

10 December 2025

Andrew Wilson
Chief Executive RotoruaNZ

By email: andrew.wilson@rotoruanz.com

Tēnā koe, Andrew

We are writing on behalf of the New Zealand Law Society Te Kāhui Ture o Aotearoa, and the Waikato Bay of Plenty Branch, in support of your letter to Associate Minister McKee about the Rotorua Courthouse. The Law Society strongly supports progress on the new courthouse, and has previously raised this with both Associate Minister McKee and Minister Goldsmith.

The Law Society agrees the current courthouse is not fit for purpose, and has not been for some time now. The significant concerns that you outline are shared by the profession, including:

- the design and size of the courthouse is not suitable for the volume and type of cases it must accommodate. Shared spaces are too small and are unsuitable for court users, including victims, witnesses, defendants, and whānau. This impacts not just safety and dignity, but the volume of work that can be completed.
- the physical condition (including leaks, and reports of pests) of the courthouse is poor, as is accessibility for disabled persons and those with mobility issues.
- technological capability is limited. As reported recently, lawyers have had to bring their own audio equipment to the courthouse, to ensure evidence can be heard.

These issues are contributing to delay in the courts, contrary to the combined efforts of the judiciary, the profession, and the wider justice community.

The need for a new courthouse has been known for some time now. While this is not necessarily unique amongst New Zealand's courthouses, Rotorua is one of the busier courthouses in the country, dealing with complex cases from across the region. Yet it has, for example, only one courtroom available for High Court work. It is also accommodating the work of other courthouses, such as Tauranga.

On behalf of the local profession, thank you for raising this. The Law Society joins your call for the allocation of funding for a new courthouse in Budget 2026.

Nāku noa, nā



Frazer Barton
President, New Zealand Law Society



Melissa Campbell
Branch President, Waikato Bay of Plenty