



Concept design leaps 90 per cent hurdle

The engineers have been hard at work getting flood protection designs right to ensure that Lower Hutt will be safe in a big flood and wanted some more ideas about how to fit this better into every day uses for the river space. Running tracks, swimming spots, picnic places, cycleways native bush, kayak launching facilities, were among the many great ideas submitted by the public for inclusion in the exciting RiverLink project.

These suggestions were made at recent public sessions at the Dowse Art Museum. Around 250 very engaged members of the public attended, submitted their ideas and got an update on RiverLink from GWRC, Hutt City Council and the NZ Transport Agency.

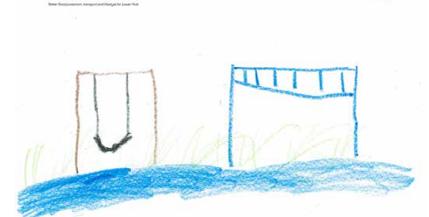
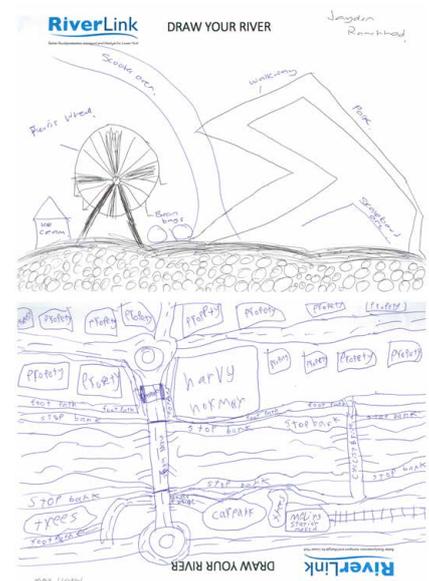
Feedback was excellent, with views aired on a wide range of subjects covering transport links, social and recreational opportunities and environmental restoration in the river corridor.

“We’re getting closer to a final design, “says Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee chair and GW councillor Prue Lamason. “We’ve presented updated designs based on the public’s views to date. We now have a further opportunity to refine the design based on the most recent feedback”.

Ideas include the promenade (featuring cafes and places for leisure and recreation), the pedestrian/cycle bridge connecting the CBD to Melling Station, cycleways and connection into the wider cycle network, public spaces such as beaches and open fields and native planting. Other matters were bike hire facilities, off dog leash areas, wind breaks, covered pedestrian bridge, busker space and an amphitheatre.

The final “look” of the project will emerge by the end of this year when the preliminary designs go before the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee for sign off. This will be followed by the detailed design process required for applications for resource consents in 2018. Members of the public will then have the opportunity to have their say on the final design.

Thanks to all who participated in the consultation. We look forward to your continued involvement as we progress this important project.



young artists drawing at our recent RiverLink community open days.

Getting a steer on transport options

The RiverLink consultation provided an opportunity to learn what people think about where a new Melling Bridge and the Melling railway station should be located. The results below reflect the results of the 63 feedback forms we received during the consultation.

Melling Bridge

Achieving RiverLink's flood protection goals requires that the Melling Bridge be replaced. While a new bridge isn't a top transport priority within the region, the flood protection benefits and efficiencies of councils and agencies working together make it worth exploring with the community. The NZ Transport Agency is considering whether a new bridge could be part of any future intersection improvements.

Of the 55 responses we received about where to locate a new Melling Bridge, 55% prefer the Queens Drive location because it's closer to the city, provides better public transport connections and could create a welcoming city entrance.

The 45% who prefer the bridge to remain at Melling Link think the central city is too busy for arterial traffic and they want to retain access to the north.



Potential Melling Bridge locations

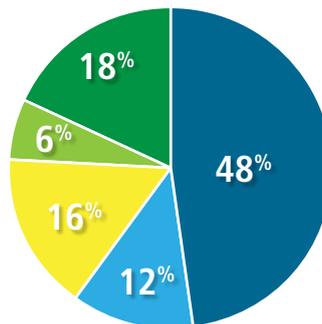
Melling railway station

There may be an opportunity to move the railway station closer to the CBD and to build a pedestrian/cycle bridge linking the railway station to the CBD.

Of the 50 people who responded to the question about where the railway station should be located, 48% prefer that the Melling railway station be moved to the location opposite the CBD. See pie chart below for a breakdown of responses.

Melling railway station

- 48% ■ Opposite CBD/Margaret Street
- 12% ■ Don't move it
- 16% ■ Move it north
- 6% ■ Move it to the city
- 18% ■ Unsure, it depends on other factors such as - the intersection; car park facilities; access



Connecting the western hills

Western hill connections are vital to the project. We will ensure that the detailed design connects pedestrians, cyclists and cars from the western hills to the CBD and rail station.

Park and Ride

Since there is an opportunity to provide additional park and ride spaces, we asked whether people would park and take the train rather than drive into Wellington. Of the 56 people who answered this question, 41% indicated they would use the parking while 25% indicated they would not. Others either weren't sure, preferred active transport such as cycling, or it wasn't applicable to their situation.

Public backing for Promenade remains solid

Hutt City Council says it is reassured by the continuing public support for its plans to redevelop and reinvigorate the CBD along and around the Hutt River.

A recent survey of 438 Lower Hutt residents found 300 respondents are in favour of the Promenade – the creation of a river waterfront precinct in Lower Hutt’s CBD.

In recent submissions to Hutt City Council’s proposed annual plan, more than 61% of submitters supported the project. One submission described Hutt River as a “jewel waiting to be polished”.

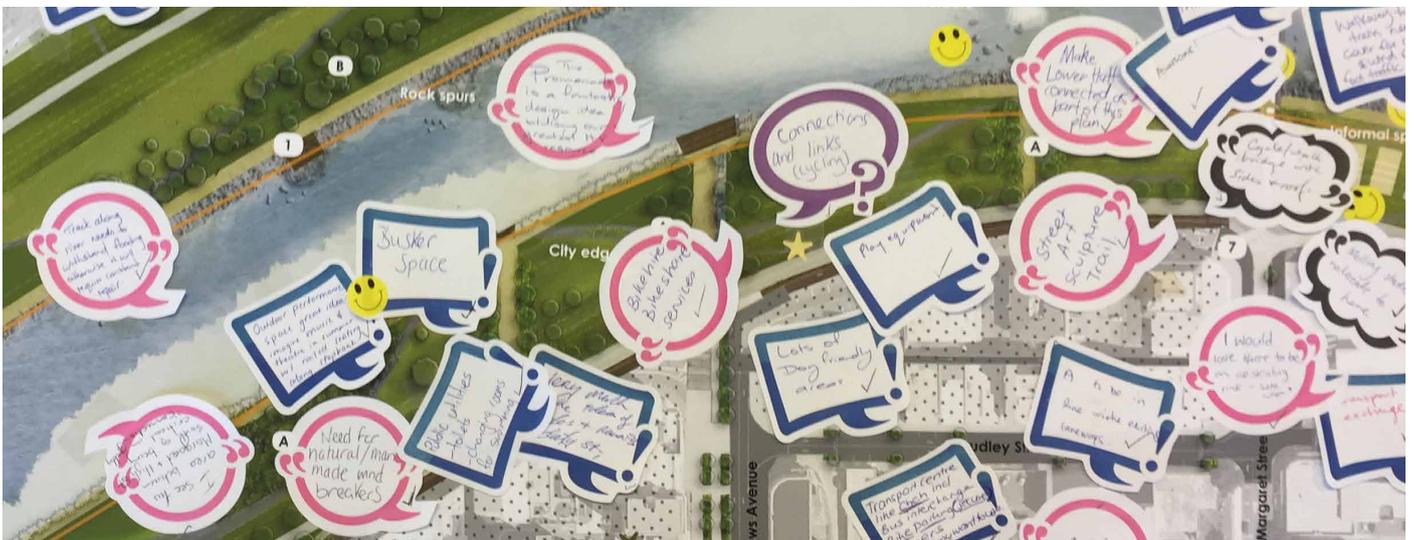
Lower Hutt Mayor Ray Wallace describes the Promenade as a once in a generation opportunity to refashion the cityscape into a dynamic and attractive environment for new and existing residents. “Our residents understand and appreciate this and it’s reassuring to have this level of interest in an initiative which will have a positive impact across the whole city,” he says.

The Promenade will be a new urban environment shifting the city’s focus towards Hutt River. Central to the project will be walkways, integrated into the new stop banks, and landscaping along the river bank.

Quality mixed-use, multi-storey buildings accommodating apartments, restaurants, cafes and other businesses will front the promenade.

A new pedestrian and cycle bridge will span the river, connecting the CBD to bus and train services. Greatly improved cycle and walking networks throughout the city will connect to the highway and Western Hills.

Council estimates the project could add 2700 people to the CBD’s workforce and 1300 new apartments could accommodate around 2600 new residents. An economic impact assessment estimated the project will directly and indirectly inject \$2.5 billion into the local economy.



Public feedback on promenade at recent RiverLink community open days



Artist impression of Making Places Promenade

Community responds to walking and cycling path proposal

The NZ Transport Agency engaged with the public on the Petone to Melling section of the Wellington to Hutt Valley Walking and Cycling Link from 26 April to 31 May 2017.

Nearly 200 people attended the series of open days and provided input on the features proposed for this section of the path and described the amenities they'd like to see.

The path, when complete, will run from the Wellington CBD to the Melling railway station and connect to other walking and cycling tracks in the region. The project is divided into the following three sections that align with funding and planning requirements:

Wellington CBD to Ngauranga section

A Wellington City Council project, this cycling path will run from Bunny Street along Thorndon Quay and Hutt Road to the Ngauranga interchange. This section is jointly funded by the Urban Cycleways Fund, the National Land Transport Fund and the Wellington City Council.

Ngauranga to Petone section

An NZ Transport Agency project, this is a shared off-road path from the Ngauranga interchange to the Petone interchange. This section is jointly funded by the NZ Transport Agency, the Wellington City Council and the Greater Wellington Regional Council.

Petone to Melling section

An NZ Transport Agency project, this is an off-road cycle path with shared path connections linking the Petone railway station to the Hutt River Trail which links to the Melling railway station. This section is jointly funded by the Urban Cycleways Fund, The NZ Transport Agency and the Hutt City Council.

A report summarising the findings of the public engagement is expected to be published on the Transport Agency website in June 2017.



Wellington to Hutt Valley Walking and Cycling Link

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For further information:

www.riverlink.co.nz
info@gw.govt.nz
or call (04) 384 5708
or freephone 0800 496 734

