclusiveness of the waterfront.
- Diversity of use will support diversity of opportunity, of occupation, and extended use of the waterfront.
- Successful squares are characterised by spatial definition, sunshine, areas of shelter, activity around the edges, views in and out and connection with other space. They usually contain a feature or focal point that gives them a distinctive character.
- The potential for concealment and entrapment needs to be minimised. A choice of routes through the area is desirable with at least a single route well lit for night time movements.
- Spaces that are robust allow for multiple and changing activities. Often these activities are unforeseen. Possible activities include all those typically seen in city streets and squares and might also include performance art, children's play, vending, public

meetings, fishing, picnicking, rollerblading and any other waterfront recreational event.

- Public spaces that are responsive to changes in use are desirable to ensure continued activity and vitality on the waterfront.

### 3.2 Furniture guidelines

A furniture brief has been prepared by the WDSC and will need to be consulted at the developed design stage.

The brief is based on the fact that the furniture on the waterfront reflects the industrial and nautical elements of a working wharf on the edge of a city. It employs the elements of metal and timber and the elements used to connect them such as bolts, chains and plates. These are expressed on the waterfront in four main forms:

- planks (ship/wharf decking)
- balls (buoys, bollards )
- plates (cranes, ship hulls)
- masts (cranes, ship masts).

All elements are strong, bold and robust. Salvaged timber and materials are used where available, to maximise their effect and as appropriate to their purpose.

## 4.0 NEW BUILDINGS

Five ‘areas’ have been defined as being appropriate for buildings, four to the south of Whitmore St gates, and one on site 102.

Building heights are to be in the order of four storeys (and a limited number with two-to-four storeys) with some buildings to be a maximum of six storeys. The heights relate to the scale of adjacent heritage buildings.

The height of buildings on either side of the Whitmore St entry to the waterfront can be higher to form a ‘gateway’ to this part of the waterfront.

*Storey: means a floor (full or mezzanine) or level of a building including the ground floor level. It is envisaged that the maximum floor to floor height per storey is 4.2 metres, except the ground floor which may have a maximum height of 6 metres.*

Area	Location	Site coverage	Indicative height	Issue
1	Site 102, north of Whitmore St gates, south Shed 21	100%	6 storeys	Strong relationship with Shed 21 Southern end could form part of ‘gateway’ at end of Whitmore St
2	Site to south of Whitmore St gates alongside Customhouse Quay	100%	5 storeys step down to 3 to south	Northern end could form part of ‘gateway’ down Whitmore St
3	Site to the east of area 2, alongside promenade	100%	4 storeys	Defines landside promenade edge
4	Site to the east Shed 13, alongside promenade	70%	2-4 storeys	Opportunity for mid block connection Scale relationship with Shed 13 important
5	Site to the east Shed 11, alongside promenade	70%	2-4 storeys	Opportunity for mid block connection Scale relationship with Shed 11 important

Buildings may exceed (in part or in whole) the indicative heights given above if the design and/or impact on public space are such that they warrant consideration.

It is possible that each of these areas could be subdivided into a number of smaller buildings which would generally support and add to the diversity of the area. This would also open up opportunities for more developers to become involved.

#### 4.1 New building principles

- New buildings will be sympathetic to, and relate to the scale and size of, the heritage buildings, bearing in mind that Shed 21 at the northern end is higher than the heritage buildings at the southern end.

*Scale: "The impression of a building when seen in relation to its surroundings, or the size of parts of a building to its details, particularly as experienced in relation to the size of a person. Sometimes it is the total dimensions of a building which give it its sense of scale: at other times it is the size of the elements and the way they are combined". Department of Environment, Transport and Regions, UK Govt. It is not necessarily an easy concept to understand and an ambiguous one. It is often confused with the term 'size'. "relative or proportionate size or extent, degree, proportion" Oxford Dictionary*

*Generic scale vs human scale; "the size of a building element relative to other forms in its context". Ching*

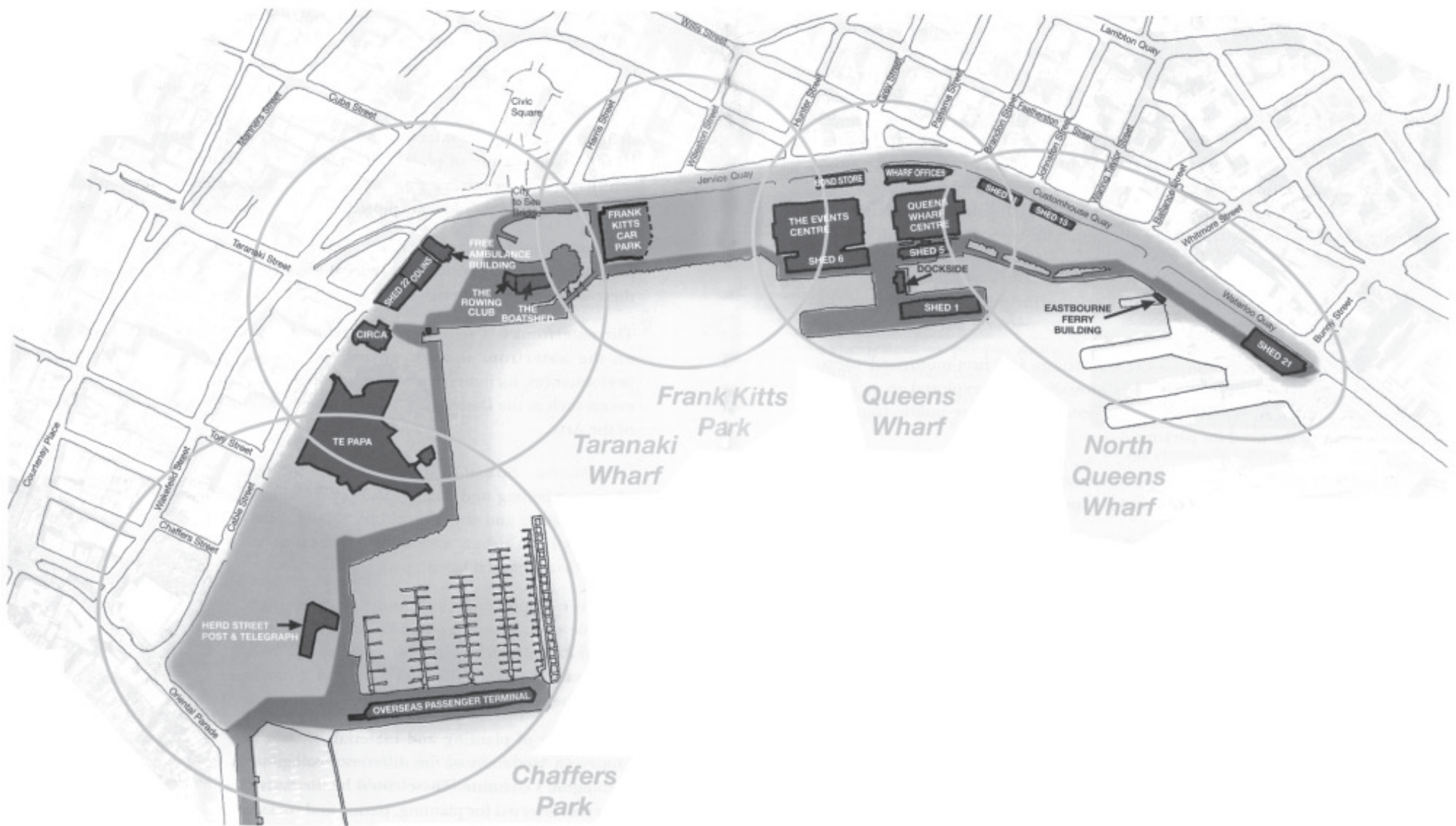
- Primary facades are to face on to the major public open spaces. Secondary facades to provide for a level of servicing, but not be dominated by these servicing activities. All facades to provide a level of active edge.
- Buildings will be designed in a coherent fashion that relates to the waterfront context, and have a good compositional relationship with neighbours so that they relate to and complement each other.

- Building types that would be responsive to change of uses over time are preferred.
- The buildings, including tops and roofs, need to provide the character and complexity appropriate to their prominent waterfront position, given that there are numerous vantage points overlooking this area.
- Buildings need to have visual interest with recognition of different viewing distances and duration.

#### 4.2 Building relationship to open space

- Buildings should generally contribute to the open spaces of the waterfront.
- These buildings should be of a size and shape that relate to the spaces around them, the neighbouring buildings and the water.
- They can provide enclosure and shelter to adjacent spaces. Buildings to provide a protected sheltered route along the quays and also along the promenade.
- They may become landmarks and add character to public spaces.
- The buildings that face onto these public spaces should help define these spaces, provide for natural surveillance and allow for activities that engage people using these spaces.
- The ground floors of buildings should be predominantly and clearly accessible to the public. This can include commercial activity provided it was aimed at the general public.

- Buildings should have ‘active edges’ by providing frequent entries. Windows and doors at ground level should allow visual links between ground level interiors and adjacent public spaces and allow people to interact with activities within the building.
- Servicing facilities need to be integrated into the building and/or located along secondary frontages







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