



PC50 Process Questions

What is Plan Change 50?

Plan Change 50 is the review of the Residential and Rural chapters of the Upper Hutt District Plan. The plan change reviews the objectives, policies, and rules for these zones, which manage how land within these zones can be used and developed in the future. The plan change also reviews the areas where these zones apply.

Why is it called Plan Change 50?

Changes to the District Plan are numbered in sequence, with Plan Change 50 being the 50th change to the Upper Hutt District Plan, which was adopted in 2004.

Why is Plan Change 50 necessary?

Under the Resource Management Act (1991) Councils are required to review District Plans every 10 years. We are undertaking a rolling review of our district plan, meaning we are reviewing the Plan by topic and chapter.

Furthermore, direction set at a national and regional level needs to be considered and implemented by PC50. This includes giving effect to the National Policy Statement for Urban Development, the National Planning Standards, the Wellington Regional Policy Statement and the Housing and Business Capacity Assessment (HBA). Central government is currently preparing the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Soils, which will also need to be implemented if or/when it becomes operative.

What has informed the draft proposal?

Over the last two and a half years we have been undertaking research and consultation to develop this draft proposal.

Community engagement and technical reporting has informed us of the current issues for the residential and rural environments, and how these could be addressed. Reporting has informed aspects such as setbacks, building heights, outdoor living space, and urban design. This reporting can be viewed on the PC50 webpage.

Since October 2019, residential and rural focus groups have provided us with feedback to inform our proposal. A technical working group of planning practitioners was also formed, with feedback received incorporated into the development of provisions and zoning.

In addition to the above, two phases of public engagement were undertaken in 2020, which included the identification of issues and opportunities and our proposed strategic objectives and policies. Feedback from these public engagements has been taken into consideration and informed the development of our final draft proposal to date.

What stage is PC50 at?

PC50 is entering the last stage of pre-notification informal feedback. We are seeking feedback on the final draft proposal for PC50, which includes the proposed areas to be zoned residential and rural and the proposed provisions that apply to these zones. We are welcoming feedback from the whole community on the draft proposal.

What are the next steps for PC50?

Once this stage of public consultation has ended, feedback received will be considered and the draft proposal amended where necessary. Officers will then finalise their evaluation of the proposal as required by the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).

PC50 is proposed to be formally notified in mid-2022 under Schedule 1 of the RMA. At this point the community will be able to formally submit on the final proposal. This enables every person to make a submission, with the right for submitters to be heard at a formal hearing with an independent panel of commissioners.

Once this hearing process has been completed and Council has made a formal decision on the plan change, every person who has made a submission has a right to appeal that decision (on points raised in their submission). Any appeals will need to go to the Environment Court. The maximum time frame for a plan change from notification to decision is 2 years. This excludes the time needed to resolve any potential appeals.

How does this affect me?

Plan Change 50 may be changing the zoning of your land and the wider zoning of your immediate neighbourhood. Even if your zoning remains the same, the rules relating to development are changing in all rural and residential zones.

These changes may mean that there will be more flexibility over the scale of development and subdivision for yourself and your neighbours.

Alternatively there may be only minimal changes to the zoning of your site and neighbouring sites, which may mean fewer changes for your and your neighbours' ability to undertake development and subdivision from the status quo.

Our [interactive map](#) allows you to search your address to find out which proposed PC50 zone applies to your site.

How can I get involved in PC50?

We are keen to hear your thoughts on our draft proposal for PC50 and encourage you to review the proposal and provide feedback.

Feedback material can be found on our engagement website: <https://letskorero.upperhuttcity.com/>

All background material on the project and associated material is available on the PC50 webpage at: www.upperhuttcity.com/pc50

Supporting Questions

What is the National Policy Statement for Urban Development (NPS-UD)?

The NPS-UD provides direction at a national level to provide for sufficient development opportunities to meet housing demand within the urban environment. It seeks to ensure that New Zealand's towns and cities are well functioning urban environments that meet the changing needs of our diverse communities. PC50 needs to give effect to the NPS-UD as Upper Hutt City Council is considered a 'Tier 1 Council' (largest and fastest growing urban areas) under the NPS-UD, being part of the Wellington metropolitan region.

Key requirements on Council include:

1. Removing minimum parking requirement from the District Plan;
2. Providing sufficient development to meet the expected housing demand from the HBA (see below) through both resource consenting and policy changes (like plan changes);
3. Enabling building heights and densities to increase development capacity, e.g. enabling the construction of least 6 storey development within a walkable catchment from:
 - a. Urban railway stations (eg, from Silverstream to the CBD)
 - b. The edge of the CBD.
4. Generally increasing building densities and heights relative to access to active or public transport, access to commercial activities and community services, and local housing demand.

What are the National Planning Standards?

The National Planning Standards set-out the formatting of all District Plans across the country. This includes detailing the different zones which Plans can use, and the setting of standard definitions. Plan Change 50 is required to use the zones and standards available in the National Planning Standards.

Information on National Planning Standards can be found here:

<https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/national-planning-standards/>

What is the Housing and Business Development Capacity Assessment (HBA)?

The 2019 HBA evaluated housing and business demand over a 30-year period from 2017 – 2047 at a regional and local level. The HBA found that with Upper Hutt predicted to grow in population, an additional 5,600 dwellings are required to accommodate growth by 2047. It was calculated that only 3,500 could be provided under the existing provisions within the District Plan and future growth areas, leaving a shortfall of up to 2,100 homes by 2047.

The HBA is currently being updated at a regional level, with the updated growth projections set to be released in August. The updated growth projections have revealed that growth in Upper Hutt will be higher than the 2019 HBA predicted. The new housing demand projection is 5,600 dwellings higher than previous, meaning approximately an additional 10,000 dwellings required to houses will be required in the long term. Regional growth information can be found here:

<http://demographics.sensepartners.nz/index>

As part of the national policy requirements (NPS-UD), Plan Change 50 will seek to ensure the anticipated housing demand can be accommodated through new development controls and zones within the District Plan.

How many houses will PC50 enable?

The plan change proposes to significantly change controls for development within existing urban areas. The NPS-UD requires higher density housing to be enabled close to supporting amenities and public transport. Any larger infill sites and key greenfield areas will be required to deliver a minimum density to ensure the efficient use of suitable land. Internal modelling has assumed that 18% of standard sites will realise new (higher) density and 25% of sites where specified density is required. Any greenfield area is assumed to be fully realised. Modelling does not assume that the full plan-enabled density will be achieved everywhere, for example in areas where 6-10 storeys is possible, a maximum realisation of 4-5 storeys is assumed.

Based on this it is assumed that at least an additional 10,000 dwellings could be delivered, and under a high uptake scenario 15,000 dwellings could be delivered. This does not include our long term growth areas, such as the Southern Growth Area, the Gillespies Road future urban area, or any rural development. It is therefore considered that Plan Change 50 would readily provide for projected housing demand.

How does this impact property value and rates?

Rates are determined by the rateable value of a property and the current use of the property. For example, while a specific property may have been determined to have a relatively high value, the rating category will still depend on the level of current use on a site, and consequently the demand on local services.

The rating department uses specific classifications to determine use by type, such as residential, bare land, recreational, lifestyle, forestry, etc. to estimate the level of servicing demand. Valuations are completed independently from Council by Quotable Value (QV) on a three year cycle, with the next valuation due in 2022.

The factors that influence valuations are varied and include the zone of a property as well as the associated development controls. Generally speaking, the more intensive development of a site can be, the more valuable it is. As an example, a higher height limit or a greater site coverage allowance will make the property more appealing to developers. Zoning and development controls will however only impact value in combination with demand for that type of property. For example, increasing the intensity of commercial development would only increase value if there was also demand for intensive commercial development.

Water is an important issue to us, how will this be managed through PC50?

We understand that water is an important topic for our community, and we want to ensure anticipated growth and development does not result in significant adverse effects on our water infrastructure and our natural environment. This is consistent with the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) which was adopted in 2020. The NPS-FM seeks to ensure local authorities are managing freshwater sustainably. This is supported by the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater and the Wellington Regional Plan, which manage water takes and discharges.

Plan Change 50 is proposing specific measures to control the effects on water infrastructure in residential areas by:

- Requirements to ensure stormwater runoff isn't increased (hydraulic neutrality);
- Making sure at least 30% of any residential property remains unsealed (permeable); and
- New dwellings requiring rainwater storage tanks to reduce water demand.

Are natural hazards considered as part of PC50?

A full geotechnical assessment has been completed as part of PC50. This has helped inform the most suitable areas for development. Council has also recently completed works to map flooding areas in Mangaroa and Pinehaven, guiding our zoning considerations.

All current natural hazard information is [visible through this webmap](#).

Natural hazard information layers will still control development opportunities over and above zoning changes PC50 would introduce. Council is currently seeking to progress a separate plan change addressing identified geotechnical risks.

What is a precinct?

The National Planning Standards introduced precincts. A precinct is an overlay which is applied to a specific area, and can be located on one site or across multiple sites. The precinct retains the underlying zoning of the area, but introduces specific controls to manage any current or future activity associated with that area. The use of precincts can allow for the safeguarding of existing activities which may not align within the underlying zone provisions, or capturing any other unique features within that area.

PC50 is proposing to introduce several precincts in both the residential and rural areas, which include precincts for:

1. Staglands Wildlife Reserve;

2. Wellington Naturist Club;
3. St Patrick's Estate – Urban and College;
4. Distinct Character Area Precinct for Golf Road and part of Barton Road;
5. Kingsley Heights extension Development Area;
6. Village areas in Mangaroa Valley and Maymorn; and
7. Hutt Valley Clay Target Club acoustic buffer.

Residential Questions

What are the proposed zones for the residential area?

The National Planning Standards prescribe a set of residential zone names and descriptions that Council's must choose from. The proposed residential zones for PC50 are:

1. General Residential Zone
2. Low Density Residential Zone
3. Medium Density Residential Zone
4. High Density Residential Zone
5. Future Urban Zone

A summary of intended zone outcomes for each of the zones can be [viewed on the factsheets here](#), which includes the full set of draft provisions for each of the zones.

What are walkable catchments and how were they mapped?

The NPS-UD states that we must map walkable catchments from existing and planned rapid transit stops and from the edge of the city Centre. For Upper Hutt, these catchments have been mapped from urban railway stations, which are the only form of rapid transit stops in Upper Hutt, and from the edge of the Central Business District (CBD).

Guidance from the Ministry for the Environment as advised that a walkable catchment should begin with areas within 10 minute walking distance. The area should increase where there is good accessibility to other community services, commercial activities, public transport, or increased housing demand.

Council has gone through a complex process to map all walkways, crossings, paths, and pedestrian crossings and run this through a GIS model to calculate a 10 minute walking time in accordance with Ministry guidance. Walkable catchment mapping has been released as part of the PC50 background material.

What do walkable catchments enable?

Within the defined walkable catchments the NPS-UD directs Council to promote a denser development, which includes enabling a minimum of 6-storey development. This does not mean that all development must be at least 6 storeys within this zone. The NPS-UD directs that Council needs to increase the maximum enabled height beyond 6 storeys in response to accessibility to other community services, commercial activities, public transport, or increased housing demand. PC50 has proposed that 10 storeys is the maximum enabled height within the walkable catchment.

We understand this is a significant change from the existing built-form of Upper Hutt, but enabling denser development and building upwards enables the most efficient use of land, and will help us meet our housing demand identified in the HBA (Housing and Business Development Capacity Assessment).

What does PC50 mean for the future of Upper Hutt's urban area?

The proposed provisions seek to enable a greater diversity of housing within Upper Hutt. The result is likely to be a denser urban form with a greater range of housing types, improving the availability of a range of homes to meet different community needs. PC50 will enable us to meet our identified housing demand from the HBA.

With this growth we want to ensure that Upper Hutt remains a well-functioning urban environment, with sufficient public and private open space, an attractive urban environment and good connections to public transport. We have developed an urban design guide to ensure new development of greater density will positively contribute to the urban amenity of the city.

My property is in a walkable catchment, do I need to be High Density?

The NPS-UD sets guidelines on the extent of the walkable catchment, which we have taken into consideration during our mapping of walkable catchments within Upper Hutt.

Due to the direction of the NPS-UD, any site within a walkable catchment needs to be zoned to enable at least 6 storeys of development. PC50 has sought to classify this as the High Density Residential Zone, providing for residential development between 6 to 10 storeys. Only certain sites that meet site-specific criteria prescribed by the NPS-UD may be excluded from this more intensive zoning. In Upper Hutt's context, the following are seen to be the most applicable exemptions:

- Designations
- Heritage features
- Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) or Special Amenity Landscapes (SALs)
- High Natural Hazard risk
- Identified District Character areas
- Urban Tree Group site coverage, being majority coverage or located to reduce development potential

We would still like to receive your feedback if you believe your site should be removed from the walkable catchment extent using the above criteria, and on how high density development should be managed within walkable catchments.

How does PC50 enable residential subdivision?

PC50 focuses on reprioritising housing over subdivision, and as such subdivision standards will be more enabling for certain zones, including the enablement of zero net site areas around existing dwellings. The proposed subdivision standards can be seen below:

Zone	Minimum subdivision
General residential	350m ² or Zero
Low Density residential	600m ²
Distinct Character Precinct	1,500m ²
Medium Density Residential	250-300m ² , 700m ² or Zero
High Density residential	250-300m ² , 800m ² or zero

Zero net site areas apply where the subdivision is occurring around a residential unit, whilst a vacant lot will need to meet the minimum net site area standards detailed above.

Further information on the proposed subdivision standards and activity statuses for the zones can be found in the full set of draft provisions, available at: <https://letskorero.upperhuttcity.com/>.

What will happen to the Comprehensive Residential Development overlay?

The existing Comprehensive Residential Development overlay, which allows for a denser form of development in the residential area, is proposed to be replaced by the high and medium density residential zones. These will more readily enable intensification and give effect to the National Planning Standards.

How will denser development affect outdoor living space?

With denser and multi-storey development being more prevalent in the urban area, the private outdoor space of units is likely to change, from private garden spaces to balconies and communal outdoor spaces. We want to ensure that residents of denser development still have the opportunity to enjoy outdoor living space.

The proposed provisions include standards for outdoor living space, including minimum sizes for balconies for multi-storey developments. A study of surrounding open space provision will also be required for larger multi-unit development, and requirements placed on developers to provide sufficient private open space where there is seen to be a deficit of public open space.

The proposed outdoor living areas for the General and Low Density Residential Zones have also increased required minimum areas from the existing standards within the Plan, putting a greater emphasis on the need for outdoor living space.

How does PC50 control other activities?

Besides the proposed provisions relating to development and subdivision, PC50 will also be reviewing and introducing provisions to manage other activities anticipated within the residential area, including:

- Visitor Accommodation
- Home businesses
- Childcare facilities
- Places of worship
- Dairies and convenience stores
- Community Facilities
- Fencing

These activities will be controlled through a range of provisions to ensure residential amenity is maintained, whilst ensuring these activities can continue to operate where suitable within the residential zones.

How will this affect my home business?

The draft proposal contains specific rules to manage home businesses within the residential environment to ensure adverse effects on surrounding residential amenity do not occur as a result of home businesses operating.

We understand that home businesses provide employment opportunities, can support the local economy, and are increasing in a post-covid world. However, aspects including hours of operation and traffic movements will be controlled to ensure that adverse effects on residential areas are avoided. Changes are also sought to control the types of business that can operate in the residential area.

These proposed provisions will be applicable for new home businesses, but existing home businesses currently operating can continue under the existing use rights of the RMA.

How will new development impact our infrastructure?

As our city grows there will be more pressure on our existing infrastructure. As part of PC50 we have undertaken evaluations of the existing infrastructure within Upper Hutt to understand where existing constraints are and how large scale development could affect infrastructure.

Furthermore, PC50 will place an onus on new development to consider how the proposal will impact infrastructure and the need to highlight constraints and address them where necessary, which the current District Plan does not require.

Will PC50 enable the Southern Growth Area and Silverstream Spur?

The Southern Growth Area was identified in the Land Use Strategy (2016) as an area for future development. More information on the Southern Growth Area and the Silverstream Spur can be found [here](#).

PC50 is not proposing to rezone the Silverstream Spur or the Southern Growth Area. There has not been sufficient supporting information provided by the landowners to consider these growth area through PC50.

Therefore the Southern Growth Area and Silverstream Spur is proposed to be considered through a separate Council-initiated plan change process once sufficient information has been made available to support the plan change.

Rural Questions

What are the proposed zones for the Rural area?

The National Planning Standards prescribe a set of residential zone names and descriptions that Council's must choose from. The 4 zones proposed by PC50 for the rural area are:

1. General Rural Zone
2. Rural Production Zone
3. Rural Lifestyle Zone
4. Settlement Zone

A summary of intended zone outcomes for each of the zones can be viewed on the factsheets at <https://letskorero.upperhuttcity.com/>, which also includes the full set of draft provisions for each of the zones.

How will secondary dwellings be controlled in the rural zones?

The current District Plan does not allow for secondary dwellings within the rural zones, only allowing for Family Flat of 55m² or less. Under the draft PC50 proposal, secondary dwellings will be permitted within all rural zones at scales that reflect underlying zoning.

Within the General Rural and Rural Production zones, a secondary dwelling could have a maximum footprint of 100m² and in the Rural Lifestyle and Settlement Zones a maximum footprint of 60m² would be permitted. These size differences reflect the differences in anticipated lot sizes and densities for each zone.

The proposed provisions introduce rules relating to the location of these secondary dwellings on a site, and other rules relating to height and setbacks will still apply, to ensure rural character and amenity is maintained.

How will rural character be maintained?

We understand that our community values the rural character of Upper Hutt, and we want to ensure that development in the rural areas does not result in a loss of rural character and amenity through inappropriate subdivision and development.

The controls around subdivision and development within the rural zones have been developed to ensure the rural environment is still a place where people can live, and where development is permitted, but at the same time the rural character and landscape will be maintained. This includes the control of setbacks (side and road), site coverage, density, building heights and materials.

How is rural production being considered through PC50?

Our rural environment provides an important role in the production of food, and we want to safeguard the productive land we currently have. The Proposed National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land (NPS-HPL) is currently being developed by central government. It seeks to prevent the loss of productive land. We expect this Policy Statement to have full legal effect by the end of 2021.

PC50 has reflected the outcome sought by the draft NPS-HPL by proposing to zone land that is currently identified as having high class soils for production purposes and by limiting further development and intensification of this land. High class soils are those ranked in Class 1-3 and have thus far been mapped by LandCare Research.

Why have you considered rural clustering and how will clustering be managed?

The clustering of dwellings within the rural environment intends to enable the efficient use of sites that have the potential to be intensified within the rural environment. It means that development will be undertaken in a settlement style and located on the most appropriate portion of a site, with the remainder of the site being retained on one rural property to ensure that rural character is protected.

The proposal is that 70% of a site will need to be retained as rural undeveloped land to balance against the increased development density within the cluster area of the site, and restricting clustered development to a maximum of 10 clustered lots. Clustering is only proposed in Rural Lifestyle and Settlement Zones over sites of sufficient scale. Details for these requirements are contained in our overall rural provisions.

How has the Maymorn area, including the Gabites site, been considered?

Much of the Maymorn area is being proposed to be re-zoned as Settlement Zone, enabling intensified rural-residential living at a minimum density of 2,000m² (half acre). This includes allotments fronting Maymorn Road, Parkes Line Road, over Maclaren Street and around Old School Road. The proposed Settlement Zone will be buffered by Rural Lifestyle Zone to help the transition to production areas.

The plan change also proposes to rezone most of the Gabites Farm current Rural Valley Floor (Ural Production) and Rural Hill (General Rural) zoned area as Settlement Zone. For the Gabites block the proposal is that any large scale development of the site would need to provide a development plan for the site, which would ensure that the rural character is retained.

What is the Village Precinct and why is it needed?

PC50 is proposing to introduce two Village Precinct areas: one around Maymorn Railway Station; and a second in the core settlement area in Mangaroa Valley, at the beginning of Mangaroa Valley Road. This introduces an overlay on the Settlement Zone, enabling additional development opportunities.

These village precincts will help create a focal point for the future rural community. Within the precincts ancillary commercial and community services will be enabled which support the rural economy, such as local shops, hospitality, and other rural services. The proposed sites are considered to be the most suitable due to their central location and accessibility. The precincts also allow for greater density of housing to better provide for a concentration of services in a village setting.

Will more of the rural land be utilised to accommodate growth?

PC50 is not proposing to allow for urban development within the rural environment. The direction from central government, as detailed within the NPS-UD and the proposed NPS-HPL, is that growth should primarily be accommodated within the existing urban areas through intensification, and that our productive land should be safeguarded from development.

While PC50 is proposing to rezone certain areas of the rural environment to enable additional subdivision within the rural environment, this has been carefully considered to ensure that this does not occur within areas of highly productive soils, and controls will be established to ensure rural character is not affected by development.