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Kia ora mai Ross Copland

Otago Polytechnic Submission on Infrastructure for a Better Future

Thank you for the opportunity to feed into the Aotearoa New Zealand Infrastructure Strategy Consultation Document. There are specific areas that we would like to raise in relation to the Action Areas and Needs that are important for Otago Polytechnic.

Overall, we support the contents of the Aotearoa New Zealand Infrastructure Strategy Consultation Document

Priorities

We lend our support for the Priorities 1 – 5 outlined on pages 13 -14. We have outlined our unique Dunedin Tertiary Precinct experience below. As you read this, you will appreciate why we are especially interested in, and supportive of, numbers 4 & 5. This includes our ‘great ideas’.

Needs

The 6 needs listed on page 45: We agree with and support these – whole heartedly. They are reflected in the Tertiary Precinct Development Plan which we developed with our Tertiary Precinct Partners – the Dunedin City Council, the Otago Regional Council, and the University of Otago in 2008.

General Comments

Otago Polytechnic contributes significantly to the local economies in which it operates. In Dunedin the Polytechnic accounts for more than 3% of the City’s GDP. In 2019 the combined contribution to Dunedin City’s GDP from Otago Polytechnic and the University of Otago, was \$1.125 Billion. This is approximately 18% of the City’s total GDP. Further, Otago Polytechnic and the University’s GDP contribution to the City in 2021 is estimated to increase to approximately \$1.3 Billion, as both institutions have expanding domestic enrolments supported by increases to population growth, central Government funding and free fees for several programmes.

If the indirect, or flow-on expenditure is considered, the total spend in Dunedin increases to \$2.2 billion (2019), or more. For example, the Polytechnic and University buy supplies from a local business; that business in turn needs to employ staff and buy raw products from another supplier to meet the demand. It is obvious that the impact of the tertiary sector’s Total Expenditure in the City is significant. In 2019 the University supported 16,265 jobs and Otago Polytechnic supported 4,172 jobs in Dunedin City. This equates to 31% of the City’s paid workforce.
(Refer Otago Polytechnic annual Economic Impact Report 2019 & 2020)

Otago Polytechnic has created partnerships and links into the wider city and region. These are key to ensuring innovation and the best outcomes for all parties. The impact of our learners on the organisations they work with and for, is often underestimated. In addition to the above economic impact, this often includes unpaid volunteer work. As part of this submission we will be

highlighting and asking for your consideration and support for projects that are critical for the continued innovation and development of our city.

Shaping Aotearoa's Better Future in Dunedin could present an opportunity to trial a project involving Otago Polytechnic along with its Tertiary Precinct partners the ORC, DCC, and the University of Otago. The Strategy presents a once in a century opportunity to build on a range of projects to shape the quality and performance of our City, addressing our public transport system; provide well- functioning infrastructure and clean water – in order to meet future demand; and address climate change for the future wellbeing of our planet. It is an opportunity for Government and Otago Polytechnic (and our TP partners to 'dare to be wise' . The Polytechnic would encourage the Government to de-carbonise, and support smart, agile options for public transport and infrastructure investment; and constantly test, trial, and innovate.

In the following we outline our experience working with regional partners to progress much of what you outline in this Strategy - in our Tertiary Precinct. The lack of progress has been frustrating for the partners. However, in what is being proposed in this Strategy by central Government there is a glimmer of hope. That with central government's direction, and with practical and workable funding solutions – shaping our future is a real possibility.

We think our experience will be of interest to you. We also put our hands up to work with the Government to trial this Strategy and the initiatives that will fall from it, within our Tertiary Precinct, in Dunedin. We believe our partners will support this, because we have already progressed much of the 'thinking' and some of the planning, that are reflected in the 'Needs' (p45).

Dunedin - Tertiary Precinct

Background

- The Dunedin City Council (DCC) initiated Memorandum of Understanding, the four Tertiary Precinct (TP) partners, the DCC; Otago Regional Council; University of Otago; and Otago Polytechnic.
- The partners have been working collaboratively to progress the TP Plan, which has provided the strategy and planning to support the TP Upgrade.
- Funding has been a challenge and this needs to be addressed if we are to progress this plan.
- Recently, the TP partners had committed to working on the draft Business Case for the Three Waters Infrastructure Upgrade, including the TP upgrade.
- TP partners have been working on the TP upgrade and have progressed the first stage of the Investment Logic Mapping to support the Business Case for this.
- The upgrade to the Tertiary Precinct will bring significant opportunities and benefits for the City and expand its Tertiary destination status which enhances the attractiveness of Dunedin.
- Significantly, if the TP upgrade proceeds and models innovative urban development and transportation priorities for the City, this will have a flow on effect that will help to progress change throughout the City and transform the City as a more desirable place to live, work and play. This would include:
 - Pedestrian friendly access, use, signage and wayfinding
 - Use of a range of clean and agile public transport; and encourage travel behaviour change
 - Car and bus free zones within the Precinct
 - Car parking on the perimeters of the TP connecting to alternative modes of green and agile transport options in and out of the Precinct
 - Road safety and accessibility – lessen the dominance of cars and large diesel buses
 - Enhanced cyclist, scooter and skater environment and access but within campus and city regulations
 - Streetscape amenities
 - Sense of place and establish the Tertiary Precinct as a destination with cultural and heritage features that tell Kāi Tahu and earlier stories

- Green spaces and spatially integrate the Polytechnic and University campuses, Forsyth Barr Stadium, Logan Park and the Leith Stream and their planned future developments
- Ensure works are functional for the present requirements of the Tertiary Precinct, but are flexible to adapt to changing spatial requirements such as events and new ways of traveling within the area (ride share).

(Reference Tertiary Precinct Development Plan (2008))

Within the Tertiary Precinct itself the most important consideration is providing small smart agile slow moving de-carbonised public transport which complements the pedestrianisation of the Tertiary Precinct.

Restoration of the Leith

- Tertiary Precinct partners worked closely on the Restoration of the Leith in 2016-17 and over a period of 2 years worked with the Leith Amenity Working Group to present the Otago Regional Council with a final report. (Refer Leith Working Group Final Report 30 May 2018)
- This Report with design concept plans were made public and the TP partners worked closely with ORC staff to conduct the community consultation on the final proposal. Otago Polytechnic hosted this on our campus. (Refer Water of Leith Flood Protection Scheme. Forth Street – Harbour Amenities Improvement Concept 17 May 2018)
- However, recent communication with ORC staff has been unsuccessful in progressing this work and most recently we have been advised that as there is no budget for the Project in the draft LTMP it cannot proceed.
- We note that this is an important project for Dunedin City and is a necessary component of the Tertiary Precinct Upgrade.

In reference to page 103

“• Crown land is mostly exempt from paying general rates. This includes Crown land occupied by institutions such as education providers and hospitals. The users of these services create infrastructure costs and benefit from the infrastructure of the areas, which must be managed and maintained by local authorities. It may be appropriate for the Crown to pay rates on land that generates a demand for infrastructure.”

We note that in addition to the economic impact our Polytechnic contributes to the local economies, as outline above, our students and staff pay rates directly to the Dunedin City, Auckland City and Cromwell District Council.

Hearing

The Polytechnic would appreciate the opportunity to attend and present/ or discuss this submission in person.

Summary

The Polytechnic appreciates the opportunity of comment on the Infrastructure for a Better Future Strategy Consultation Document. We look forward to continuing to work alongside Government to achieve the recommended strategies. Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission. If any clarification or further information would assist, please do not hesitate to contact the Polytechnic as per the details provided above.

**Special Projects Manager
Otago Polytechnic**