

Discussion Document - Summary

PROVIDING FOR

RESIDENTIAL GROWTH

IN WATERLOO, EPUNI AND CBD EDGE

Earlier this year, Council released the *2012-2032 Urban Growth Strategy*, which contained a target of increasing the population of Hutt City by approximately 11,700 persons (12%) and the number of homes by at least 6000 by 2032. A portion of this growth is intended to result from an increase in housing and population densities within existing urban areas. Waterloo, Epuni and the Lower Hutt CBD edge were identified in the *Urban Growth Strategy* as areas particularly suitable for residential intensification.

Increasing housing supply and housing density is consistent with the recommendations of the *2012 New Zealand Productivity Commission Report on Improving Housing Affordability* and the *2013 Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region*.

We want to hear your views on future housing options in the area, before any changes are made to existing planning rules.

What is Residential Intensification?

Residential intensification refers to increasing the density of dwellings or population living in these dwellings within a particular area. Residential intensification can result in a range of house types including standalone houses on individual lots, semi-detached housing, townhouses and apartment buildings. Higher density can be achieved vertically (by an increase in the number of building levels) or horizontally (by decreased spacing between houses). Intensification does not always involve an increase in height.

What are the Benefits of Residential Intensification?

Residential intensification has the potential to bring about substantial benefits. Key advantages include a more efficient use of land, increased opportunities for greater housing choice with more housing options available to residents, ability to attract new residents, increasing the population residing close to shops and train stations, and ability to add to the vitality and liveliness of neighbourhoods.

Residential intensification does not necessarily result in cheaper or more affordable housing. However, an increase in housing supply is expected to reduce upward pressure on existing house prices.

Will Residential Intensification Change the Character of the Area?

Yes. The area is expected to transform over a long period of time from a low density area characterised by single storey houses to a higher density residential area with a mixture of standalone houses and a number of attached and multi-storey dwellings.

Can Higher Density Residential Areas Provide a Good Quality Residential Environment?

Yes. Examples of good quality medium and high density developments around the country show that it is possible to increase residential densities, in a way that continues to provide a high quality residential environment and a high level of amenity for existing and future residents.

Will I be Affected?

Existing residents will be affected to varying degrees, depending on how existing planning rules change, and the interest of developers and landowners to build new housing in particular locations. The proposed changes are expected to change the future style of housing in Waterloo, Epuni and the Lower Hutt CBD edge.

A NEW RESIDENTIAL GROWTH ZONE

It is proposed that a new Residential Growth Zone applies to land within ten minutes walking distance (or 800m) of Waterloo and Epuni Train Stations and the Lower Hutt CBD edge, excluding land to the north of Hutt River, land used as open space and land zoned Special Residential Activity Area.

The Residential Growth Zone is intended to be split into two sub-areas.

- Area 1 – intended to contain a wide range of residential development, ranging from standalone and semi-detached housing of one to two storey height, and multi-storey townhouses and apartments within five minutes walking distance (or 400m) of Waterloo Train Station and the Lower Hutt CBD edge. The height of development provided for would remain at 8m for most residential properties, with three-storey residential buildings up to 12m high able to be built on 'larger sites'.
- Area 2 – remaining area intended to contain a mix of existing and new housing in the form of standalone housing, semi-detached dwellings and townhouses (up to 10m height on large sites).

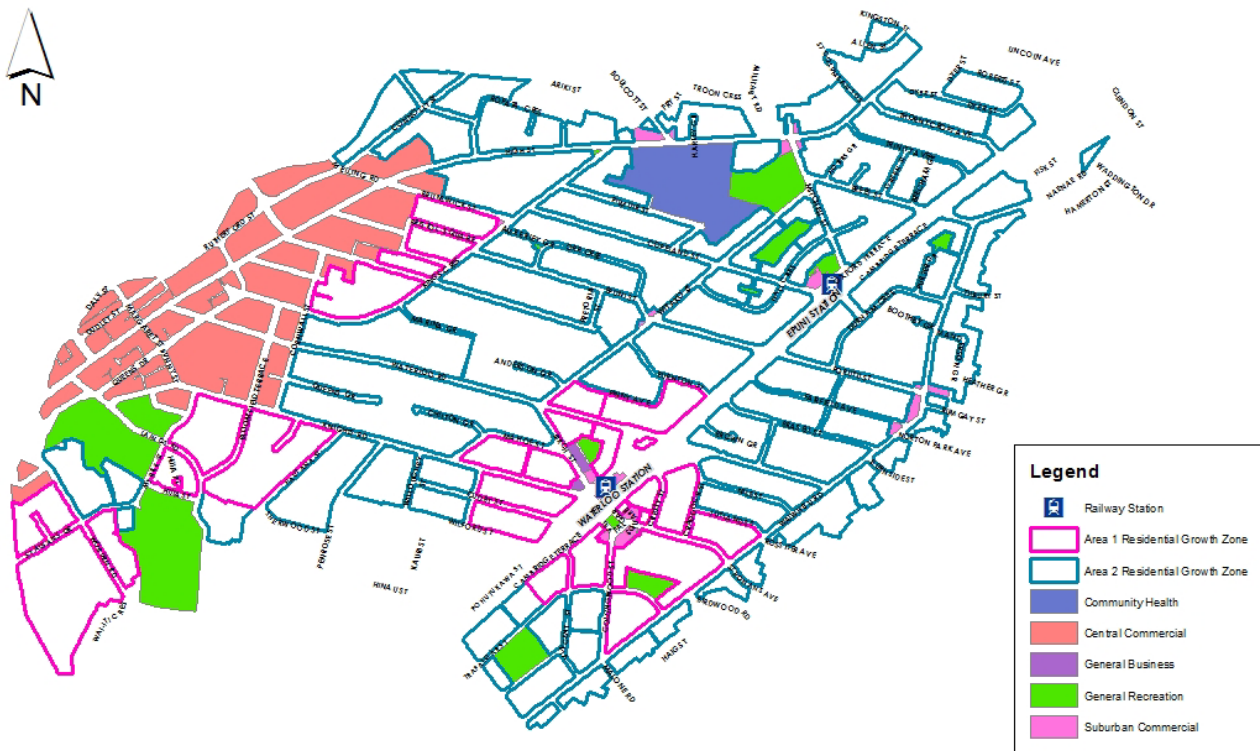


FIGURE 1: DRAFT SUGGESTED BOUNDARY FOR RESIDENTIAL GROWTH ZONE

The map shown as Figure 1 can be downloaded from Council's website huttcity.govt.nz/growth. A larger version is also included in the full *Residential Growth Discussion Document*. The exact boundaries for the Residential Growth Zone and its two sub-areas have not yet been decided. Comments on the suitability of land for inclusion in this zone are invited.

Landowners would still be able to build one and two-storey standalone houses without resource consent. At the same time the resource consent process would be made easier for a wider range of other house types, including semi-detached dwellings, townhouses and other forms of multi-unit housing, including low-rise apartments of three storey height. Residential buildings of three-storey height would be limited to larger sites only.

A design guide would be used to provide direction to developers on how to provide a good level of amenity for residents of new dwellings and also for residents occupying existing housing. New planning provisions, including a design guide, would be used to ensure that new development is of good design quality.

The general approach under consideration for providing additional housing supply and choice is briefly outlined below. A more detailed explanation is provided in the *Residential Growth Discussion Document*.

1. Creation of a new Residential Growth Zone, which largely follows the existing boundary for Medium Density Overlay areas within the *District Plan*.
2. Increasing the number of residential properties with a minimum lot size of 300m² (of which a maximum of 120m² can be covered by buildings and structures without the need for resource consent) within 800m of Waterloo and Eponi Train Stations and the Lower Hutt CBD edge.
3. Providing more opportunities to build semi-detached housing, with all semi-detached housing continuing to require resource consent.
4. Making it easier to build townhouses, with all townhouses continuing to require resource consent.
5. Increasing opportunities to provide first floor accommodation within taller roof spaces (especially on narrower or smaller sites) through the use of dormer roof windows and gable ends, without the need for resource consent.
6. Providing more encouragement for the redevelopment of larger sites for multiple houses by the introduction of new rules, including the ability to build residential buildings of 10m height. Resource consent will be needed.
7. Allowing for the construction of three storey apartments up to 12m in height on larger sites generally within 400m of Waterloo Train Station and the CBD edge. Resource consent will be needed.
8. Allowing for three storey mixed-use development in the Suburban Commercial Activity Area (Waterloo Shopping Area) within 400m of Waterloo Train Station. Resource consent will be needed.
9. Allowing for the replacement of existing commercial development in the General Business Activity Area within 400m of Waterloo Train Station with multi-level residential dwellings.

A RANGE OF HOUSING TYPES

Dwellings with Dormer Windows and/or Gable Ends

A dormer is a window that is set vertically on a sloping roof. A gable end is the end wall of a building, which is topped by a triangular shaped sloping roof. These roof features are often used to provide first floor accommodation within existing roof spaces, for dwellings with taller roofs. They provide an alternative to a typical two-storey house design. Dwellings with dormer windows and gable ends are easier to fit on smaller sites than typical two-storey standalone dwellings.

A possible new provision for dormer windows and gable roof ends is an allowance for some dormer windows and gable roof ends which do not comply with the existing setback from property boundaries rule known as the 'height recession plane'. This allowance could be limited to features of a certain size.



FIGURES 2 AND 3: DWELLINGS WITH DORMER ROOF WINDOWS AND GABLE ENDS

Semi-Detached Housing

Semi-detached housing refers to housing which is joined or attached to another house on one side only by a common wall. Semi-detached housing can make a better use of space on a small site, than a pair of standalone houses. A pair of semi-detached dwellings can be built which has a similar or smaller building size and shape than a two-storey standalone house as shown in the figure below.

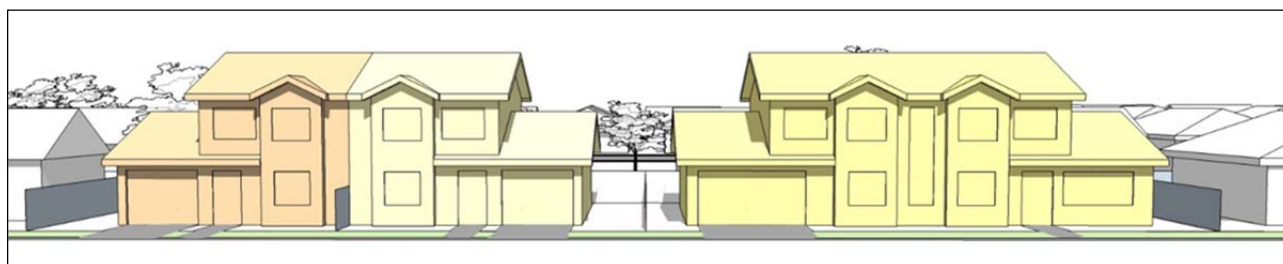


FIGURE 4: VISUAL COMPARISON OF PAIR OF SEMI-DETACHED DWELLINGS (LEFT) WITH STANDALONE HOUSE (RIGHT)

Possible new provisions for semi-detached housing are:

- Reduced minimum lot size for each house to 200m² or 400m² for a pair of semi-detached dwellings.
- Reduced car parking requirement from two to one on-site car parking space per dwelling (2 spaces per pair).
- Minimum private outdoor space available to each dwelling.
- Making it clear that new dwellings can be attached to another dwelling.
- Matters of consideration in the assessment of resource consent limited to specific matters.



FIGURE 5: AERIAL VIEW OF SEMI-DETACHED HOUSING



FIGURE 6: PHOTO OF SEMI-DETACHED HOUSING

Townhouses

There is a wide variety of townhouse designs that can range from one to three stories in height. Townhouses occupy less space than standalone houses and have the potential to significantly increase the number of new dwellings which could be built on a site.

The *District Plan* currently contains provisions and a design guide relating to multi-unit housing developments, including townhouses. There are several examples of semi-detached and townhouse developments within Hutt City, which have been granted resource consent.

It is proposed that new rules be created, which simplify the resource consent process for this type of development, by clarifying that dwellings attached to other dwellings on both sides is an acceptable form of housing development. Council would continue to retain the ability to consider the design and appearance of new development, as well as any impacts on the amenities enjoyed by persons living in adjacent homes, when assessing these types of applications.



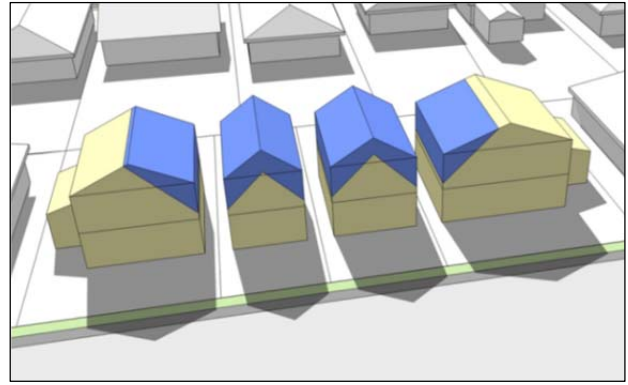
FIGURE 7: SITE PLAN FOR 3 TOWNHOUSES



FIGURE 8: SITE PLAN FOR 8 TOWNHOUSES

Special Rules for Multi-Unit Housing on Larger Sites

Council wishes to encourage additional multi-unit housing, due to its substantial potential to increase the number of dwellings in an existing urban area. Redeveloping existing housing is expensive. To improve the commercial viability of redeveloping areas for multi-unit housing, Council is considering a range of changes to existing multi-unit housing development rules, particularly for larger sites. Council is seeking feedback on how 'large' a large site should be.



FIGURES 9 AND 10: SITE PLANS FOR TWO STOREY STANDALONE HOUSES ON MULTI-UNIT HOUSING SITES

The houses in the above figures comply with existing setback rules at the boundary of the multi-unit housing site, but do not comply with these rules within the site. The portion of the houses which do not comply with internal setback rules is highlighted in blue on the figure to the left.

Possible new provisions for all multi-unit housing are:

- Existing setback rules to apply from outside edge of housing development site, rather than internal lot boundaries.
- Existing site coverage by buildings and hard surfaces to be calculated for the total housing development site, rather than internal lot boundaries.

Possible new provisions for multi-unit housing on larger sites are:

- Increase in building height from 8m to 10m. A height of 10m would need to be positioned away from side and rear property boundaries.
- Increase in side and rear yards from 1m to 3m.
- Change to front setback rules to allow a multi-level building to be positioned closer to the road boundary.
- Increase in proportion of site able to be covered by buildings from 40% to 50%.

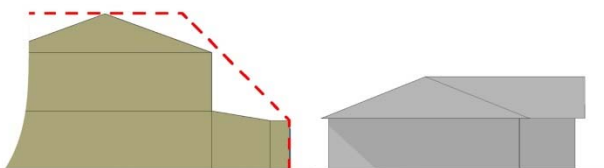


FIGURE 11: TWO STOREY HOUSE WITH SHED WHICH COMPLIES WITH EXISTING SETBACK RULES ALONG REAR BOUNDARY

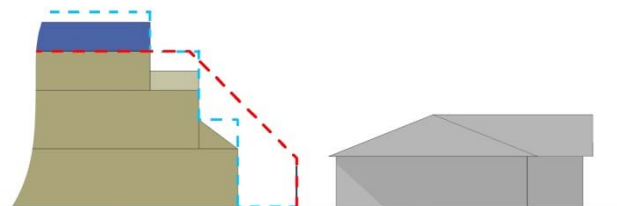


FIGURE 12: THREE STOREY BUILDING WHICH COMPLIES WITH POSSIBLE NEW SETBACK RULE ALONG REAR BOUNDARY

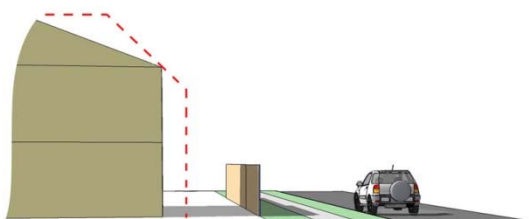


FIGURE 13: TWO STOREY HOUSE WHICH COMPLIES WITH EXISTING SETBACK RULES ALONG FRONT BOUNDARY

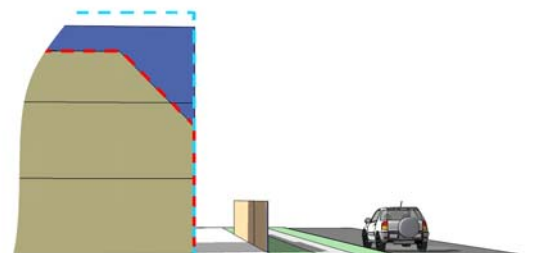


FIGURE 14: THREE STOREY BUILDING WHICH COMPLIES WITH POSSIBLE NEW SETBACK RULE

A red dotted line is used in figures 11 to 14 to show the area that a house needs to be contained within to comply with the existing setback rules which apply to rear, side or front property boundaries. A possible alternative setback rule is shown by the blue dotted line. The section of the three storey building which does not comply with the existing setback and height rules is highlighted in blue.

Three-Storey Apartments

Council is considering provisions to encourage three-storey apartments within 400m of Waterloo Train Station and the Lower Hutt CBD edge. Possible new provisions for three storey apartments are:

- Increase in building height from 8m to 12m for larger sites only. A 12m height would need to be positioned away from side and rear property boundaries.
- An increase in building setback from the side and rear boundaries of the total development site.
- Change to front setback rules to allow a multi-level building to be positioned closer to the road boundary.
- Increase in proportion of site able to be covered by buildings (currently 40%) and hard surface areas (currently 70%).
- New requirement for private or shared outdoor living space(s).
- New requirement on minimum unit size.
- New requirement for garbage/waste recycling facilities.



[FIGURES 16 AND 17: SIDE PROFILES OF THREE STOREY APARTMENTS WITH FLAT ROOF \(LEFT\) AND PITCHED ROOF \(RIGHT\)](#)

The apartment on the left has a height of 9.3m, and the apartment of the right has a height of 12.0m.

Council is considering a change in approach in the assessment of apartment buildings, which allows a greater building height and scale to be achieved, where it can be demonstrated that a good visual appearance on the surrounding area and good levels of amenity for existing and future residents will be achieved. A focus on good urban design outcomes rather than compliance with bulk and location rules is considered to provide a better basis for providing for additional housing growth in a way that results in a high quality residential environment.

NEXT STEPS

How can I find out more?

- *Discussion Document for Residential Growth:*

The best way to find out more about the proposed changes is to read the full version of the *Discussion Document for Residential Growth*.

This document can be viewed online at huttcity.govt.nz/growth

Paper copies can be collected from:

- Hutt City Council Administration Building, 531 High Street, Lower Hutt
- War Memorial Library, Cnr Queens Drive and Woburn Road, Lower Hutt

You can request a paper copy by phoning 04 570 6666 or emailing growth@huttcity.govt.nz

- Open Forums:

Open Forums will be held at the Waterloo Plunket Clinic, 8 Trafalgar Square, Lower Hutt on:

- Thursday 4 December from 5:30pm to 8pm and
- Saturday 6 December from 10am to 1pm

You can drop by to collect information and ask questions from Council staff.

- Contact a member of the Environmental Policy Team on:

- Phone: 04 570 6905
- Email: growth@huttcity.govt.nz

How can I provide feedback?

Feedback can be provided in the following ways:

- Filling out the feedback response form and freeposting this to Council. The form is attached to the paper copy of the *Discussion Document for Residential Growth* or can be downloaded from huttcity.govt.nz/growth
- Filling out an online form at huttcity.govt.nz/growth
- Sending an email to growth@huttcity.govt.nz
- Provide a written or verbal comment at the open forum days (details above).

Please provide your feedback by Friday 19 December 2014

What happens next?

Following the end of the public consultation period, Council officers will consider the written and verbal feedback received. A summary of consultation responses will be made publicly available.

Chosen options to be pursued will then be translated into a proposed plan change to the *Operative District Plan*. Council will carry out further public consultation on a draft version of the plan change, prior to commencing the formal consultation process for a notified version of a plan change under the *Resource Management Act 1991*.