



MT VICTORIA

Historical Society News

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Waring Taylor's Ponzi Scheme

Was Waring Taylor a 'kindly well-meaning muddler' who did not mean to defraud anyone, as some historians have argued, or was he a conman who preyed on friends and family members under cover of a benign, Bible-quoting exterior? **Jane Tolerton** argues that he was the latter and that the frauds for which he was sentenced to five years in jail were just the tip of a psychopathic iceberg.

Sunday March 17 at 2.00 pm
Society of Friends Hall, Moncrieff Street

Jane is the author of an award-winning biography of Ettie Rout and oral histories including the best-selling *Convent Girls* and the World War One Oral History Archive. She runs Booklovers B&B at 123 Pirie St and has just done an MA thesis on Mary Taylor, best known as a friend of Charlotte Bronte.

Visitors welcome

Our new logo

As most of you (except perhaps very recent new members) will know, we've been exploring creation of a new logo for the Society to replace the current one featuring Queen Victoria.

In our last newsletter, we shared that good progress was being made and we liked the direction things were taking.

After lots of debate and to-and-fro with the designer, the committee has finally settled on a new logo. We love it, and we hope you will too.

First, a bit of background on the development process. The design company initially presented us with a number of very different styles, shapes and wording. We quite quickly decided that we liked the general concept presented here – it's striking, original, distinctive and can be used for a number of purposes.

More importantly, once the idea was raised, we decided to move away from putting the full name of the Society on the logo and opt for more of a 'description' of what we're about. So . . . drum roll . . . curtain-raise . . . here it is . . .



Our legal name, and the name we'll use in many instances, will still be Mount Victoria Historical Society. And, maybe, if it takes on, in time we'll become generally known as 'Heritage Mount Victoria'.

We'd love your feedback on the logo, so do email jonewman@xtra.co.nz to let us know your thoughts.

District Plan Commissioners on the side of character protection

In what will probably be a contentious recommendation, the Independent Hearings Panel of Commissioners reviewing Wellington's District Plan have upended the approach to character protection in the city, deciding there is room for significantly reinstating the character areas which were dramatically cut in the Proposed District Plan.

Advice to councillors, prepared by council officers, summarises the magnitude of the change the Panel recommends – overall, the inner-city suburbs would retain 67% of character protection, compared to just 28% under the Proposed District Plan. This is set out by suburb in the table below (ODP=current Operative DP, PDP= Proposed District Plan consulted on and reviewed by commissioners, IHP=Independent Hearings Panel recommendation).

Character Precincts: Key IHP Recommendations					
Character Area/Precinct	ODP Area (ha)	PDP Area (ha)	Percentage PDP of ODP	IHP Recommended Area (ha)	Percentage IHP of ODP
Aro Valley	27.6	7.3	26%	22.2	80%
Berhampore	47.6	6.7	14%	29.7	62%
Lower Kelburn	0	0	N/A	6.4	New Area
Mt Cook	26.4	11.1	42%	21.9	83%
Mt Victoria	49.8	18.2	37%	36.6	73%
Newtown	93.9	24.7	26%	59.3	63%
The Terrace	5.6	0	N/A	5.2	93%
Thorndon	44	17.5	40%	23.4	53%
Holloway Road	12.3	0	N/A	1.5	12%
Total	307.2	85.4	28%	206.2	67%

A number of groups and vocal individuals are convinced that there's a direct correlation between upzoned land and affordable housing, but the Commissioners did not accept this reasoning. Instead, they listened to objective academic analysis and submitters like Willis Bond who said there is plenty of land in Wellington but that development is not occurring because of excess cost and (on-sale) values that are too low to drive development.

The Commissioners also noted that the PDP provided development capacity for almost double the projected demand. "Stating the obvious, this is well in excess of the margin the NPSUD requires be created."

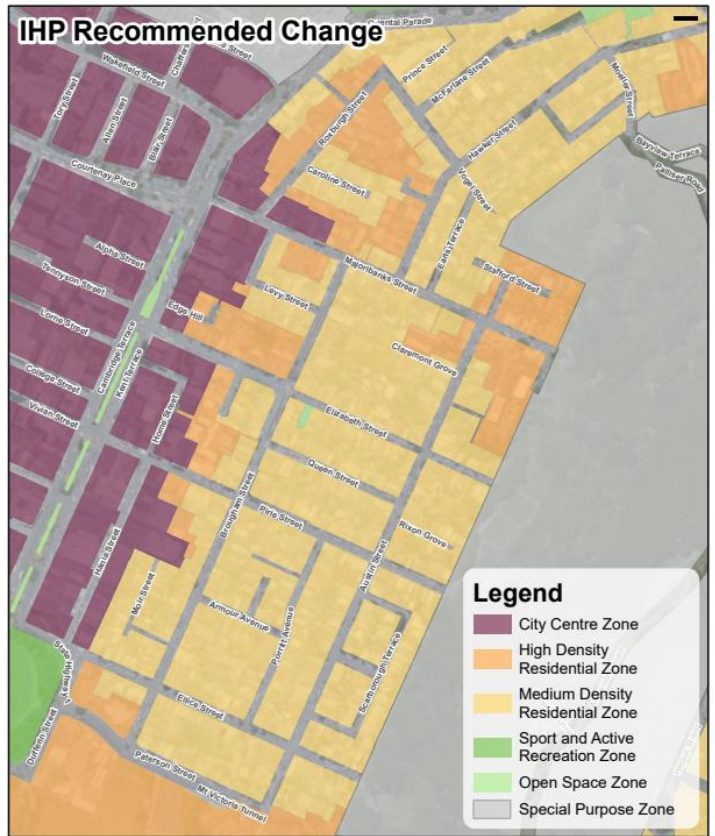
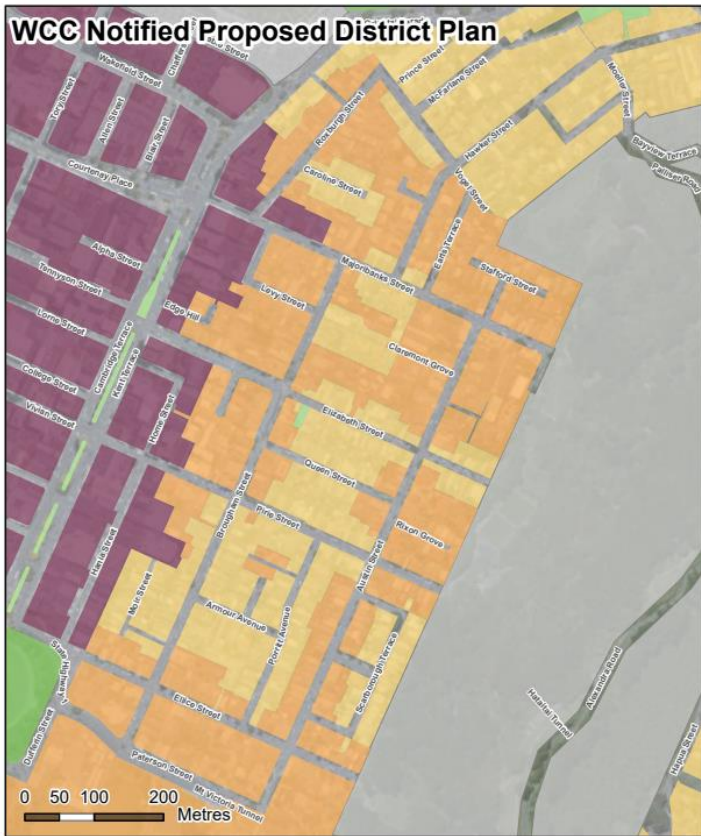
As MVHS and others have argued since the days of the Draft Spatial Plan, there was more than enough capacity to allow for character protection to be maintained, without it impacting on the land available for housing.

This is a huge win, and we feel vindicated by the Commissioners' recommendations. No doubt those in favour of blanket upzoning will still not be convinced.

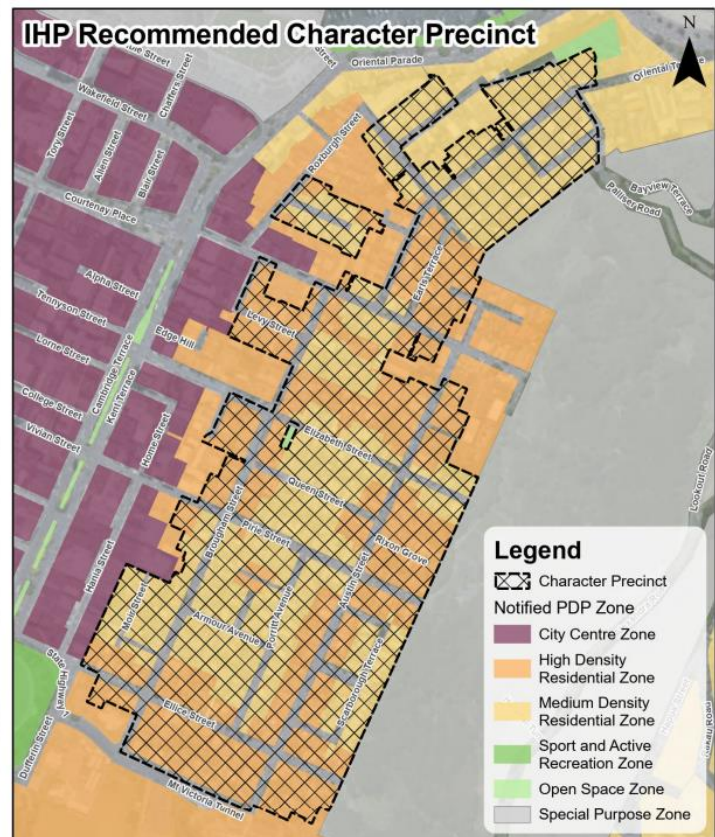
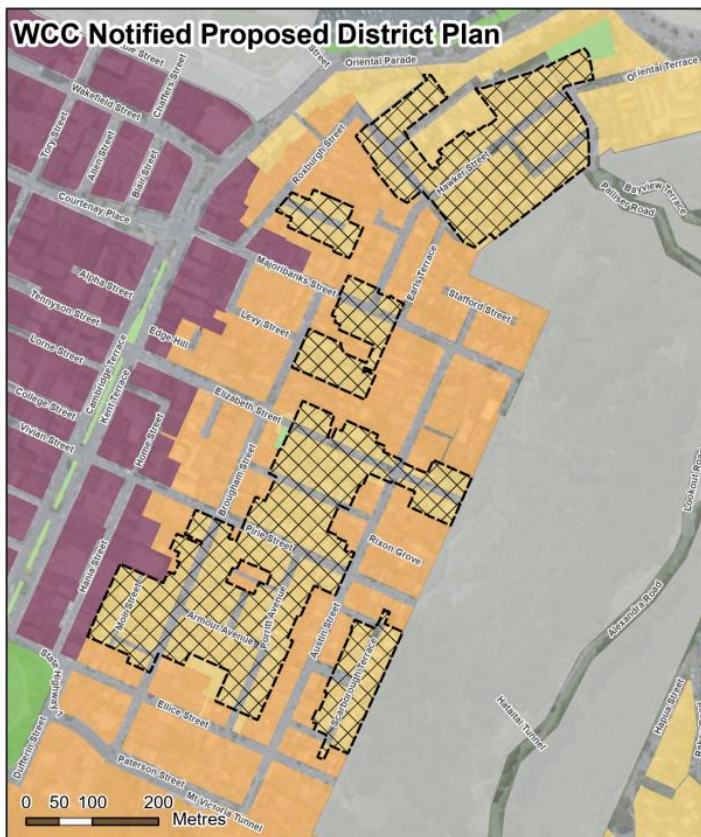
Councillors have been warned they can't lightly reject the recommendations, with advice from officers saying it is 'very rare' for a Council to reject a Hearings Panel recommendation, as the panel has gone through a robust process in reaching their recommendations.

Nevertheless, we imagine this won't stop some of our councillors trying and expect a fiery debate when the Council meets on Thursday 14 March 2024 to make decisions on the IHP's recommendations. If the fight must go on, we're prepared to 'take up arms' again.

The two maps below show the significant changes in Medium Density Residential area and the Character Precinct area recommended for Mount Victoria.



Map 4: Zone Changes Mount Victoria



Map 7 - Mount Victoria IHP Recommended Character Precincts & Notified Proposed District Plan Zones

In the meantime, a huge thank you to all our members and other Mount Victorians who have engaged in this process - regardless of whether you stuck it out from beginning to end, or contributed for part of it. Your expertise and contributions made the difference!

A Tribute to Victor Davie

(194?-2023, resident of Claremont Grove)

An eccentric loner, quiet of voice, unassuming, courteous. Intensely focused, singular of purpose. A natural researcher. For others, at times frustratingly, annoyingly obsessive, dogged, intransigent.

Victor hailed from Geraldine in inland mid-Canterbury. As a child he worked on his parents' small dairy farm. His career was in the Post Office. From Geraldine he was transferred to Wellington's Chief Post in Grey Street, now site of the Intercontinental Hotel. Overnight shift work in the mail-sorting room gave him a view over the early-morning hotels which had a special licence to cater for night-shift workers. These were the Post Office Hotel in Grey Street and Jack Young's Pier Hotel on the corner of Grey Street and Customhouse Quay. Among the regulars were some members of the legal fraternity who were needful of a first-of-the-day quick fix.

Another role as mail sorter was to travel on the overnight Wellington to Auckland Express in a separate mail carriage. His last role was as an internal auditor, travelling throughout New Zealand, scrutinising post offices large and small. This required him to spend most nights in small, inexpensive hotels. A lonesome existence.

Mount Victorians and all Wellingtonians who value the inner-city neighbourhoods and the evolving character of the waterfront owe Victor a debt of gratitude. Over 30 or more years he at times participated as a committee member in the Mount Victoria Residents' Association, and ultimately as the Chair of Waterfront Watch. He was a long-time member of Mt Victoria Historical Society. Victor researched and wrote the first comprehensive history of Etrick Cottage (before the Historical Society was founded).

Victor methodically recorded the transfer of publicly owned and controlled waterfront land into long-term privately held leases. Most times, if not every time, these were granted without an open tender. Simultaneously, he patiently took excellent photographs for Waterfront Watch's annual calendar, regrettably now defunct but a significant fundraiser.

There is a corner in Blondini's Bar on the first floor of the Embassy Cinema. It overlooks the corner of Marjoribanks Street and Kent Terrace. Late in the afternoon, Victor could be seen hunched over his laptop, seemingly unaware of those around him. Perhaps one day it will be known as Victor's Corner.

By Craig Palmer



Victor, centre, along with some fellow Mount Victorians and other Basin Reserve campaigners. (Front page of The Dominion Post, 23.7.2014)