

Our Future Vision for KRL



Kilbirnie, Rongotai, and Lyall Bay are changing. Residential intensification, new retail models, transport changes, and social dynamics all mean that the KRL of 2027 will look and operate differently to the way it does now.

While much of this change is inevitable, it is also a one-time opportunity to reshape our community to better serve businesses, their customers, and local residents. It is also an opportunity to address some of our current challenges, including vacancies.

Our Goals

- 1. KRL's commercial real estate will be sought-after and in strong demand from independent businesses and national chains**
- 2. KRL will continue to attract customers from throughout Wellington City and meet the demand for specialist businesses, large retail formats, and non-commercial activities**
- 3. KRL will have a community and street environment where all visitors and locals are accepted and feel safe**

Goal One – Sought-after environment

KRL's commercial real estate will be sought-after and in strong demand from independent businesses and national chains

- Low turnover of occupants; short vacancy times (ideally a 'waiting list' of keen occupants)
- Flexible regulation and building stock appeals to a range of industries including hospitality
- A mutually-supporting business mix drawing customers who are attracted to other local businesses

Initiatives

- Commission market study identifying strengths and gaps
- Support materials for agents/property owners
- Proactively targeting businesses for a balanced portfolio of anchor tenants and specialists
- Actively encourage clusters of similar competing businesses
- Give preferential support to businesses that attract customers from outside KRL

Measures – increased customer spend; vacancy rates and duration; range of industries represented; KRL recognised as desirable commercial location

Goal Two – Attract customers from across Wellington City

KRL will continue to attract customers from throughout Wellington City and meet the demand for specialist businesses, large retail formats, and non-commercial activities

- Be recognised for Wellington City’s primary commercial area, combining the bulk retail hub, specialist retail, and light industry
- Continue to offer a range of non-commercial activities that attract people to our area, including recreation, schools, cultural, and transportation
- Support convenient transport links and mode options (including parking and public transport)

Initiatives

- Advertise (radio? outdoor?) KRL as a diverse destination worth the trip through the tunnel
- Actively support non-commercial activities that attract visitors to our area
- Work with neighbouring communities to attract visitors and tourists

**Measures – identify % of spend from outside Eastern suburbs:
airport traffic: sports attendance: casual and beach recreation
numbers: school student numbers**

Goal Three – Safe and welcoming community

KRL will have a community and street environment where all visitors and locals are accepted and feel safe

- Shoppers feel safe and welcomed by businesses, other shoppers, and residents
- Local residents feel accepted and have a sense of pride and ownership in their neighbourhood including commercial areas
- Social housing residents have the opportunity to integrate into the wider community through secure tenure and relevant opportunities
- Anti-social behaviour (including begging and graffiti) is promptly addressed and recognised as especially unwelcome in KRL

Initiatives

- Subsidise anti-ramraid measures including bollards and security roller doors
- Subsidise street surveillance including lighting and cameras
- Working positively with WCC, police, NGOs to address anti-social behaviour
- Support graffiti removal and street ambassadors
- Encourage diverse nightlife
- Murals and signage directing visitors to local amenities

Measures – street surveys including KRL shoppers, visitors from outside our area, and local residents: reported crime data: reported graffiti and vandalism data

Action Points

Spring 2022

Liaise with WCC – 1-day workshop with relevant WCC departments to compare visions for KRL.

Seek external support – promulgate vision with BID members, potential members, real estate agents, and industry organisations.

January 2023

Formalise strategy – combine vision with feedback received from WCC and external supporters to define KRL Five-Year Strategy.

February 2023

Benchmarking – source baseline data for the performance measures included in each goal.

Communicate Strategy – to members, other BIDS, local community etc.

2023-2028

Implement Strategy – use strategy to evaluate and modify proposed changes to membership, environment, and business community.

Initial questions & discussion points

- Do we identify desirable industries and retail sectors, then proactively approach/broker candidates?
- What do retailers/cafes etc need in retail spaces? Will the new residential/commercial developments provide functional shops? Are cafes/restaurants compatible with homes upstairs?
- Who will live in our local catchment? Changes are coming to social housing and intensified private residential property.
- What will bring visitors to our area? Shopping, beach, recreation, airport, schools, SH1 will all continue to attract visitors from throughout Wellington City.
- Transport – we can't change geography and there will always be chokepoints to entering and leaving our area. We also have SH1 skirting our area. How will visitors come and go from KRL?

Known issues

Integrating business downstairs with homes upstairs

Kilbirnie redevelopments are already bringing medium-rise residential property to KRL's traditional retail centre. These redevelopments bring a welcome opportunity to refresh our retail real estate but cannot be allowed to conflict with current and future retailers and their customers. This is especially important if we want to attract hospitality into the street. It is also important to work with developers and designers to ensure the new retail premises are attractive and versatile.

More people living and working here

Housing intensification will combine with working-from-home trends to increase the population living and working in the eastern suburbs. This gives opportunities for CBD-style cafes and meeting places. It will also shift shoppers' expectations of online shopping and delivery/click & collect.

Attracting attractive businesses

Our growing local population brings opportunities for convenience and takeaways businesses serving their immediate neighbourhood. While these are credible businesses, they do not have the pull to attract customers from outside our area. We need to appeal to 'destination tenants' who will complement our overall portfolio.

Land banking and covenants

KRL currently has several large and highly visible sites that remain vacant or under-utilised. We need to encourage property owners to expect realistic rents, and facilitate the removal of empty and rundown property. We also need to understand any covenants or other limitations to offering a broad and attractive commercial portfolio.