

Choice in Urban Housing

Strategy: Choice in Urban Housing

There are eight key themes to the residential component of this strategy:

1. Create a greater choice of housing options
2. Foster good urban design
3. Protect important features
4. Allow for more intensive forms of housing development within walking distance of the city and village centres
5. Reduce or remove the potential for housing development in more sensitive environments
6. Generally maintain the same potential for housing development throughout much of the city, whilst reviewing the current nature of infill development in tandem with bulk and location standards
7. Identify and provide for significant new areas of residential development
8. Work with the central government, other agencies and the private sector to provide housing which people can afford to buy.

1. Create More Choice In Housing

Council proposes to foster development of a wider choice of housing so that people from all walks of life are able to find housing that meets their needs within Upper Hutt.

Provision will be made for a range of densities of housing development in suitable areas throughout the city. The table on page 43 describes the different densities of housing that are referred to in this Strategy.

Council proposes to zone land to provide generally for different intensities of housing development within the urban area, as follows:

ZONE	DENSITY	NOTES
Residential	Medium	Refer to Housing Strategy 2,3 and 6
Residential Conservation	Low	Refer to Housing Strategy 2,3 and 6
Residential Hill	Low Very Low	Refer to Housing Strategy 2,3 and 6
Residential Central	Medium-High	Refer to Housing Strategy 2, 3 and 4 Retail Strategy 3
City Centre	High Mixed Use	Refer to Housing Strategy 2, 3 and 4 Retail Strategy 1 and 2

Generally, these changes proposed will enable more people to live close to the city centre and key suburban centres, more spacious forms of housing on the surrounding hills and better designed housing that fits with its environment.

A range of housing types could be used to enable more houses to be built on smaller sites, while at the same time still ensuring that residents will have an acceptable level of outdoor living space, control of noise, sunlight, and parking. Examples might include:

- Comprehensive residential developments [three or more dwellings designed in relation to each other]

- Well designed single or double storey terrace housing, with outdoor living spaces relating to sunlight access
- Apartments in the central city area with balconies relating to sunlight access.

Council will be guided by the views of local residents in deciding which types of housing will be provided for, together with where and to what standards.

Council will then use the District Plan change process to work out the provisions for more compact forms of housing in detail. Generally, as the density of housing increases, so too will the standards of design required.

The remaining strategies explain these proposals in more detail.

2. Foster Good Urban Design

Council proposes to become a signatory to the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol, as proposed in the earlier chapter on retail centres. As more people live and work closer together, good design becomes increasingly important.

Council proposes to develop Urban Design Guidelines which identify how the key principles of good urban design might work in the Upper Hutt context for different types and densities of housing.

Council proposes to require the more intensive forms of housing development – that is any development classed as a Comprehensive Residential Development, Medium-High or High density, or Mixed Use – will have regard to the seven principles of good urban design, and this will be assessed as part of the resource consent process.

3. Protect Important Features

Council will continue to assess all proposals for subdivision and development in terms of the protection of special amenity features. Council may place appropriate conditions on subdivision resource consents to ensure that special features are protected. This may include taking a slightly more flexible approach to subdivision to enable the developer to subdivide to the permitted standard yet also retain the special feature[s].

Council will continue to protect those special features that are listed on the Schedule of Notable Trees and the Schedule of Heritage Features in the District Plan.

Council will work with the different community interest groups, including the local Royal Forest and Bird Society and the newly created Upper Hutt Heritage Trust, to identify, verify the value of and protect appropriately these features and trees. Separate strategies will be prepared for Heritage and Biodiversity in forthcoming years that will expand on the respective roles and responsibilities of Council and the community. This work will address not only the rules of the District Plan but also any incentives and education required to assist both individuals and the community to manage these valuable features.



4. Consolidate Housing - City & Village Centres

Council proposes to enable a greater intensification of housing within close proximity to the Upper Hutt City Centre and village centres at Silverstream and Camp Street, Trentham.

These nodes have been chosen because of the following criteria:

- They are already focal points for a range of retail, business and community activities
- The Retail section of this Strategy proposes to grow the city centre and selected 'urban villages' and more local residents will help to make these centres more vibrant and safer
- They are close to both rail and bus transport
- They connect well to surrounding housing.

Because each centre has its own unique characteristics, Council proposes to undertake further discussions with each of the local communities to identify how many more homes could be allowed, where this intensification would be allowed around each centre and what development standards would be appropriate to ensure the character and amenity of each area is enhanced.

As part of becoming a signatory to the Urban Design Protocol, Council will develop Urban Design Guidelines for new comprehensive and medium density housing developments.

Council will introduce changes to the District Plan to provide for more intensive levels of housing development in these three areas.

The following sections consider each of the three centres in turn.