

Questions:

1. Matters concerning heritage buildings is a heated topic in Wellington's media. What is your position on heritage buildings in Wellington?

Generally I support retention of heritage buildings however that will depend on who can afford to retain and upgrade them.

The definition of "heritage" is never a clearcut one.

There are places and taonga which are not buildings but should be retained and their stories celebrated

2. With the high demand for housing and development in Wellington, what is your position on those developments which risk the demolition of heritage buildings?

I am appalled that the Gordon Wilson flats which housed at least 150 people are now set down for demolition when some relatively cost effective upgrade could have retained them. I said so at the time during the comment/ "debate" at Council-but in effect two councillors only Peck and Foster) acting as Commissioners and one independent commissioner (from) memory, decided their fate.

We as a Council and community need to be very astute before demolition of adequate housing stick is agreed or required.

3. Do you support strengthening of the Town Hall to a satisfactory level of earthquake prevention and working towards an urgent opening of this important amenity?

Absolutely. As mayor, this will be a key focus of mine.

Enhanced, strengthened and opened without delay. (Enhanced where possible to reflect some of its original architecture.)

If I had had my way it would have been opened by now or in a few months. The Council record shows the proposal I put to Council which would have readily funded this. (May/June 2015)

I also suggested then that Councillors Young and Woolf take my proposal as their motion but they refused.

I was appalled that Council suddenly found \$ 134m and ongoing annual operating costs to fund a private venture/company and a convention centre with the same capacity as the Town Hall. I have written many articles on this-one published recently on Wellington Scoop.

I saved the Town Hall from demolition in 1982 on my motion.

The increased cost of strengthening relate more to the leasing proposal and the specific needs if the proposed lessee than to the strengthening per se.

4. Do you support maintaining or increasing the Wellington City Council Built Heritage Fund

Probably (I don't make promises I cannot keep-I am but one vote).....it is so minimal that the impact is ...well minimal.....when it comes to the entire costs of saving important heritage places and taonga.

5. What is your vision for historic places' role in Wellington's future?

Well, As mayor I would advocate adequate government funding for key heritage places and taonga of which the Town Hall is but one!

We have to be mindful of the fact that heritage classifications for the public good can sometimes impose impossible burdens on owners without public funding assistance.

6. We welcome any other comments you may wish to make on this subject

Yes there is one further comment...I am very concerned that the world class heritage civic centre-an integrated whole of mixed period Architecture and arguably the best public space in the country is being subdivided, separately titled and effectively sold off in pieces for commercial gain and exploitation.

As Chair and leader of the civic centre project in the late 80's I have repeatedly tried to highlight this and oppose it.

You should also rightly be concerned!

Kind regards
Helene
for Mayor