

5 Wellington City Community

5.1 Population Growth

Based on the 2006 census, Wellington City's population is around 180,000 people. Between 1996 and 2006 Wellington City's population increased by 21,747, a 13.8% increase. The population of Wellington City relative to the other districts in the Wellington region is shown in *Figure 5.1*.

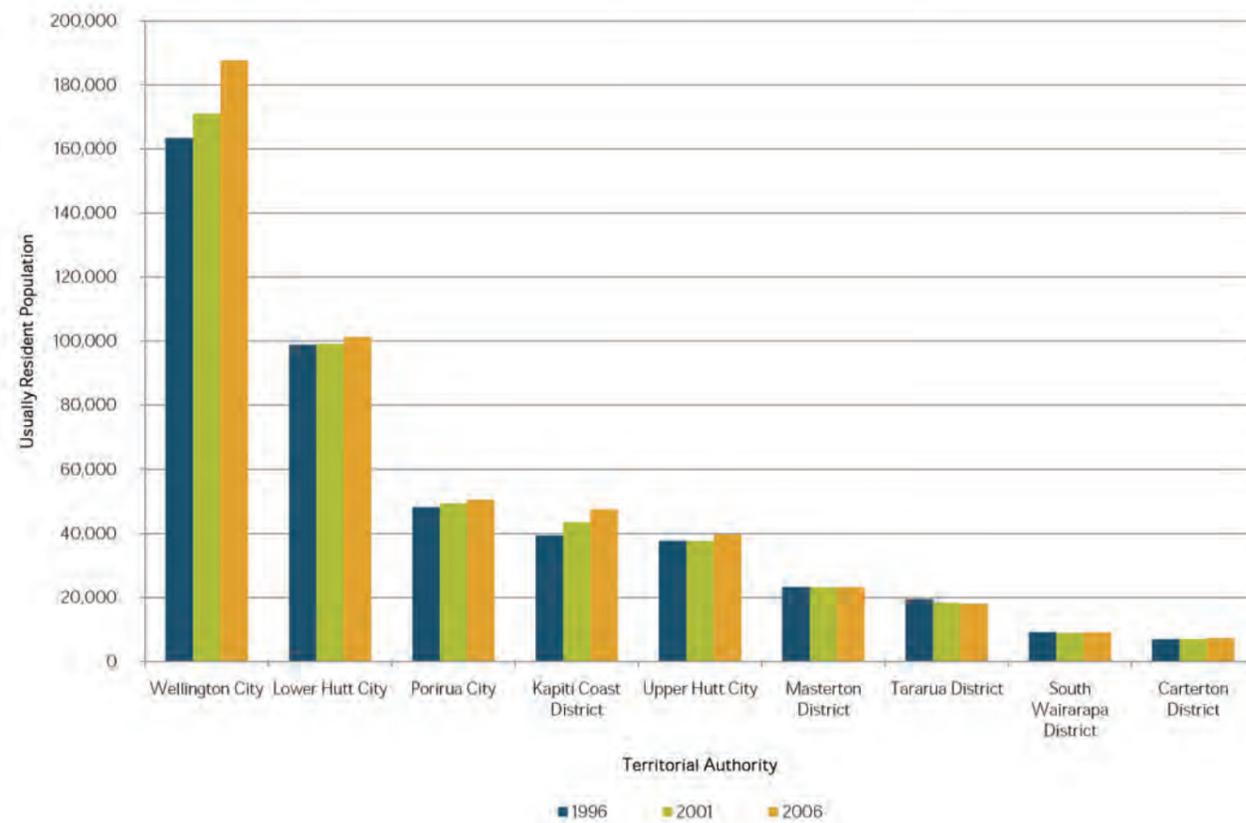


Figure 5.1: Wellington Region: Resident Population¹

In comparison, the population of the Wellington Region was 449,000 at the 2006 census². By 2026, NZ Statistics forecast a population of between 440,000 to 550,000 for the region. NZ Statistics forecast for the 'low growth rate scenario' indicates that the region's population is expected to stabilise at or just below its present figure.

Nevertheless, Wellington City is expected to grow at a faster rate than the region, and to keep on growing even though the rest of the region may not. Consequently, the city can be expected to have an increasing proportion of the region's population³ in future years. By 2026, Wellington City's population is expected to increase between 9,000 and 43,000, depending on the growth scenario as shown in *Figure 5.2*. The medium growth scenario shown in this figure has been used for this project.

¹ Statistics New Zealand, 2006 Census Data - note: only one ward of the Tararua District is in the Wellington Region.
² NZ Statistics.
³ GWRC "CBD Corridor Study, Pressures and Issues", Page 5.

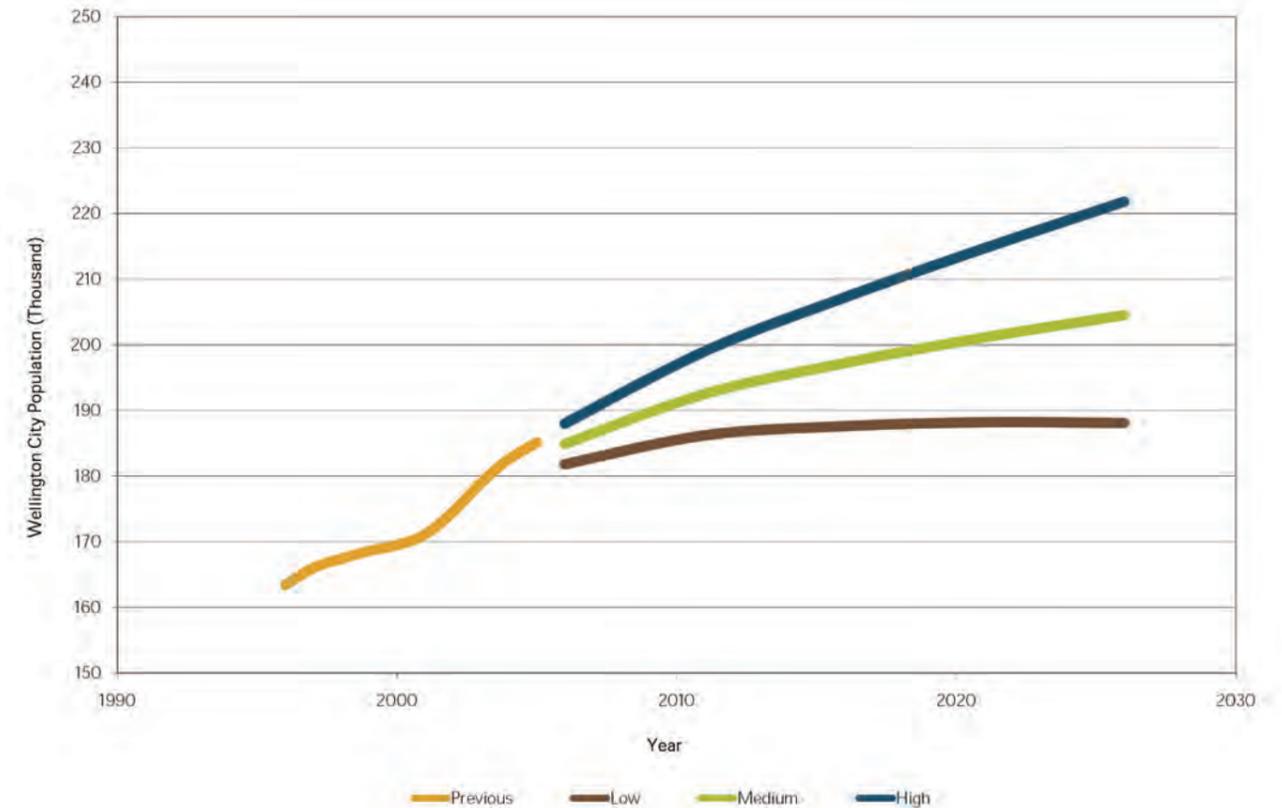


Figure 5.2: Population Growth for Wellington City (source: Statistics NZ)

The projected population growth rate of only 0.4% to 0.5%⁴ to the year 2021 appears very modest. The landscape coupled with the vibrancy and diversity of Wellington's central city creates an attractive, positive environment for significantly higher growth figures. Wellington has all the qualities⁵ to be part of the next generation of cities to experience significant growth over the next 20 years, as Melbourne and Vancouver have over the last 20 years. A key element to the growth success of these cities was their investment in transportation corridors, including high quality passenger transport systems.

Compared with the rest of NZ, where only 14% of new dwellings are medium to high density development, Wellington City constructed 40% of its new dwellings as medium to high density⁶. This trend is making Wellington City more compact, and is in turn reducing the length of trips people need to make. Furthermore, it is making passenger transport a viable alternative to the private motor car. Given the level of medium to high density construction in previous years, the city's plan to accommodate a significant proportion of the future population growth within intensified areas and growth nodes, as discussed in Section 3, appears to be an achievable target.

⁴ Wellington City Council, "Quantifying the Growth Spine, supply, demand and capacity for residential development in Wellington City", September 2006.
⁵ Compared with NZ other large cities, Wellington City residents rated it as the best city, with over 87% saying they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I feel a sense of pride in the way my city looks and feels"; Quality of Life in NZ Eight Largest Cities, 2003, page 114.
⁶ "Quality of Life in NZ Eight Largest Cities", 2003, page 76.

Over 50% of population growth within Wellington City is expected to occur in the CBD area⁷ (in the form of high density apartments). Twenty five percent is expected to occur in “brownfield”⁸ suburban growth nodes at Johnsonville, Newtown and Kilbirnie. The remaining 25% of growth is expected to occur in the “greenfield” northern suburbs.⁹ The suburban growth nodes at Johnsonville, Newtown and Kilbirnie form part of what has been referred to as a “growth spine” extending from Johnsonville to Kilbirnie (refer Section 3.1). It is emphasised, however, that while this has been referred to as a growth spine, it is not intended that intensified mixed use growth will occur along the full extent of this spine. Rather, three separate growth nodes are proposed, perhaps connected by a high quality rapid transport corridor.

This growth has significant implications for the project because the Basin Reserve is the key link in the transportation network which connects three of these growth nodes; the CBD, Newtown and Kilbirnie. The intensified growth in these three nodes will result in increased demands for passenger transport, private motor vehicles, walking and cycling through the Basin Reserve.

5.1.1 Population Density

Wellington has a high population density within the central city area, as shown in *Figure 5.3*. Densely populated neighbourhoods include:

- Mount Victoria;
- Willis Street;
- Lambton Quay area;
- Mount Cook;
- Newtown;
- Hataitai;
- Brooklyn; and
- Kilbirnie.

Population density tends to decrease with increasing distance from the central core of the city.

5.1.2 Population Age

Figure 5.4, on the following page presents the percentage of the population within each age range for the 2006 Census unit areas near the Basin Reserve. The extent of these unit areas is shown on *Figure 5.5*. The overall average for the entire Wellington City is provided as a comparison. Very few children (under 15 years of age) live in the areas immediately surrounding the Basin Reserve. Instead these neighbourhoods are inhabited by a high proportion of people aged 15-29.

The population age of the areas surrounding the Basin Reserve will have minor implications for the project. Because of the high proportion of 15-29 year olds there is likely to be a high proportion in full time work (refer Section 5.2) and therefore are likely to be travelling during peak periods. Also, due to the closeness to the CBD and the type of residences surrounding the project area there are not likely to be many people driving to work (refer Section 5.3) and they are more likely to be using active modes or passenger transport (refer Section 5.4.3). This means that high quality active mode and passenger transport connections through the project area are likely to be the key desires for residents in the areas surrounding the Basin Reserve.

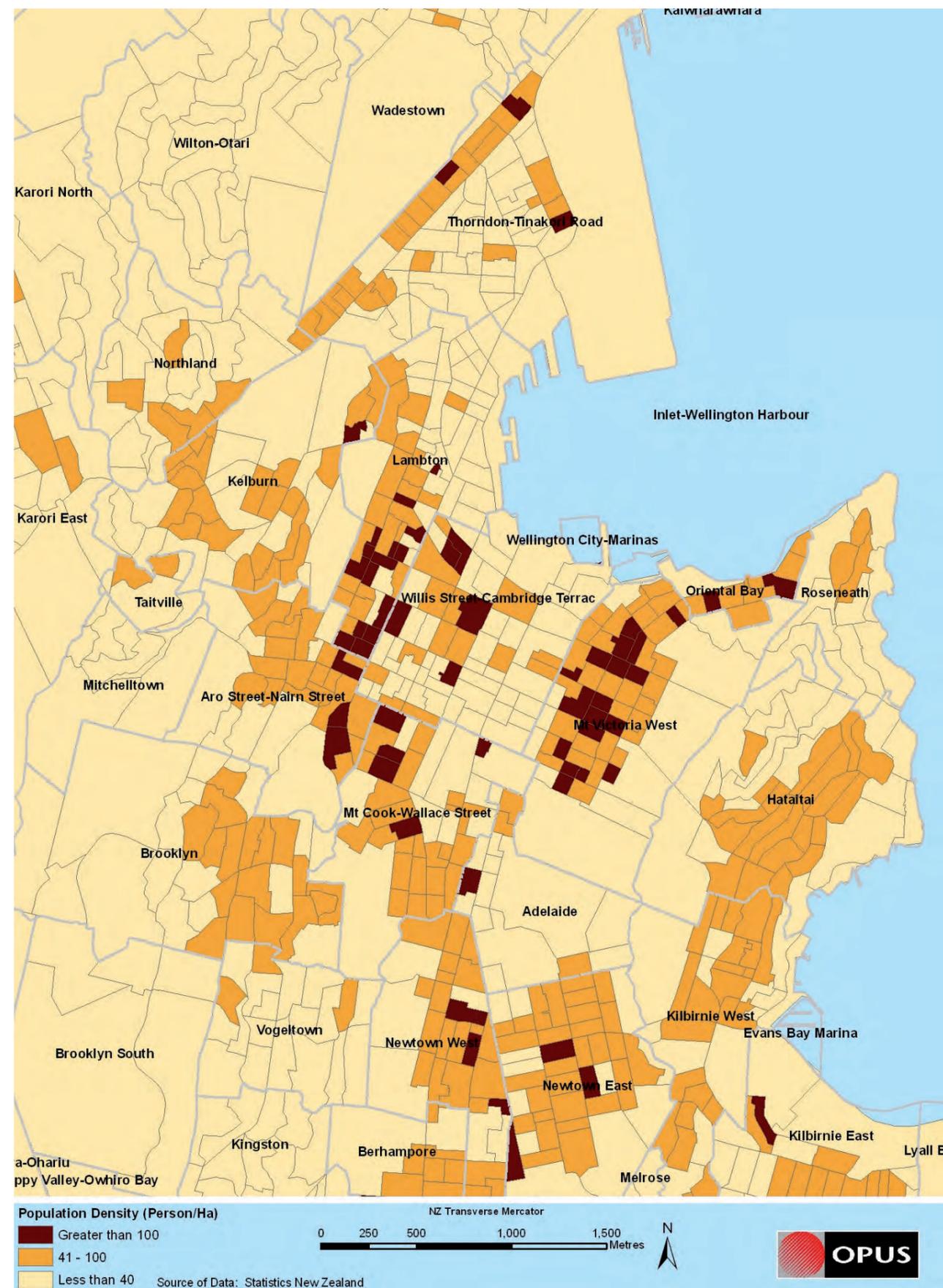


Figure 5.3: Population Density (2006 Census Data)

⁷ If transport costs continue to increase in future years, the region may see future increases in the present trend for apartment living in the CBD and surrounding suburbs.

⁸ Brownfield is an existing developed site suitable for re-development.

⁹ WCC, “Urban Development Strategy, Working Paper 4”, May 2005, Appendix 5.

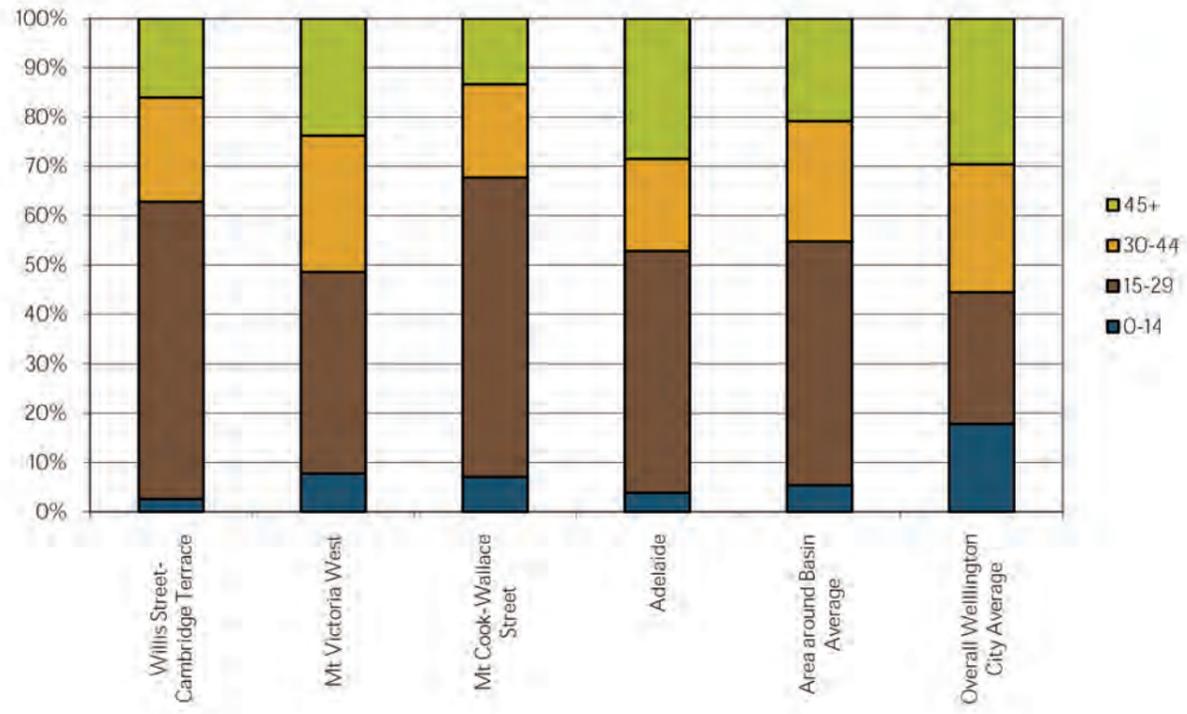


Figure 5.4: Percentage of Population Age by Unit Area (2006 Census Data)

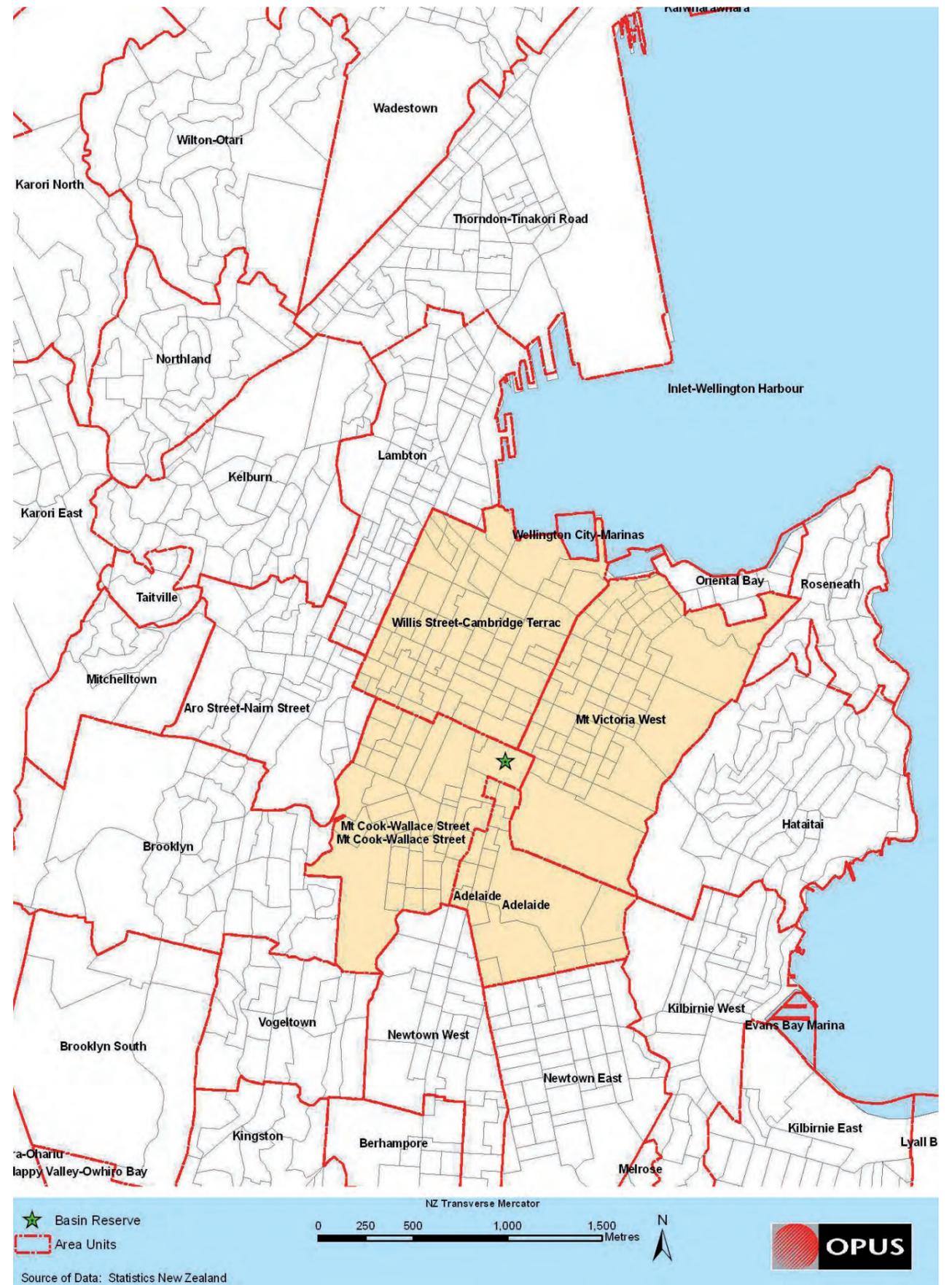


Figure 5.5: Unit Area Locations

5.2 Employment

Employment in the area surrounding the Basin Reserve is summarised in *Figure 5.6* below. 'Unemployed' includes people who are not currently working but available for work and actively seeking work. 'Not in the work force' includes individuals who are not working and not seeking work (such as retired people and students who are only studying).

The proportion of people employed part-time is relatively constant across all the neighbourhoods, although a lower proportion of people from the Mount Cook and Adelaide Road areas are employed full-time. This corresponds with the higher proportion of people from these neighbourhoods who are studying, as shown in *Figure 5.7*.

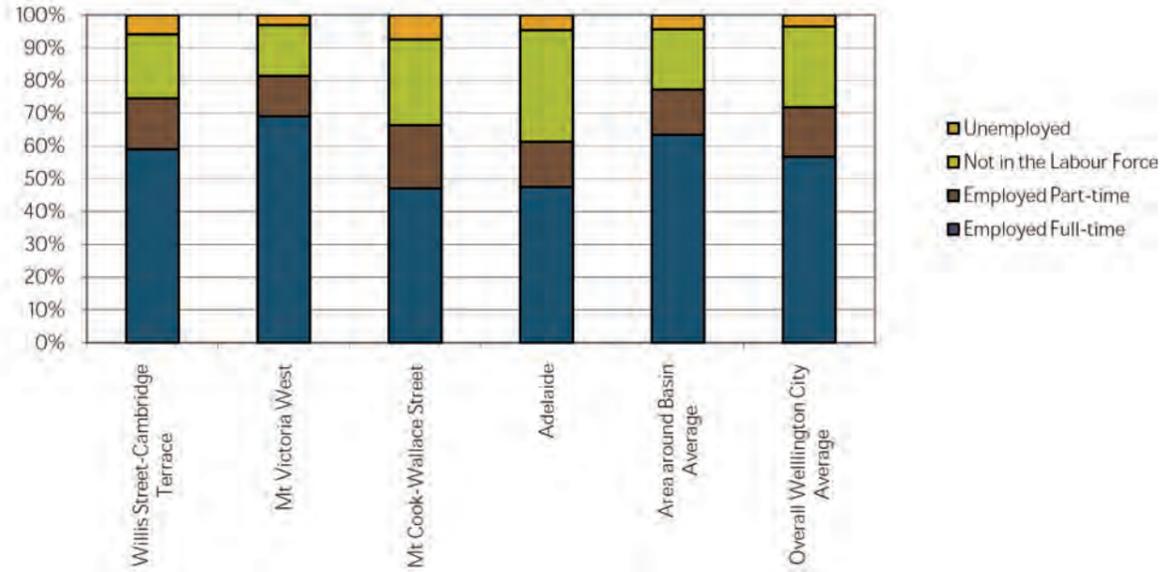


Figure 5.6: Employment Status

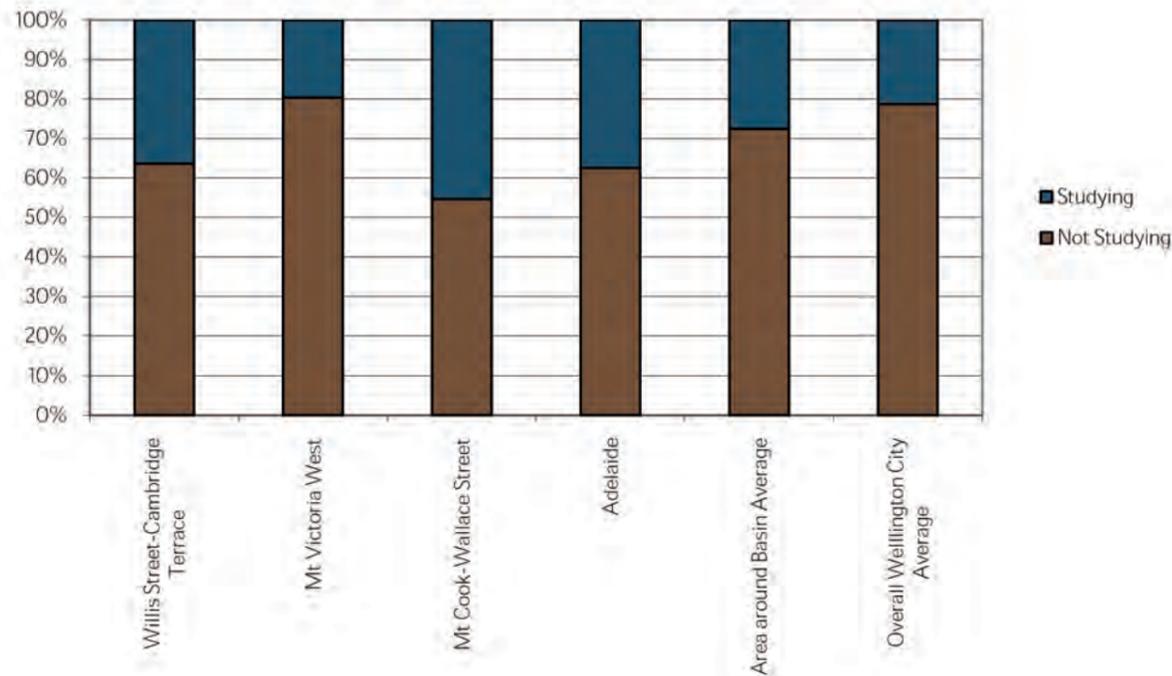


Figure 5.7: Percentage of Students

The median income of the residents in each of the neighbourhoods is summarised in *Figure 5.8* below. The median incomes in Mount. Cook and Adelaide Road areas are all below the overall average income for Wellington City. This corresponds to the neighbourhoods which have a lower proportion of people employed full-time.

As discussed above the high proportion of full time workers are likely to be travelling during peak periods. However, due to the relatively high proportion of students the travel patterns of that particular demographic might not be aligned with the commuter peaks. The implications for the project are that during the peak periods the demand will not just be for motor vehicles but also for active modes and passenger transport. The high proportion of students is likely to result in a high proportion of active mode users in the inter-peak.

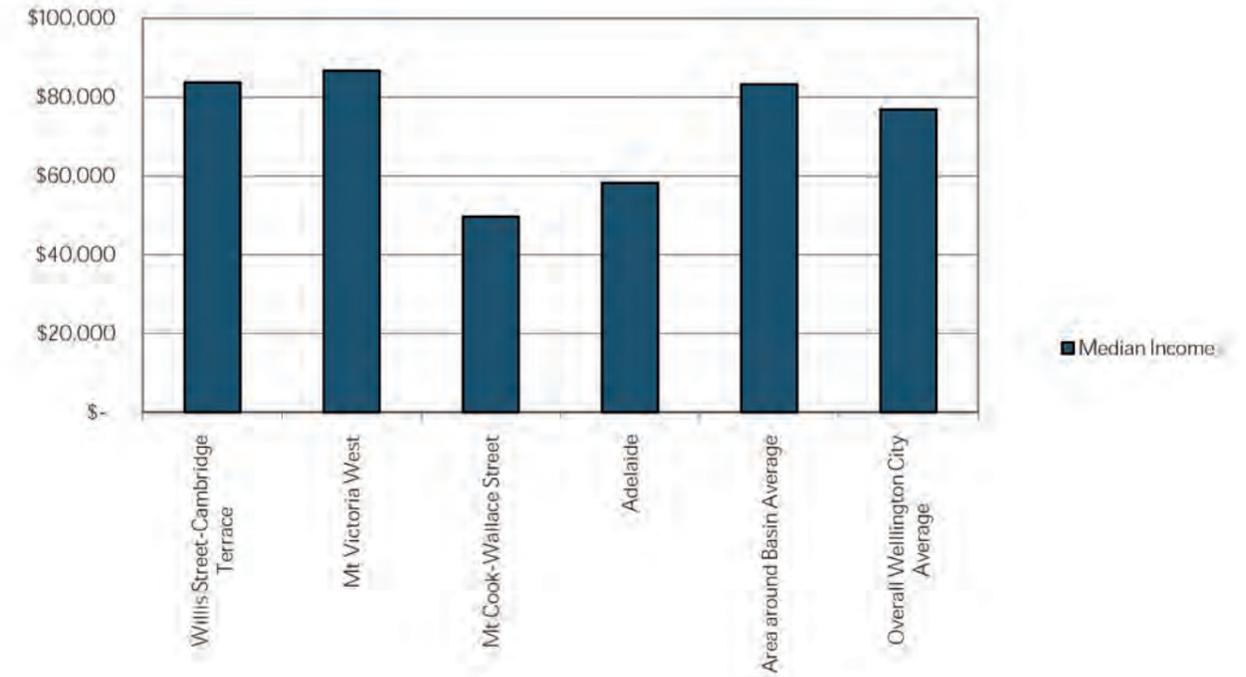


Figure 5.8: Median Income

5.3 Access to Motor vehicles

The number of motor vehicles accessible per household is presented in *Figure 5.9* on the following page. The number of households with access to one motor vehicle is relatively constant between each of the areas around the Basin and the overall Wellington City average. However, the proportion of households without access to a motor vehicle in the central city area is very high relative to the overall average for Wellington City. This is most likely due to the compact and easily accessible nature of these neighbourhoods, meaning people do not need access to a vehicle to retain their mobility.

As discussed above, due to the closeness to the CBD and the lower proportion of access to motor vehicles there are not likely to be many people driving to work and are more likely to use active modes or passenger transport (refer to Section 5.4.3). This places an emphasis creating high quality passenger transport and active mode connections through the project area.

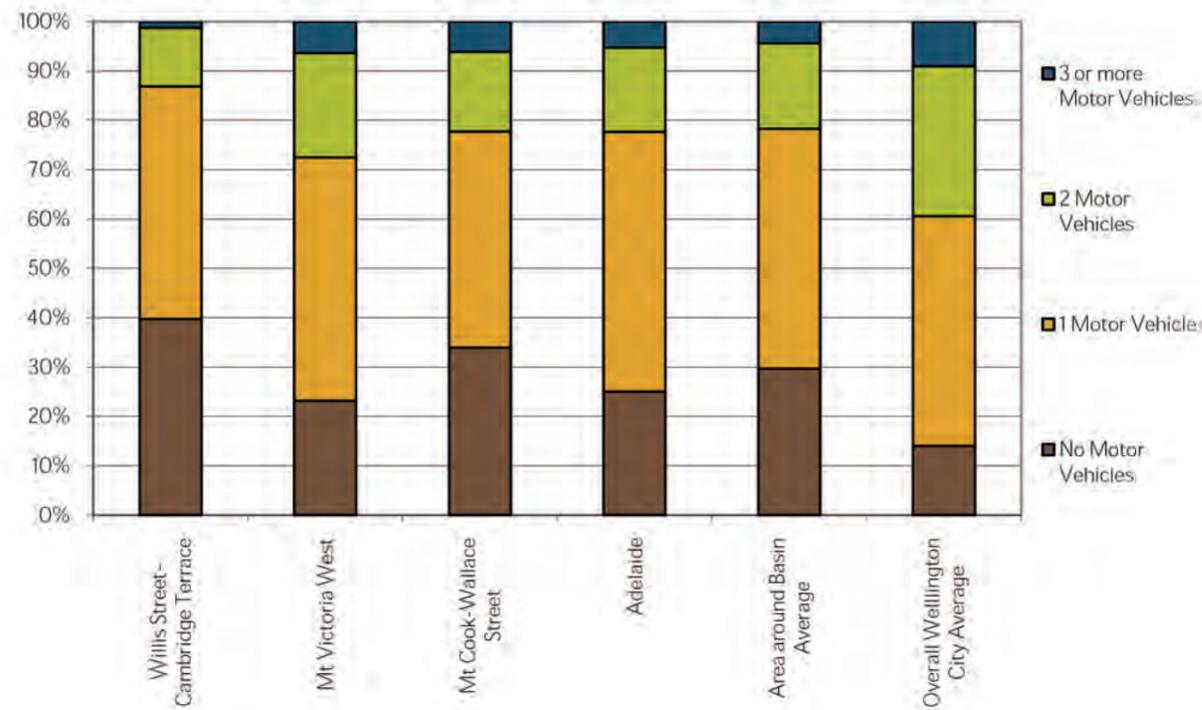


Figure 5.9: Number of Motor Vehicles Accessible per (Occupied) Private Household

5.4 Travel to Work

5.4.1 Travel to Work Destinations

In Wellington City, an extremely high density of employees work around the Lambton Quay area. Thorndon, Lambton, and Willis Street-Cambridge Terrace also have high employment densities, as does Wellington Hospital and a few mesh blocks along Adelaide Road. This is illustrated in Figure 5.10.

This means that a high proportion of the people who live in the southern or eastern suburbs and work in the CBD must pass through the project area during their commute. The project will need to cope with a high demand for motorised and non-motorised users through the project area during the peak periods.

5.4.2 Travel to Work Trip Length

Most people living near the Basin Reserve have a commute to work that is less than 4 kilometres, as shown in Figure 5.11. Trips of this length can be easily walked or cycled.

The implications of the travel to work trip length for the project are that the areas directly surrounding the basin have some of the shortest travel to work trip lengths of anywhere in the city. The project can help these trips be made by sustainable modes by providing high quality active mode and passenger transport connections through the project area.

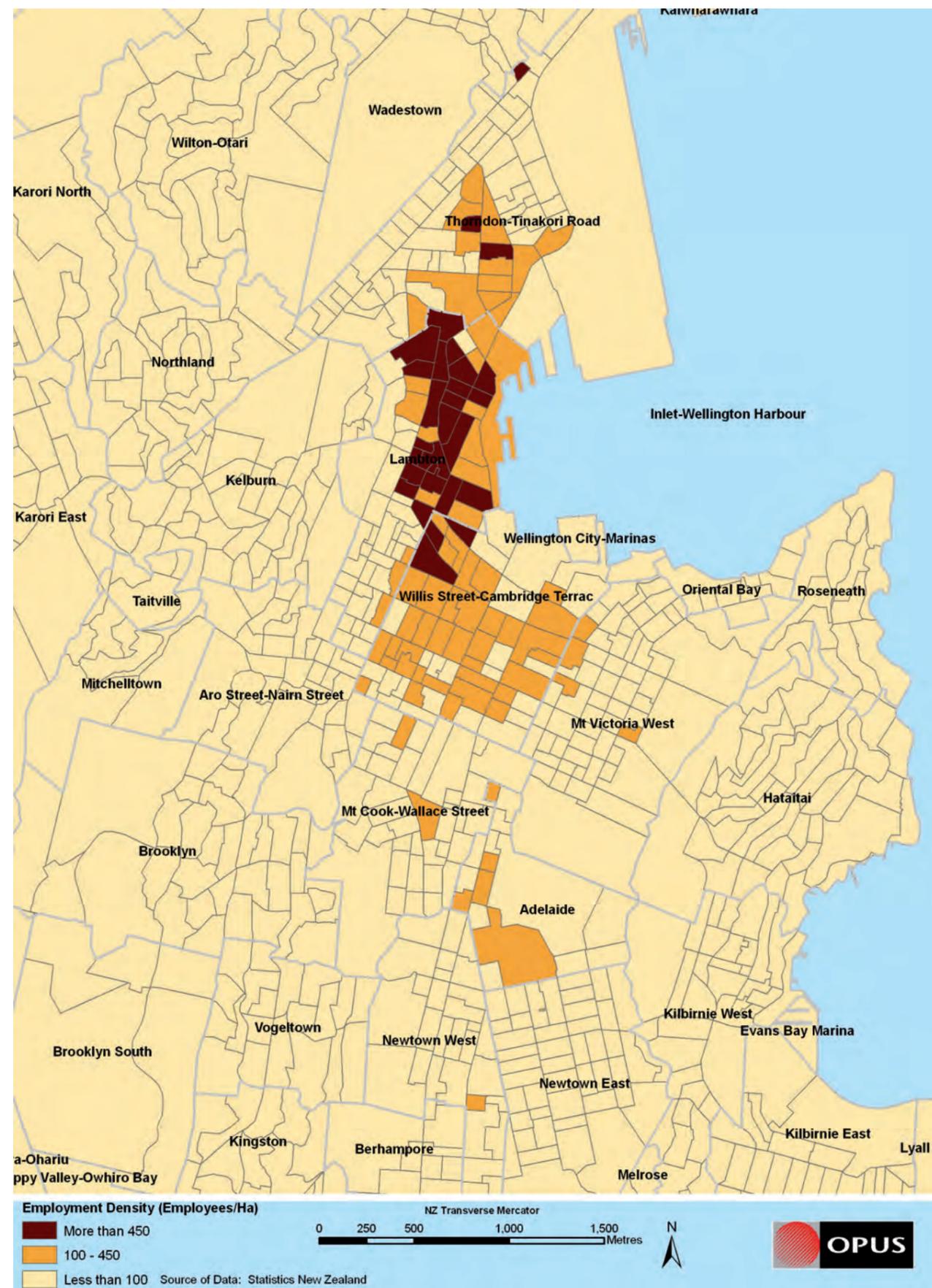


Figure 5.10: Employee Density (2006)

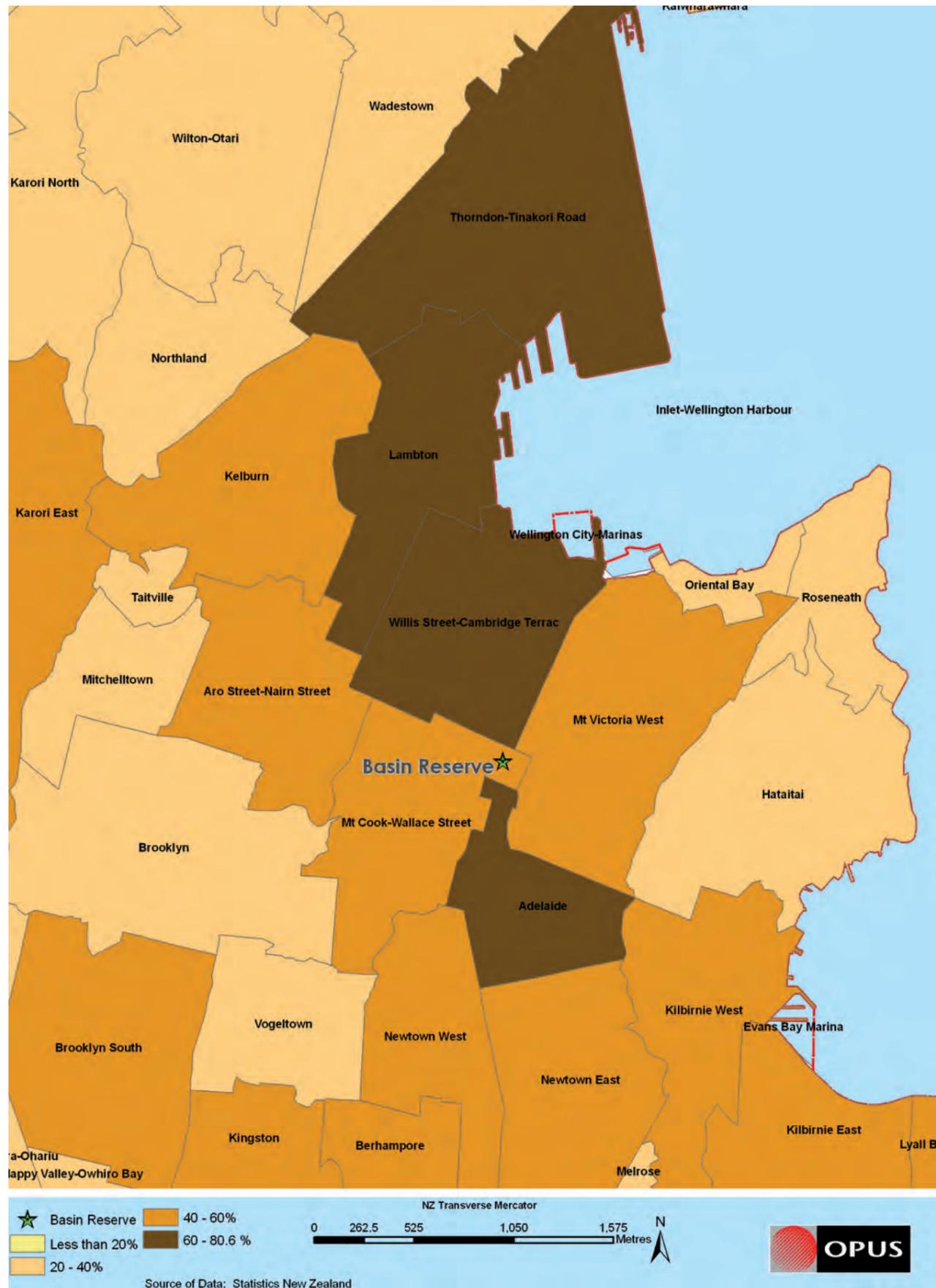


Figure 5.11: Proportion of Residents Commuting 4 km or Less to Work

5.4.3 Travel to Work Mode Choice

The travel mode used by residents on the 2006 census day is summarised in Figure 5.12 to Figure 5.15. Significantly less people in the study area use a private vehicle to commute to work compared with the overall average for Wellington City.

Active travel modes are predominantly used by residents in the neighbourhoods closest to the CBD. As the distance from the CBD increases, the proportion of residents using active modes for their commute to work decreases. As the proportion of residents using active modes for their commute to work decreases, the proportion of residents using passenger transport increases.

Similar to the passenger transport trends, the proportion of residents who use a private vehicle to commute to work increases with their distance from the CBD.

The high proportion of residents from south of the Basin Reserve who use active or passenger transport for their commute highlights the importance of providing a high quality facility for them through the Basin Reserve area.

As discussed in the sections above, the implications of the information presented in this section is that high quality active mode and passenger transport connections through the project are key to successful operation of the transport network in this part of the city.

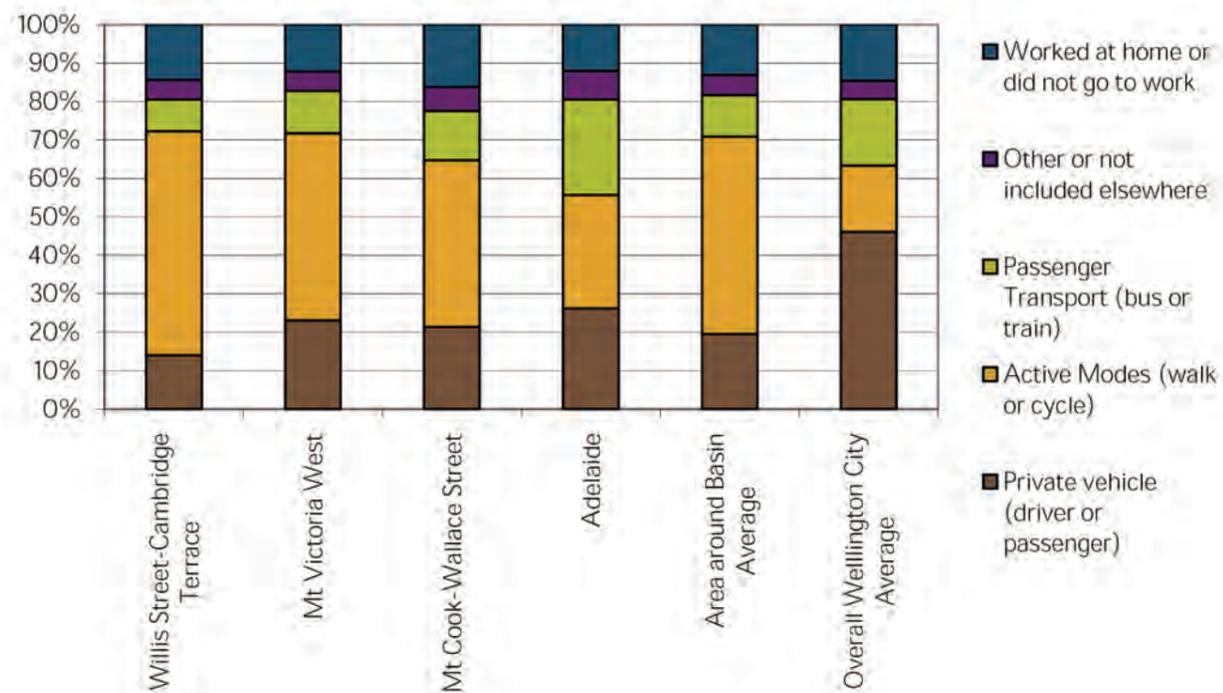


Figure 5.12: Travel to Work Mode Choice

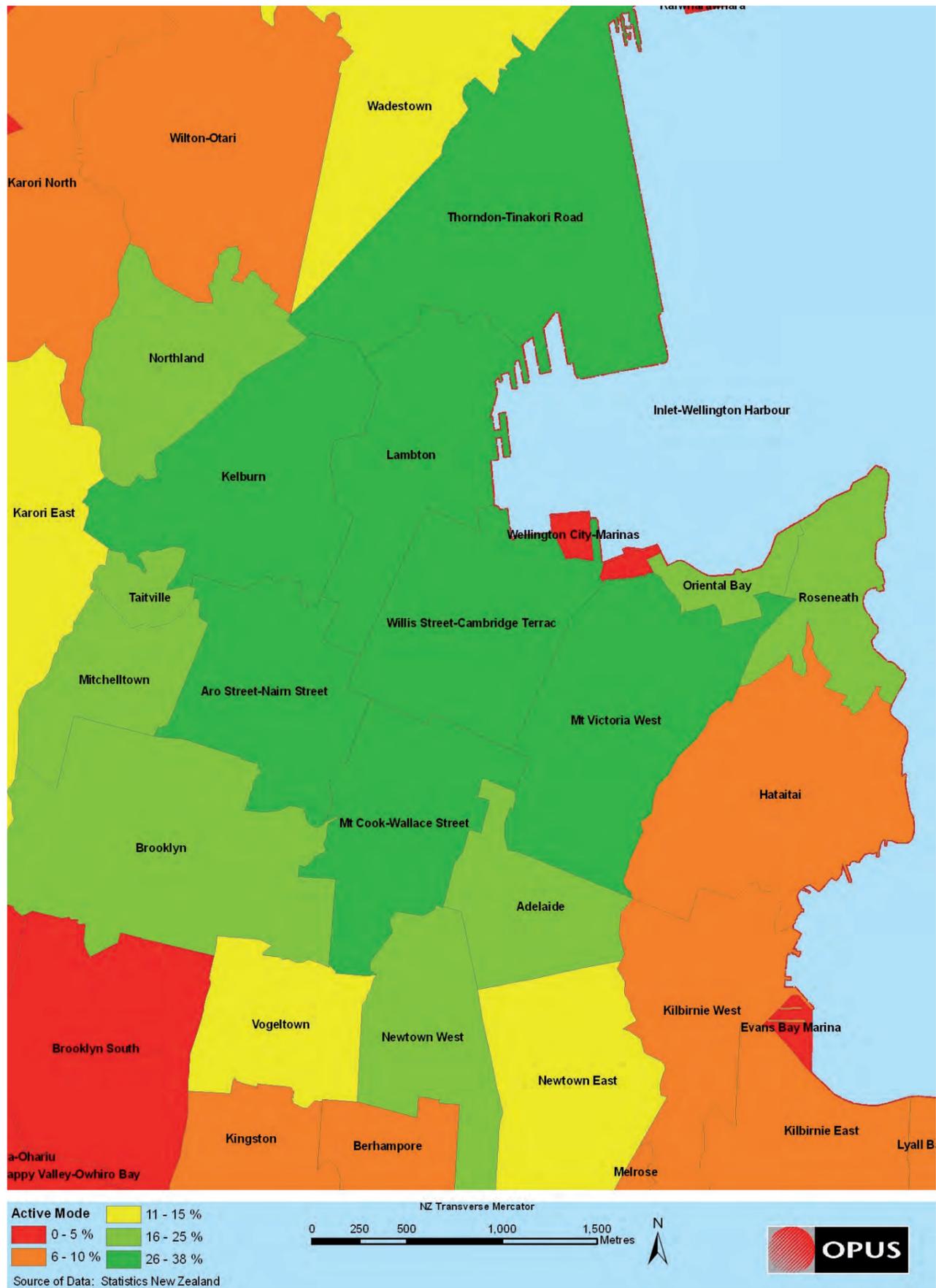


Figure 5.13: Proportion of Residents Commuting to Work Using Active Modes (%)



Figure 5.14: Proportion of People Commuting to Work Using Passenger Transport (%)

