

Outcomes and Methods for the Rural and Residential Review – Residential Edition

PLAN CHANGE 50 OF THE UPPER HUTT DISTRICT PLAN
2004



September-November 2020 Public Engagement

This page has been intentionally left blank.

About this report

Introduction

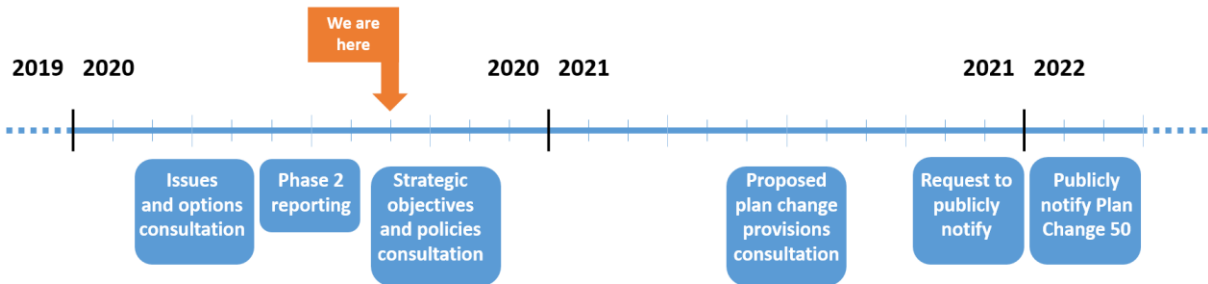
The Rural and Residential Review is an evaluation of our current controls and zoning for rural and residential areas across the Upper Hutt District. It seeks to assess whether District Plan measures are fit for purpose and are able to accommodate predicted growth for the foreseeable future in a way that reflects our local values. Current rules in the District Plan have a genesis that predates the current 2004 Plan and have not undergone a substantive review since the late 1990s. This review is therefore a significant component to defining the form of Upper Hutt for future generations.

Large scale reporting has been completed in order to identify what issues currently exist and what opportunities may assist us in addressing these issues. In March 2020, we released an overview of the issues and opportunities that were identified, receiving feedback from over 270 respondents across engagement platforms. Feedback we received has helped us to conclude the overall long-term outcomes people are seeking for rural and residential areas, and what methods should be used to achieve these.

The following report details the strategic outcomes we have identified for **residential areas** and what methods can be used to achieve them. Our community focus groups and technical working group have helped us better understand outcomes at the local level, whether or not this accurately reflects their understanding of the environment, and what other methods can be used to help achieve these outcomes.

How your feedback sets the agenda

This period of engagement is the second phase of public engagement. Feedback we receive on this report will help us confirm the desired community outcomes for rural and residential areas and what methods we should use to achieve them.



Setting these outcomes and methods is of particular importance as this will create the basis for all forthcoming zoning and rule proposals for rural and residential areas. As detailed above, the next phase of engagement on the project will be on a full draft plan change proposal, and it is therefore important that we establish a clear direction for the provisions at this early stage.

It is currently anticipated that a draft plan change will be publicly released for feedback in mid-2021. Current feedback will influence the final proposed plan change, which is anticipated to be released for

public consultation in early 2022. This will be the formal notification of the plan change under the Resource Management Act 1991.

Layout of this Report

All objectives and policies have been organised into rural and residential themes. This is structured as follows:

- **Objective** – what outcome should be achieved
- **Associated policies** – how we want to achieve the outcome
- **Purpose**
- **What has helped informed this**

This is the **residential edition** of issues and opportunities and only covers residential topics, with all rural topics covered in the rural edition. This edition and all other supporting information is available on the PC50 project webpage (see link below).

How to make a submission

Submissions on the Rural and Residential Review Strategic Objectives and Policies will be open from:

30 September 2020 to 2 November 2020.

Submissions may be made online at: www.upperhuttcity.com/pc50

Submissions may also be made at any public library or at Council offices at 838-842 Fergusson Drive.

In addition, Council will also be encouraging people to get engaged will be advertised locally via our Social Media pages and through the Upper Hutt Leader. This is in a limited form in respect of Covid-19 restrictions and any engagement will reflect current Covid-19 Alert Levels.

Table of Contents

Introduction	i
How your feedback sets the agenda	i
Layout of this Report	ii
How to make a submission	ii
Residential Strategic Objectives and Policies	1
Management of Growth Areas	1
Medium and High Density Residential Areas	3
Housing diversity & choice	5
Creating flexibility in subdivision	7
Protecting our established character	7
Environmental controls and climate change	8
Operating home businesses	9
Have we captured everything?	11

Residential Strategic Objectives and Policies

The following section provides an overview of core objectives and policies we have identified across the residential area to date and the various methods seen to achieve these. The term 'strategic' is used here to note that these are key outcomes to manage rural and residential areas, recognising that additional policies will likely be provided to supplement draft rules once these are developed next year.

Management of Growth Areas

OBJECTIVE #1

Development within the Gillespies Road growth area, Kingsley Heights growth area, and the Southern Growth Area is enabled where:

- a) A development plan is developed detailing a comprehensive intended development form;*
- b) A range of housing and ancillary services or businesses are incorporated;*
- c) Public and active transport options are integrated;*
- d) Resilience to the current and future effects of climate change is incorporated by design;*
- e) Urban design best practice principles are adopted; and*
- f) There is adequate roading and water and wastewater infrastructure capacity.*

ASSOCIATED POLICIES OF #1

- 1. Development plans detail intended outcomes for each growth area, describing:*
 - a. General roading layout, including active transport and public transport integration;*
 - b. Allocation for public greenspace;*
 - c. General housing density;*
 - d. Principles for urban design to be achieved;*
 - e. Location for Neighbourhood Centre or Local Centre area(s); and*
 - f. Any proposed landscaping or design treatments.*
- 2. Any development within identified growth areas is enabled where:*
 - a. In the Gillespies Road growth area, a minimum density of 20 dwellings per hectare is achieved; and*
 - b. In the Kingsley Heights growth area and Southern Growth Area, a minimum density of 16 dwellings per hectare is achieved.*
- 3. Ensure adequate power, telecommunications, and water and wastewater infrastructure capacity is available to, and provided for, within developments;*
- 4. Enable renewable, alternative or supplementary communal energy sources; and*

5. *Enable measures to reduce greenhouse gas emission, when compared to emissions within established urban areas of a similar density at the time of establishing the development plan.*

#1 PURPOSE:

More than anything, an overall sense of clarity for what development can be anticipated for growth areas was strongly expressed through community feedback. This was also strongly correlated with creating clear provisions for subdivision and development, generally. Objective 1 therefore seeks clearly define where the growth areas are, the outcomes that should be achieved, and cement this through the use of a Development Plan to ensure these outcomes are met. Criteria within Objective 1 ensure that a high standard of living is achieved, incorporating within their design provision for public transport, climate change resilience, and a range of available housing choices that meet good urban design standards.

Associated policies detail specific elements to be included within development plans, at a minimum. Here, minimum density standards are also introduced. These ensure that available capacity within growth areas is used effectively, preventing inefficient use of available land resource. This also provides more certainty that Upper Hutt is able to provide choice in available housing, while further ensuring we are able to meet current and future housing demands.

Policies have been also included to allow for greater flexibility for renewable energy alternatives and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order help to achieve climate change resilience. This will require developers using a comparable urban form as a baseline to consider emission reductions. Measures should also be included to ensure that our infrastructure is not under strain and sufficient roading and water capacity is available to service development.

What has helped inform this?

Following the close of engagement on PC50 issues and opportunities, Council sought to review our existing urban design guidance. This updated guidance ensures that any development of up to three storeys meets current best practice standards and has helped inform the principles which future development in Upper Hutt should seek to achieve. The updated **proposed Urban Design Guide** is now available on the PC50 project webpage.

Work has also been underway at a regional level through the [Wellington Regional Growth Framework](#). This is currently undergoing development and seeks to provide a long-term vision for how the region will growth, including a methodology for how sufficient and affordable housing can be provided.

As discussed in our last engagement, in November last year council completed a stock take of our available capacity against project growth through the **Housing and Business Development Capacity Assessment** (known as the HBA). While the HBA did show that a housing shortfall could be anticipated under current controls, this showed us what commercially feasible yields may be possible over growth areas. This assessment has helped inform the minimum housing density standards introduced in associated policies.

The regulations that directed the HBA reporting also established a strong mechanism to enabling housing where there is seen to be a shortfall. Issues and Opportunities reporting indicated that an opportunity existed to zone the Southern Growth Area (SGA) for future residential use, recognising its future intended use and the work that had yet to be completed to address some of the unresolved issues with the site. Since the conclusion of Issues and Opportunities reporting, the landowner, the Guildford Timber Company (GTC), has approached Council to seek that PC50 is fully incorporates the SGA. Development would seek to be enabled in light of the housing shortfall, subject to GTC providing and resourcing supporting information demonstrating its appropriateness for development. It is for this reason that the SGA has now been included as part of Objective 1. We have sought to establish a Terms of Reference with GTC to formalise

this joint approach, which will clearly detail that including the site is still subject to legislative qualifiers for appropriateness, and is not a guarantee that development will be enabled. Once confirmed, The Terms of Reference will be available on the PC50 project webpage.

Feedback we received from focus group members on initial draft objectives and policies noted that reductions in carbon emissions should be incentivised and prioritised, which requiring that infrastructure capacity should be demonstrated. They also stated that development plans needed to be clear about what elements were included, stressing the importance of public transport integration.

Medium and High Density Residential Areas

OBJECTIVE #2

Medium density residential areas are established where:

- a) Urban design best practice standards are achieved;*
- b) Accessibility to community facilities, open space, and public transport is available;*
- c) These act as a transition between lower and higher density areas; and*
- d) Required roading, water and wastewater infrastructure is sufficient.*

ASSOCIATED POLICIES OF #2

- 1. Urban design principles for Medium Density Housing are achieved.*
- 2. Enable Medium density residential as a buffer between high density residential and suburban residential areas.*
- 3. Ensure adequate power, telecommunications, and three waters infrastructure capacity is available to developments.*

OBJECTIVE #3

High density residential areas are established within a walkable, 500 metre perimeter, of rapid transport stops and the CBD boundary in a manner that:

- a) Responds to the anticipated future neighbourhood context;*
- b) Achieves a density that is consistent with projected residential demand;*
- c) Adopts good urban design principles, with a suitable balance of building types, elements, and open space or landscape elements;*
- d) there is adequate roading and infrastructure capacity; and*
- e) Integrates with current and future transport corridors.*

ASSOCIATED POLICIES OF #3

1. *Enable high density housing that maintains privacy of adjacent neighbours.*
2. *Urban design principles for high density housing are achieved.*
3. *Housing within high density residential areas achieved a density commensurate with housing demand.*
4. *Ensure adequate power, telecommunications, and three waters infrastructure capacity is available to developments.*

#2 & #3 PURPOSE

The proposed introduction of medium and high density living areas are primarily a response to requirements under the new [National Policy Statement for Urban Development 2020](#) (NPS-UD), which was introduced in August 2020. Issues and opportunities reporting concluded that opportunities existed for medium density development around the CBD and Silverstream, with some intensification around Clouston Park and Maoribank. However, the NPS-UD now specifically directs Council to enable high density housing (building heights of at least six storeys) within walkable areas from urban railways stations and the edge of the CBD. Preliminary mapping of coverage is **available on the PC50 project webpage**. At this stage Council has taken the view that 'walkable' areas are in the order of a 10 minute walk, which generally corresponds to a 500 metre perimeter around required intensification areas, and corresponds to a walking distance of between 700m to 1,000m, on average.

As a means to ease the transition from these high density areas, medium density areas (of up to three storeys) have been proposed to be used as a transitional buffer between suburban residential areas and newly-enabled high density areas.

This approach will be a drastic departure from the current built form within anticipated intensification areas. Both objectives and policies therefore seek to ensure that good design outcomes are achieved, while ensuring that sufficient infrastructure capacity is available to service these areas, as well as the provision of local parks and amenities. It is likely that a High Density Urban Design Guide will be produced to facilitate this, but has not been produced yet as this regulation has only recently come into force.

As with the enablement of growth areas, the establishment of these intensification areas also provides a means to address the currently anticipated shortfall in housing. Residential units within these areas will also likely deliver substantially more one and two bedroom units, which are in high demand.

What has helped inform this?

In developing these objectives and policies, Council has sought additional advice from practitioners who produced the **Upper Hutt Residential Character Assessment**. They helped establish key principles to test the appropriateness of intensification management within these areas. This work is ongoing and will be made available once complete.

In the meantime, guidance is actively being produced by Central Government. This reflects the novelty of the new direction under the National Policy Statement for Urban Development 2020 and is anticipated to continue to be updated as best principles are developed. The [guidance to date](#) has detailed how a walking distance of between 400m and 800m would generally be considered a walkable distance, reflecting a 5-10 minute walk. Guidance also suggests using the likes of Medium Density zones to manage the transition

from high to low density, amongst other factors. This will be factored in as zoning options begin to get developed following this engagement.

As above, the likes of work through the [Wellington Regional Growth Framework](#) has also helped inform the overall approach taken in terms of concentration of intensification in these areas.

While focus group members were understandably surprised about the change in direction to include high density residential areas, the elements that they thought should be considered at a minimum were:

- Building dominance and effect on street scene;
- Use of landscaping;
- Use of recession planes to ensure sunlight access;
- Sufficient accessibility to greenspace and communal greenspace areas; and
- Integration of local commerce and other community facilities at ground floor.

Focus group members also took the time to test the 'walkability' of these areas. They were generally pleased with the size of areas, stating that while walking routes generated were longer than 500 metres, time taken was walkable, which should target a walk of between 10-15 minutes. Members noted that the street scene would have a greater impact on walkability, when considering the likes of: grade; lighting; footpath condition; and general visibility.

Housing diversity & choice

OBJECTIVE #4

An increased supply of diverse housing scales and types are provided to cater for a variety of housing needs, including multigenerational living or communal living options, and increases accessibility across the housing market.

ASSOCIATED POLICIES OF #4

1. *Provide for a diverse range of housing options that are suitable for a diverse range of particular needs and characteristics throughout residential areas.*
2. *Maximum building heights correspond to:*
 - a. *the width of road that provides access to the site;*
 - b. *the scale of any adjacent open space or school; and*
 - c. *adjacent heritage buildings or distinctive character areas.*
3. *Enable Papakāinga housing.*
4. *Enable private or communal outdoor living areas when sufficient utility is provided for intended users and designed to be well-orientated for sun exposure, connected to living areas, and maintains a good degree of privacy.*

5. *Minor residential units [formally family flats] are enabled to a scale that is secondary to the primary dwelling when:*
 - a) *Adequate servicing is provided;*
 - b) *Sufficient separation is allowed for;*
 - c) *Access to the unit is provided whilst maintaining a good degree of on-street amenity and safety; and*
 - d) *Adequate outdoor living space is provided for both the minor and primary unit.*

6. *Comprehensive Residential Development is enabled throughout the urban area, subject to:*
 - a) *Adopting principles of the Medium Density Urban Design Guide; and*
 - b) *Demonstrating that adequate three waters capacity is available.*

#4 PURPOSE

The intended outcome of this objective and associated policies is to provide for a greater diversity of available housing, which is suited to a greater variety of people. The current range of housing available is heavily skewed towards larger single level detached dwellings that don't represent current needs from both a form and market price perspective. Continuing to deliver such housing is likely to continue to increase housing unaffordability, whilst also inefficiently consuming land resources.

Policies included here introduce a degree of pragmatism to housing provisions. They note that, where appropriate, housing at different densities and scales should be enabled. One of the most significant changes is around Comprehensive Residential Developments (CRDs), which are proposed to be enabled across urban areas, rather than being constrained to a specific geographic extent. This reflects that when good urban design is achieved, there is greater flexibility in where these can be located. In addition, while not explicitly referenced, this policy approach also means that Community Housing is also more easily enabled, as this would be able to meet the definition of a CRD. Policy changes to be more flexible with minimum allotment sizes (see Objective #5 and associated policies) and communal living areas also help to achieve this.

Lastly, policies also more easily enable other housing forms, such as papakāinga housing and minor residential units (formally known as family flats).

What has helped inform this?

Feedback received from focus group members in developing this stressed the importance of delivering housing diversity. Examples were provided of where land was available, but current rules prevented people from developing down to a size which met their needs. This reduced accessibility to the housing market.

Members supported the idea of clustering these areas around transport nodes, noting that a focus on the quality of greenspace was of importance. The value of greenspace was also extensively mentioned in feedback we received on issues and opportunities. The proposed policy approach intends to exemplify existing public greenspace areas as demand increases via infill development, with new greenspaces provided as part of growth area development plans.

Creating flexibility in subdivision

OBJECTIVE #5

Subdivision in urban areas creates parcels which respond to surrounding current and anticipated urban form, responds to housing demand, and provides practically accessible and serviceable parcels.

ASSOCIATED POLICIES OF #5

1. *Housing is enabled at a rate which corresponds with housing bottom lines, as a minimum.*
2. *No minimum allotment sizes are prescribed when housing is provided as part of subdivision.*
3. *Allow for the creation of reduced allotment sizes where there is a lack of allotments at a similar scale.*
4. *Access is provided to all new allotments.*
5. *Adequate three waters capacity must be demonstrated for all new allotments.*

#5 PURPOSE

As with Objective #4, this intends to introduce a degree of pragmatism with subdivision rules, corresponding to the direction of creating greater housing diversity. It introduces a concept whereby no minimum allotment size shall be required, subject to also proposing a dwelling that complies with required servicing and amenities. This reflects that the provision of housing itself should be prioritised, rather than setting a minimum allotment size that seeks to reflect prospective housing. Simply, if a dwelling is already being proposed, minimum lot sizes do not serve their purpose. Minimum allotment sizes will only be required when vacant allotments are proposed. The minimum size is proposed to be reduced to reflect the generally smaller scale of housing that is in demand and is required.

What has helped inform this?

Focus groups and professional review was engaged through the development of this policy direction, with broad agreement across the initially-proposed direction. Groups noted that so long as quality living environment outcomes were achieved (such as outdoor living) then minimum allotment sizes should not restrict development.

Protecting our established character

OBJECTIVE #6

Distinctive residential character areas are protected and associated amenity values are maintained.

ASSOCIATED POLICIES OF #6

1. *Development and subdivision within distinctive residential character areas maintains a development scale commensurate with the existing urban form.*
2. *Require an evaluation of residential character effects for developments that seek to increase density beyond that the existing urban form, which evaluates:*
 - a. *Effects on established vegetation;*
 - b. *Effects on street scene;*
 - c. *Effects on neighbourhood setting;*
 - d. *Retention of residential use;*
 - e. *Consistency of site coverage; and*
 - f. *Building dominance, form, and scale.*

#6 PURPOSE

The [Upper Hutt Residential Character Assessment](#) completed as part of PC50 reporting demonstrated that there were some select 'distinctive' residential character areas within the existing urban environment. These areas had a high degree of sensitivity to development. Provisions included here specifically address matters which define their special character, restricting development within these areas and requiring additional reporting to demonstrate suitability for further development.

What has helped inform this?

Focus group members expressing support for such controls during their development. They noted that the basis for protection would need to be made clear, including qualifying matters.

Environmental controls and climate change

OBJECTIVE #7

Hydraulic neutrality and resilience to the current and future effects of climate change is sought to be incorporated as part of new residential development.

ASSOCIATED POLICIES OF #7

1. *Renewable, alternative, or supplementary energy sources are encouraged.*
2. *Stormwater runoff is managed to achieve hydraulic neutrality through the requirement of rainwater attenuation tanks for all new dwellings.*

#7 PURPOSE

The current district plan provisions are silent on climate change effects and the reduction of emissions. This objective and associated policies intend to bring this consideration, enabling the likes of communal renewable energy solutions.

The concept of hydraulic neutrality is introduced for all new residential development. This effectively means that the level of stormwater runoff from a site remains the same after development when compared to before development. Introducing these policies means the costs of managing our stormwater are reduced, including a reduced overall likelihood of flood events occurring as a result of an inundated stormwater network. The provision of rainwater tanks will also mean that additional water supply could be made available in the case of a natural hazard where reticulated water is unavailable, increasing overall resilience.

What has helped informed this?

The NPS-UD regulation has now introduced national policies whereby urban development should be seen to support emission reductions and the resilience to climate change effects. Measures therefore seek to address this national direction.

Focus group members stated strong support for further sustainability and water management controls. Members wanted such measures to be made mandatory, with additional financial incentives introduced to encourage adoption from existing dwellings. In addition, the likes of requiring rainwater tanks was strongly expressed through the Issues and Opportunities consultation.

Operating home businesses

OBJECTIVE #8

Residents are able to operate a home business, fulfil their employment, or provide visitor accommodation within a dwelling.

ASSOCIATED POLICIES OF #8

1. *Enable the use of residential property for a home business where:*
 - a) *It is the residence of the business owner;*
 - b) *Hours are restricted;*
 - c) *Number of employees are limited;*
 - d) *Types of businesses are restricted; and*
 - e) *Traffic generation is limited.*
2. *Enable the use of residential property for the fulfilment of employment.*
3. *Enable visitor accommodation in residential property where:*
 - a) *It is ancillary to residential occupation;*
 - b) *Traffic generation is limited; and*
 - c) *Weekly turnover of visitors is limited.*

#8 PURPOSE

Provisions provided here intend to allow for a limited form of commercial occupancy within residential areas. Limitations have been placed around those matters that could reasonably be anticipated within residential area, providing some flexibility for business owners, without enabling a scale which would be anticipated in commercial areas. Operation of a business includes provisions for visitor accommodation (like a homestay or AirBnB), with specific restrictions around scale, modernising current homestay provisions. Provisions are also now more reflective of current practices following Covid-19 lockdowns, where more people are required to work from home.

What has helped informed this?

Focus group members noted that an appropriate scale should be set to avoid any competition issues with the CBD. They also stated that the method of control should also restrict certain types of businesses, recognising that some are not appropriate in residential areas as there is limited opportunity for residential amenity to be retained.

Members noted that while visitor accommodation should be permitted, the measures that would be controlled should reflect the ability of Council to monitor. For example, a limit on the number of nights visitor accommodation was permitted would be difficult for Council to achieve.

Have we captured everything?

The above represents the conclusions the Issues and Opportunities engagement most recently completed by Council, feedback received from our community focus groups, and supplementary reporting. We want your feedback on these intended outcomes, but also to know whether there are any prominent objectives that you feel should be addressed through the review.

To make a submission:

- see our webpage: www.upperhuttcity.com/pc50
- come to your local library or Council office to make a submission
- see us in your local community

Submission are open until **2 November 2020**.