

## SPP Submission

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<i>Organisation</i>	Cambridge Community Board
<i>Id</i>	440

<i>Full Response</i>	<p>1. <i>What do you think? Do we have the balance right?</i></p> <p>-</p> <p>2. <i>Should we demolish the Cambridge Water Tower?</i></p> <p>a) Option One: (preferred) Remove the Cambridge Water Tower.</p> <p><i>Are there any further comments you would like to make?</i></p>
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The Cambridge Community Board (CCB) acknowledges the significant financial pressures and constraints Waipa District Council is under and the resulting impact on aspirational projects, and indeed rate payers.

**Pause on Projects:** The CCB accepts the pause on the Te Awamutu museum project, Te Ara Wai, to be financially prudent.

The CCB submits that the Cambridge Library project planning continues in the Enhanced Annual Plan. We understand that existing budget limitations means no detailed design work could be undertaken at this point, however a comprehensive feasibility study has been completed and we believe this gives WDC the framework to begin essential early decision making around land acquisition for a future library site.

The CCB has serious concerns that if the Cambridge Library project is shelved in this annual plan, and not picked up until several years into the next Long Term Plan, that when the library eventually does get built, it will already be missing service delivery targets for the anticipated growth facing Cambridge and the surrounding communities.

We urge Waipa District Councillors to visit the Cambridge library and experience the immense pressure that library staff work under, as well as the significant space constraints for library patrons, the ever-growing collection of books stored on the floor, as well as the “cheek-by-jowl” library user experience across the building.

The CCB does not accept that the Cambridge Library project be removed from the Enhanced Annual Plan but advocates that planning continue specifically around land acquisition, and that it be kept front of mind for WDC as a key project in the first year of the next Long Term Plan.

In light of the significant and unavoidable rates increases, we believe a new library will present better value for Cambridge and Waipa residents than other significant projects.

Likewise, we understand the pause in funding for Cambridge Town Hall improvements but would like to see investment in this important community asset back in early years of the LTP.

**Water Tower:** The CCB accepts that removal of the water tower is the most financially prudent decision on the table but acknowledges that our community is split on the issue of demolishing this heritage structure.

Due to the Category 2 Heritage status of the water tower and the need for resource consent the CCB perceives there to be significant risk of the project cost escalating beyond the estimated budget without achieving the ultimate goal of ensuring public safety. This does not seem to be clear in the consultation document.

**Rates Increases:** We acknowledge the need to increase rates due to inflation and the cost of borrowing that WDC carries as well as the continued cost of growth. We also understand and want to highlight that increased rates will only add to the financial stress that many residents are already facing.

**Funding Cuts:** The CCB is prepared to accept funding cuts to our discretionary fund in light of the current economic environment. We would urge council not to take this a precedent-setting shift in the funding of community boards and recommend that this is reviewed at the earliest possible opportunity. The discretionary fund grants may seem small, but they go a long way to empowering our community to take ownership of their town and work together for positive outcomes.

The CCB submits that delegations to the board by council be funded in **addition** to the discretionary fund. For example, the CCB currently manages the Sister Cities relationship and this funding is granted in addition to the discretionary funding. We submit that funding for Anzac Day and Armistice Day commemorations, which are also council delegations, be in **addition** to the Discretionary Fund granted to the board by WDC. It will be very difficult for the board to operate any projects that support community wellbeing or advocacy if we are required to fund Anzac and Armistice commemorations from within the proposed smaller Discretionary Fund.

**Event Funds:** The CCB is concerned by the proposal to discontinue the Community Event Fund, our local community events do far more for the wellbeing of our people than just the economic benefit of bringing in people from out of town. We recommend that the criteria of the District Promotion Fund are changed so that Community Events can apply.

**i-SITE:** The CCB submits that some level of funding for the i-SITE should continue. The i-SITE supports local commerce and tourism through their work, as well as running key community events; this will be significantly compromised with a complete removal of funding. We also perceive a risk in duplicating this service by increasing staffing at WDC as opposed to funding this locally run and volunteer supported organisation to continue its positive work in the community. We suggest that the funding proposed for the communications team to do “online visitor promotional activity” could instead be directed to Cambridge i-SITE. A quick comparison of the i-SITE run [www.cambridge.co.nz](http://www.cambridge.co.nz) events page shows far more extensive event listings than [www.whatsonwaipa.co.nz](http://www.whatsonwaipa.co.nz) – perhaps there are some savings to be made here?

**Urban mobility:** There is no allocation in the EAP to further walking and cycling infrastructure. We know these safety improvements only add value to our community, especially school children. The CCB will continue to advocate for funding to be made available for walking and cycling improvements.

**Further Projects:** A vibrant town centre continues to be an important priority for CCB and we submit that future budgets include projects such as increased seating in Cambridge CBD, drinking fountains in Cambridge CBD as well as reserve spaces and sports fields and a business case for Riverside Park redevelopment.

