



# WATERFRONT WATCH INC

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Founded in 1995

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## You can enter the “ideas competition” for the Outer T of Queens Wharf

Members are encouraged to send ideas to the City Council’s “ideas competition” for the Outer T at Queen’s Wharf. Please remember to include viewshafts, public access, and public open space when you prepare your entry. The following points may be useful:

- The Waterfront Framework (April 2001) calls for a public competition to be held to explore options for the Outer T but it has been ignored till now.
- In 2008, ruling in favour of Waterfront Watch’s appeal against allowing a Hilton Hotel on the outer T, the Environment Court said that the Framework is “the policy document and a primary point of reference for master planning of all future developments on the waterfront”, despite having no formal planning status
- Key points from the Framework that provide guidance for the development of Queens Wharf include:

*Queens Wharf is the heart of the waterfront*

*The Outer T of Queens Wharf is a special and unique site*

*A structure that reflects the iconic nature of the site could be on the Outer T*

*All competition proposals should respect the principles of the Framework including public access, the importance of harbour views, and take into account that the Outer T is a berth for cruise liners and other vessels.*

- *Proposals will need to consider the following:*

*Pedestrian and vehicular access to the Outer T, the current condition of the wharf and buildings, view shafts, heritage, shelter, berthage of vessels, financial feasibility, and a draw card for people*

Master planning for the Queens Wharf precinct (which includes the Outer T) is a key priority for Wellington Waterfront Ltd which says it may use some of the ideas from the competition in its new master plan, which is expected to take 12-18 months to prepare, with implementation spread over ten years, long after Wellington Waterfront has been disestablished.

The competition is for ideas, not designs. It’s open to anyone. You don’t have to be an expert. Entry forms are available from libraries, from the council offices, from the waterfront project information centre on Queens Wharf, or online from [wellingtonwaterfront.co.nz](http://wellingtonwaterfront.co.nz). The deadline for entries is August 24.

### Queens Wharf rot

**Waterfront Watch member David Lee has carried out research which proves that new piles were constructed under Queens Wharf** when the Wellington Harbour Board carried out a major reconstruction of the wharf in the early 1960s (ref *The Evening Post* article: "Plan Adopted For Queen's Wharf" 13/12/63). He says that some of the rotten piles referred to by the council, would be nothing more than the remains of those replaced by new ones. Similarly, says David, one can find the remains of rotten piles under repiled houses. He adds: “Of course Queen’s and other wharves require maintenance. Ongoing wharf maintenance should be an essential part of the management of the waterfront, just as it was with the Harbour Board. Wellington Waterfront Ltd should have got its priorities right and done this before spending money on such unnecessary things as cutting out (non-rotten) piles at Taranaki St Wharf and the concrete monolith by the Meridian Building, etc.. What we are seeing here is the consequence of the Wellington City Council entrusting port facilities to a developer organisation.”

## Variation 11 – hearings in August

The controversial District Plan Change also known as Variation 11 will result in considerable restrictions to public input about new buildings on the Wellington Waterfront if it is implemented. Past public input has been a positive factor for the waterfront – with results including Environment Court decisions to stop the Hilton Hotel being built on the Outer T of Queens Wharf and to stop the Ambulance Building being moved on to Taranaki Wharf.

Citizens have sent the council a total of 49 submissions about the Variation 11 proposal. Only one of the submissions supports it. Opposition comes from a wide range of organisations (including Waterfront Watch) and individuals.

The council is beginning hearings about the proposed changes on 10 August. Four days have been allocated for the hearings, with three council-appointed commissioners. Waterfront Watch is one of the groups which will be speaking at the hearings.

You can contact the city council to request a copy of the submissions against the plan. You can also attend the hearings in Committee Room Two of the City Council building, to hear opponents of Variation 11 describe why they are concerned about it:

**Monday August 10 from 9.00 to 12.30 and from 1.15 to 5.00**

**Tuesday August 11 from 12.30 to 5.00**

**Wednesday August 12 from 9.00 to 12.30 and from 1.15 to 5.00**

**Thursday August 13 from 9.00 to 12.30**

If Variation 11 is approved, three big new buildings north of Queens Wharf are planned by the city – with restricted public input about their design and appearance.

## The Overseas Passenger Terminal will be demolished

The Environment Court has ruled against Waterfront Watch in our appeal against plans to redevelop the Overseas Passenger Terminal. Judge C J Thompson has approved the plan for the building to be removed and replaced by a new and significantly larger building. There is no question, wrote the judge, that what is proposed will preserve or protect the OPT. “While some of its fabric might be reused, the building and its values will be lost.”

The new building will be bigger than the 1960s structure which it’s replacing. It will be “wider along the eastern side of the wharf and will extend past the present northern and southern limits.” The upper levels will contain between 70 and 90 apartments and there’ll be under-wharf parking with space for 90 cars as well as parking on the wharf. The judge writes that the new building will “undoubtedly be substantially different in external appearance . . .”

“There is obviously room for debate,” says the Court’s ruling, about the historic value of the OPT. But the Court rules that “the loss of the OPT is not an adverse effect of such magnitude that it would justify refusal of consent” to demolish and replace it.

More about the ruling can be found online at <http://wellington.scoop.co.nz/?p=7406>

## The Hilton Hotel

The Dominion Post reports that the Hilton Hotel chain is still trying to find a site for a new hotel on the Wellington waterfront. But no one is telling us what sites are being considered. Some of the guesses were summarised online at <http://wellington.scoop.co.nz/?p=6709>

## Officers for 2009-2010

At the AGM of Waterfront Watch, Pauline Swann was re-elected as president, David Lee vice-president, Chris Greenwood, secretary, Pat Linney, Mary Munro, Mary McNamara, Ron Oliver, Johnny Williams. New committee members would be very welcome.