

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

I have been widely critical of the Property Development Sector here in Wellington which has a very mixed record in terms of anything other than the pursuit of monetary profit. That said, we have to be tough with non-compliance and work with what we have got - and try to educate and encourage owners and developers to look beyond short-term returns and to honour their legacy to future generations.

For example, I was very disappointed to learn that the 'Sex entrepreneurs' Michael and John Chow escaped prosecution under the Historic Places Act for pulling down the historic Settlement Cafe and Eatery. And that Council did not withdraw all possibility of subsequent development consents and insist on the restitution of the site to its previous condition

[A long-awaited report into the January 2011 demolition of the former Settlement has found the site was occupied from at least the 1860, having once housed a palm reader and wood turning business].

**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?**

The loss of HNZC accommodation for single / vulnerable people in the Gordon Wilson Flats is a disaster in terms of both heritage loss and the gap it creates in social housing availability. More could have been done to work towards a win-win outcome – perhaps with a mix of student and social housing units preserving the facade. Alternatively, I would have liked to have seen Victoria University contribute to replacement social housing as a condition for consent to alter – demolish.

The recently announced proposals for the Erskine College site sound promising in terms of mixed use and heritage preservation but I believe that the proposed housing units which are expected to sell for over \$600,000 each are not, as has been claimed, for 'first-time buyers'. I would like to see greater commitment in such developments to the inclusion of low cost / social housing as a development contribution for consent.

**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?**

Yes – the fast-tracking of remediation would be a very high priority.

And I would also like a feasibility study on the practicality and cost of restoring the exterior to its original 19<sup>th</sup> Century grandeur using modern, light-weight facsimile ornamentation [such as has been done successfully with the ‘chimneys’ of the Old Government Buildings]. To reinstate the original architectural concept would be wonderful – and I’m sure the result, properly done with community support, would be widely admired and valued.

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

I don’t like fixed-sum funds. These tend to encourage gaming and spending up to the limits by applicants and portfolio administrators. I would prefer to see proper feasibility studies that are open to public discussion and then debated in Council.

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

Frankly I don’t currently know enough to be able to make a sensible comments/commitments here on the institutional relationships.

In general, I aim to run a tight ship to ensure that money is spent wisely and effectively and that rate and debt rises are kept in check.

I would expect formal proposals and community participation on any proposed policy shifts.

We have to be careful that we are not stifling the enterprise and initiative of our best and brightest young citizens by blowing out rate and debt levels and making housing unaffordable.

That said I am a writer [and wannabe poet] in my spare time and very opposed to a money-means-everything approach to life and culture. You would get a good and sympathetic listener and someone who would also help to change public opinion towards properly valuing our heritage.

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

*An Abandoned Farmhouse Garden in South Wairarapa*

She was a heavy, red and freckled lassie  
Shipped from Greenock as a serving maid  
But women were few in the colony  
And Jack stumped up with her passage paid.

He was older, with money, but she was strong  
And she loved the work in making a farm:  
This was a place where she might belong  
Weary at dusk with a bairn on her arm.

So they passed, the aching treasured years  
As the orchard in golden fullness bore  
A bounty of apples, peaches and pears  
Sweet and tart to the homestead kitchen door.

But seasons came when the fruit just fell  
And who was the gardener none could tell.