



Ministry for the  
**Environment**  
*Manatū Mo Te Taiao*

# Urban Design Case Studies

## Local Government

**N Z** URBAN DESIGN PROTOCOL



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## Introduction

The *New Zealand Urban Design Protocol* (the Protocol) was launched in 2005 and provides a platform to make New Zealand towns and cities more successful through quality urban design. The Protocol is a voluntary commitment by central and local government, property developers and investors, design professionals, educational institutes and other groups to create quality urban design and to undertake specific urban design initiatives. The development of case studies was initiated by the Ministry for the Environment as part of a suite of tools and resources to support the Protocol and to show how quality urban design improves our towns and cities.

This is the second volume of urban design case studies. The first set of 16 case studies from around the country published in 2005 demonstrated urban design qualities outlined in the Protocol. The nine case studies covered here are targeted at local government in response to the results of *A Survey of Local Government Authorities Urban Design Capability* that the Ministry for the Environment undertook in 2006. The survey results highlighted the need to build skills and capacity within and across local government in the strategic and operational levels, and to provide best practice examples of quality urban design. These case studies provide examples of ways that local government can incorporate quality urban design in strategies, plans and guidelines. Examples of best practice development projects throughout New Zealand are also included.

The case studies demonstrate the practical application of urban design principles and the benefits that come from good practice, and they identify areas where further improvements could be made. Each case study includes basic summary facts and project statistics, a description of the design process, the urban design issues, an

evaluation of the project's success and limitations, lessons learnt and the value gained. The evaluation of each case study is based around the Protocol's qualities of urban design, known as the seven Cs: context, character, choice, connections, creativity, custodianship and collaboration.

The case studies have been written by authors who researched the projects and processes or have been involved in the project development. Therefore, the views they express are their own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Ministry or other contributing organisations.

There are many examples around the country of quality urban design. Further case studies will be developed over time, including projects that signatories to the Protocol develop as part of their action plans.



## Summary of the Urban Design Case Studies

### Strategies, plans and guidelines

#### CHANGING THE SUBDIVISION CODE, KAPITI COAST DISTRICT COUNCIL

This case study focuses on the policy and practices used by the Kapiti Coast District Council to change its Code for Subdivision Development. Changes were based on creating strong relationships with key stakeholders, reviewing and strengthening organisational processes, and strengthening legislative processes to produce the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* and a set of companion guidelines. Jade Garden is used as an example of how the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* and associated guidelines supports quality urban design outcomes on the Kapiti Coast.

#### MIXED USE TOWN CENTRES DESIGN GUIDE, NORTH SHORE CITY COUNCIL

The *Good Solutions Guide for Mixed Use Development in Town Centres* is part of a suite of non-statutory design guides developed by North Shore City Council. The Guide was developed to encourage choice and diversity in the North Shore and to provide local examples of well-designed mixed use developments. This case study outlines the rationale and process for developing the design guide and the way the Council is raising awareness of the guide.

#### CENTRAL AREA DESIGN GUIDE AND REVIEW, WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

When the Resource Management Act was introduced in 1991, the statutory design guide approach in the Wellington District Plan was maintained and expanded because it was seen as a natural fit for the 'effects-based' planning regime introduced by the new legislation. This case study

details the 2005 comprehensive review of the Central Area chapters of the Wellington District Plan (eventually notified as Plan Change 48). The review gave the Wellington City Council the opportunity to reassess and redesign the urban design controls that applied to the Central Area in light of recent development trends, changes in legislation, evolving case law and district plan and design guide effectiveness.

#### CITY URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY, HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL

Hamilton City Council's urban design strategy *CityScope* establishes a framework to guide Hamilton towards a sustainable, quality environment. The strategy provides a strategic and visionary urban design framework to inform and shape all aspects of the Council and community's decision-making processes. This case study details the *CityScope* process, the relationship to the SMART subdivision demonstration project, and outlines the Council's ongoing development of urban design tools and processes.

#### URBAN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, GREATER CHRISTCHURCH

The *Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy* is a broad-scale, long-term land use strategy for the greater Christchurch area prepared under the Local Government Act 2002. The Strategy area encompasses eastern parts of the Waimakariri and Selwyn districts and the urban and some rural areas of Christchurch City, including the Lyttelton Harbour Basin. This case study outlines the process used to develop the Strategy and the means of implementing it.



## Quality developments

### **CITY REVITALISATION, SOUTH OF LICHFIELD, CHRISTCHURCH**

The South of Lichfield lanes revitalisation project has saved an historic part of Christchurch by finding new uses for old buildings and building on the existing urban form. The case study analyses the design issues and opportunities that have arisen from this project, including the reuse of historic commercial buildings, the use of public and private space and creating a diversity of uses.

### **COMMUNITY RENEWAL, HOUSING NEW ZEALAND CORPORATION, TALBOT PARK, AUCKLAND**

Talbot Park is a community renewal project initiated by Housing New Zealand Corporation in a site that consisted of 1960s public housing in poor condition. The project involved major refurbishment of 108 existing dwellings and the construction of 111 new dwellings. The public spaces and street network of the block were also radically changed. The case study outlines the project process, including working with the community, plan changes and the building development.

### **MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT, CHURCH LANE, QUEENSTOWN**

The Church Lane development in central Queenstown demonstrates how quality urban design outcomes can result from negotiations between private developers and councils. This case study discusses the design process, urban design issues, including noise and ways of creating new mixed use developments.

### **MASTER PLANNED COMMUNITY, ADDISON, PAKAKURA, AUCKLAND**

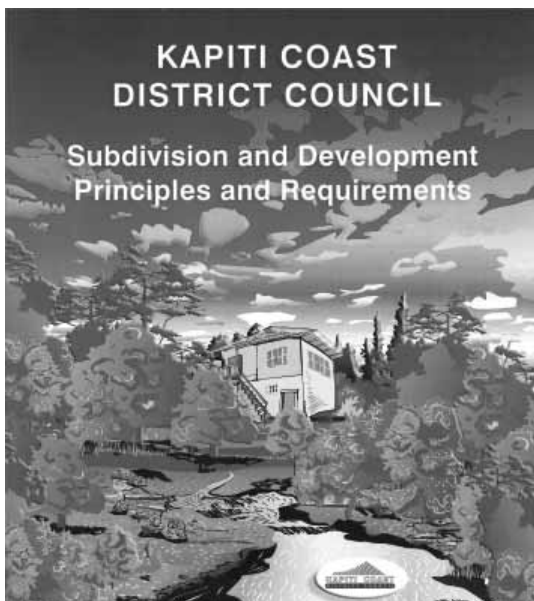
This case study examines the Addison master planned community in Takanini, a suburb of Papakura, Auckland. Addison is a good example of a medium density, greenfield residential development in New Zealand incorporating a range of housing typologies aimed at creating a sense of place and community that has attracted a diverse population. The challenges facing the design process and development are discussed. These include masterplans, council requirements and structure plans.

## ■ Strategies, Plans and Guidelines – Introduction

The case studies in this section focus on the processes required to develop urban design strategies, plans and guidelines in a local government context. They demonstrate how several councils have developed or reviewed strategies and policies to embed urban design into their everyday practice.

This section provides information on how local government has:

- changed subdivision codes of practice
- developed non-statutory mixed use town centre guidance
- created and reviewed statutory design guidance
- produced a city-wide urban design strategy
- organised a sub-regional urban development strategy.



## Changing the Subdivision Code – Kapiti Coast District Council

### FAST FACTS

**Subject:** Changes to the policy and practices of subdivision development

**Location:** Kapiti Coast District Council (40 minute drive north of Wellington)

**Population:** Current population 47,000 in 2007; predicted 57,000 by 2026

**Website link:** <http://www.kapiticoast.govt.nz/DistrictDevelopment/SubdivisionandDevelopment.htm>

**Case study researcher:** Viv Heslop, Vivacity Consulting Ltd

- <sup>1</sup> Old-style subdivisions in the Kapiti Coast were dominated by cul-de-sac development with low permeability and lack of connections with the wider urban area.
- <sup>2</sup> Kapiti Coast District Council Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements.
- <sup>3</sup> Workshops held during review of the Code.





## INTRODUCTION

The Kapiti Coast is a narrow coastal plane of 73,000 hectares and 40 kilometres of coastline within commuting distance of Wellington. The area is facing high residential growth on greenfield sites.

Kapiti Coast District Council (the Council) wanted to achieve quality urban design and provide a planned response to high residential growth. However, traditional methods of dealing with growth simply focused on building more infrastructure and improving traffic management. As a consequence the Kapiti Coast's natural environment was being adversely affected by development. For example:

- there was an increase in stormwater flow, which affected the water quality of streams and coastal estuaries
- the biodiversity of the natural environment was under threat
- potable water had to be sourced from increasing distances.

The Council began to question the relevance of the Kapiti Coast District Council Code for Subdivision Development (the Code), viewing it as a barrier to innovative and quality urban design. As a consequence, the Council reviewed its approach to subdivision and development management.

This case study focuses on the policy and practices used by the Council to support changes to the Code and how this new approach, coupled with a changed organisational structure and culture, is leading to improved quality subdivision and development.

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## RATIONALE FOR CHANGING THE CODE

Traditionally, subdivision and development on the Kapiti Coast was based on standards set out in the Code. The Code represented the Council's minimum standards, and controlled the infrastructural requirements of new developments, as well as the layout, pattern and character of urban and rural development.

While the Code set out and maintained important health, safety, management and maintenance factors for new subdivisions, it had a negative impact on the environmental effects and design quality of new subdivisions. The wording of the Kapiti Coast District Plan (the District Plan), and the application of the Code, meant that alternative innovative designs were being treated as non-complying activities.

The Code supported flattening of land to provide easily serviced sites and over-width roads to ensure trouble-free parking and access. The result was subdivisions that had little character, and designs that did not relate to the important topographical and landscape features of the Kapiti Coast. Subdivisions were characterised by cul-de-sacs and low permeability between, and within, adjoining subdivisions and the wider urban area.

Developers were concerned about the prescriptive nature of the Code, especially when trying innovative subdivision designs. In addition to this, the community, in the 2003 Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP), had expressed a desire for better subdivisions in the district.

In 2002, the Council employed a sustainable subdivision engineer and gained a new chief executive officer, both of whom were instrumental in proposing and supporting new concepts for subdivision and development. These internal champions were well supported by a management team who was willing to see a change to subdivision development in the area.

The Council recognised that any new approach to subdivision planning and development would require a new application method and the formulation of an urban design skills base, both within and outside the Council, to support its implementation.

■□ The Code was reviewed and changed to the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* and was based on three key elements employed by the Council:

- building relationships with key stakeholders
- reviewing and strengthening organisational processes
- strengthening the legislative framework.

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#### BUILDING RELATIONSHIP WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The Council's sustainable subdivision engineer was tasked with reviewing and revising the Code. This involved consultation with developers and their representatives, as well as with the Council's main clients. These meetings were key to changing the Code and provided an opportunity for the Council to communicate its vision and intent to promote sustainable development.

The development community, through a core group of developers, was involved in reviewing the new guide as it was being drafted.

During the review process, the Council also met with other key stakeholders, including environmental groups in order to make the process as transparent as possible, and to allow for all views to be considered and taken into account. As a result, only a small number of submissions on the subdivision district plan change were received.

#### REVIEWING AND STRENGTHENING ORGANISATIONAL PROCESSES

The Council set up an internal Design and Review Team to ensure ongoing links were made within the organisation, as well as with resource consent applicants. This team holds pre-application meetings with resource consent applicants to analyse:

- proposed public space projects, such as roads, reserves and open spaces
- strategic or community design issues
- significant design implications, for example, road upgrading and community facilities
- opportunities for innovative subdivision and development design, and best practice options.

Another key organisational change was the development of a strong culture of collaboration within the Council. Staff are encouraged to work together and discuss issues that cross departmental boundaries.

The Council is beginning to rotate staff amongst its various departments. The purpose is to build staff capacity for the various council processes and provide an environment that recognises individual development needs. To that end, staff rotation is seeking to create a stable working environment, where staff see internal, rather than external, opportunities for career advancement.

The Council has also included cross-team expectations and requirements in all job descriptions, highlighting its commitment to collaboration and an understanding that implementation is a council-wide process.

The Council has a focus on building capacity with staff and the wider community. An example was involving an external urban designer to train staff and representatives from developer and environmental groups. This helped ensure everyone had the same level of urban design knowledge.



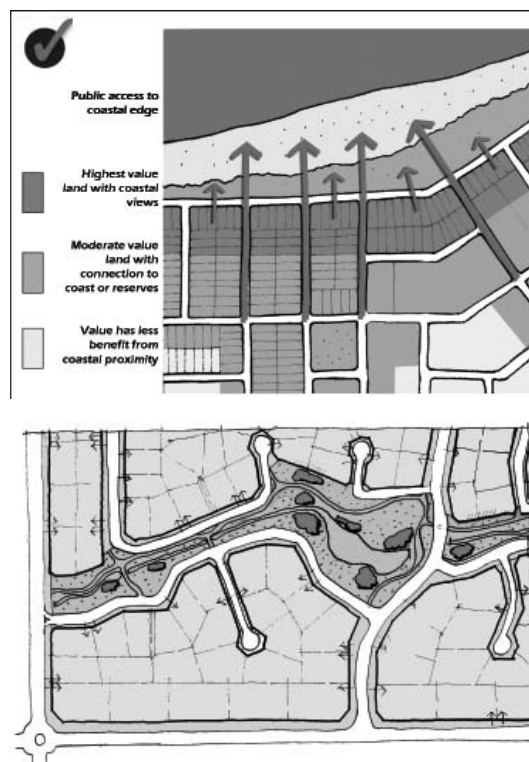
## STRENGTHENING THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The main regulatory change for the Council was adopting the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* into the District Plan – via a plan change. The Council also uses plan changes (private and council initiated) to give effect to structure plans and masterplans with a set of key development principles formulated through the 2003 LTCCP.

The Council also developed supporting non-statutory guidelines to help developers meet the outcomes being sought. These guidelines include a *Best Practice Subdivision Guide* and a *Medium Density Housing Best Practice Guide*. The Council is in the process of developing a streetscape strategy and guideline, and a rural subdivision guide. These are now statutory documents under the District Plan and are companion documents to the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements*.

The *Best Practice Subdivision Guide*, developed by Urbanism Plus, won the Resource Management Law Association's 2007 Project Award because of its 'outcomes focused approach to integrated resource management'.

The Council has a commitment to reviewing implementation of *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* on an ongoing basis. Although it has only been operative since 2005, a review is planned for 2008.



- 1 Public access to the coastal edge – *Best Practice Subdivision Guide*.
- 2 Integrating streams and vegetation to become a valuable natural asset and amenity of the new development – *Best Practice Subdivision Guide*.

## OUTCOMES TO DATE

Since the adoption of the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* in 2005, there has been positive change in both the development process and built developments. The urban design ethic is filtering through the Council, as well as into the development community.

Developers are getting positive benefits from the Council pre-application meetings. The Design and Review Team is proving to be effective in presenting a united front on the outcomes the Council is seeking with developers. The Council also takes the



1-4 Jade Gardens.

opportunity at these meetings, and through other contact with developers, to discuss the economic benefits of quality design. The benefit to Council is quality urban design resource consent applications.

Developers are seeing a market advantage in providing innovative subdivisions that respond to the local environment and provide better places for people to live. The Council assists developers in getting innovative subdivision solutions with a non-notified resource consent process if they comply with the standards for medium density developments as set out in the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* and *Medium Density Guide* in the District Plan. This provides developers with an economic incentive, because it reduces their costs while increasing certainty of how their consents are going to be assessed.

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#### JADE GARDEN, PARAPARAUMU: AN OUTCOME HIGHLIGHT

Jade Garden, part of the Waterstone Development, has 26 houses, and has a higher housing density than normal subdivisions in Paraparaumu. It was designed and built by Jade Garden (Kapiti) Ltd and is a good example of how the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* and the companion guidelines support quality urban design outcomes.

The urban design features of Jade Garden include:

- a connected road network and roads that are narrower than many of the other developments in the local area
- living spaces that face the street and private outdoor areas to the rear of each house
- fencing that can be seen through
- building materials chosen for long-term durability
- proximity to a planned railway station.

Jade Garden is innovative in its use of low-impact design features on each lot and within the development as a whole. The houses are all two storey, with two or three bedrooms, open-plan living areas



and single or double garages. Each house has a ‘watersmart’ system installed that captures rainwater from the roof for external use and greywater from the shower for a trickle irrigation system for the lawns. Each house also has low-flow showerheads, which reduce water use. The maintenance of these low-impact design features is included as a covenant on the title of each property.

In terms of the low-impact design features in the overall development, an extensive open space area consisting of ponds and a wetland also provides stormwater treatment. The incorporation of onsite stormwater management has added a useful feature to the area, and is seen as an asset by both residents and the wider community.

Benefits to house buyers in this development include:

- connections with the neighbours
- good quality, low-maintenance houses
- the environmental features.

The community is mixed, and includes older people, investors seeking rental properties, single people, families and new immigrants. The development’s success has given the developer confidence that consumers and the community want to see increased housing density with high-quality public open space and good transport connections.

## EVALUATION OF URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

CONTEXT	<p>As stated, Kapiti Coast is characterised by rapid urban growth, which presents challenges in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ planning to accommodate subdivisions and development</li><li>■ providing the infrastructure and facilities required to fit the Kapiti Coast environment.</li></ul> <p>The Council believes that the <i>Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements</i> and its companion guidelines support developments that better fit the local context and the outcomes being sought by the Kapiti Coast community. They acknowledge the area’s unique dunes and landforms and aim to ensure that any development is responsive to the site.</p>
CHARACTER	<p>The <i>Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements</i> and supporting guidelines allow for more consideration of, and a flexible approach to, enhancing, local character. The Design and Review Team process also allows the Council to work with developers to achieve the outcomes sought by the Kapiti Coast community.</p>
CHOICE	<p>The old ‘cookie cutter’ approach to past subdivisions created developments with a standard plan laid over a flattened landscape. This layout was characterised by cul-de-sacs, lack of permeability, car dependence and lack of pedestrian and cycle options. The outcome was subdivisions that were similar and offered limited choice in terms of living environments and housing types.</p>



Through the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements*, guidelines and the Design and Review Team, the Council now works with developers to ensure there is choice and diversity, and that any developments respond to the local site. Over time, as shown by Jade Garden, this approach will lead to diverse development types.

CONNECTIONS	<p>An objective in developing the <i>Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements</i> and the supporting guidelines was the integration of urban design principles, including connectivity, between new and existing subdivisions. In its transportation section, the <i>Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements</i> refers to the Council's wish to encourage pleasant, walkable neighbourhoods, with low-speed environments that enhance connectivity and decrease the area of 'black top' asphalt by differentiating parking bays and providing associated landscaping.</p> <p>The Jade Garden medium density development demonstrates these outcomes through its narrower, connected streets, and options for pedestrians and cyclists.</p>
CREATIVITY	<p>The Council has displayed a high level of creativity in both developing and implementing the <i>Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements</i> and its supporting guidelines. This has been supported by council senior management, who are open to trying new strategies, and developers and the community, who are open to trying new subdivision approaches to create quality urban design.</p>
CUSTODIANSHIP	<p>The <i>Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements</i> and guidelines support low-impact design, sustainable stormwater management, water saving and energy efficiency. Developers are incorporating a range of sustainability components into new developments, including passive solar heating, rainwater tanks, onsite stormwater management, reduced earthworks and restored and enhanced natural features and vegetation.</p> <p>The new patterns of subdivision and development promoted in the <i>Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements</i> and guidelines will lead to less dependence on motor vehicles for transport, helping to reduce carbon emissions.</p> <p>Some of the provisions that support custodianship include developers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ ensuring natural ecosystems are able to continue to function and are not degraded or lost as a result of the subdivision or development</li><li>■ enhancing existing natural ecosystems as a priority form of mitigation</li><li>■ ensuring that new subdivisions and developments are compatible with existing natural (ecologically intact) water systems as far as practically possible, or replicating natural systems and minimising the increase of stormwater runoff from those sites.</li></ul>
COLLABORATION	<p>Collaboration has been a core element in developing the <i>Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements</i> and its supporting guidelines, the creation of the Design and Review Team, and the use of pre-application meetings to encourage developers to</p>



consult early with the Council. Further collaboration has occurred, with urban design training being provided that incorporated council staff, developers and environmental group representatives.

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## LESSONS LEARNT

### CHAMPIONS AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE CHANGE

Support from senior management has been critical. The Council's senior management team played a key part in championing the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* and guidelines, creating new teams with a changing culture of communication and collaboration, and supporting ongoing implementation.

A key learning outcome for the Council was to up-skill staff on urban design in order to ensure smooth implementation of the provisions of the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* and guidelines. Staff need this knowledge to discuss applications and to articulate the outcomes the Council is seeking for urban design and development.

It is important to have motivated staff who are responsible for a project. Their enthusiasm and commitment often drive the development process. The appointment of a new subdivision engineer helped with changing the Code and implementing a new approach to subdivision and development. The Council's reporting and organisational structure now also supports the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* and guidelines – subdivision engineers sit in the strategy group, and report to the Sustainable Development Manager (Planning Manager).

The Council considers the pre-application meetings with the Design and Review Team one of the most important ways of working with developers to achieve quality urban design subdivision outcomes. Pre-application meetings encourage early discussion between councils and developers, so there is opportunity to influence the outcome of the process. Discussions at these meetings must be well documented and distributed to all parties so that all issues are addressed and there is no misinterpretation.

### COUNCILLOR INVOLVEMENT

Ideally, support and buy-in should extend to include councillors because their support and understanding is invaluable and strengthens the delivery of quality urban design outcomes. Councillors should also be included in training and development initiatives around proposed changes to policy and plans. The Council has identified that, if it was to develop the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* and guidelines again, it would seek more involvement from politicians because this would increase their commitment to policy and plan changes.

### INCLUSION IN THE DISTRICT PLAN

The Council has included the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* in the District Plan in order to achieve the desired outcomes it is seeking. The development process of the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* ensured the Council had support for its inclusion in the District Plan from developers and the community. The Council is, however, concerned that the District Plan may not be responsive to the changing community outcomes that are being developed through the LTCCP.



## CONSULTATION WITH DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

Because the Council involved the development community in reviewing the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* as they were developed, a good working relationship was formed. Developers' support for the changes was demonstrated when they began using the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* before it was included in the District Plan. This relationship is based on trust and a willingness of the development community to consider new urban design ideas and gain pre-application support from the Council.

## NO NEED TO REINVENT THE WHEEL

The Council drew on international and national examples to develop the general and performance requirements in the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* and supporting guidelines, including the New Zealand Standard Subdivision for People and the Environment. While the approach taken by the Council was new, many of the ideas embraced in the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* and guidelines are found in a range of other urban design documents and publications.

## LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Because the Council needs to lead by example, it would like to see further innovative urban design approaches used in its internal projects, such as capital works. This has meant the Council is using processes such as the Design and Review Team for its own road, building and open space projects.

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## CONCLUSION

The Council responded to the pressing issue of growth on the Kapiti Coast with an innovative and collaborative approach to subdivision and development. It has led the way in supporting quality urban design and development by updating the old engineering code of practice.

The Council is already seeing improvements in the quality of applications and on-the-ground developments. A commitment to developing good working relationships within, across and outside the Council has been rewarded by enthusiasm from staff, developers and the community, and resulted in urban design-led approaches leading to better outcomes.

While it is still early days for the Council in implementing the *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements* and guidelines, its approach is leading to improved design and development outcomes for the Kapiti Coast. The Council has led the way in reviewing policies and plans to provide more of a sustainable development focus to planning, and in recognising the need to build organisational capacity to ensure implementation is successful.

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## RESOURCES

Heslop, V. and Guerin A. 2007. *Out with the Old and in with the New: The Kapiti Coast experience with changing the rules of the game for subdivision and development*. A paper presented at the Annual New Zealand Planning Institute Conference, April, Palmerston North.

Kapiti Coast District Council Subdivision web pages <http://www.kapiticoast.govt.nz/DistrictDevelopment/SubdivisionandDevelopment.htm>

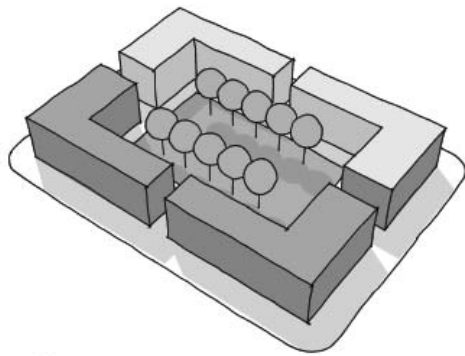
Kapiti Coast District Council 2005. *Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements*.



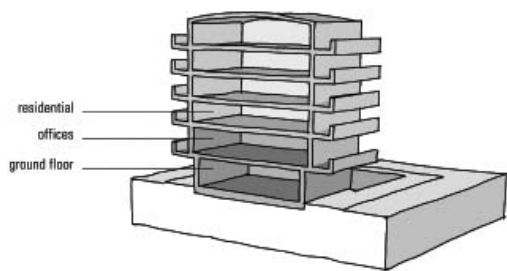


Kapiti Coast District Council 2007. *Best Practice Subdivision: A design guide for developers, planners, surveyors, architects, engineers and others*. <http://www.kapiticoast.govt.nz/NR/rdonlyres/59E6C7BB-BDC6-4431-A9D4-37156103686B/39732/FINAL031206FULLsmallest.pdf>

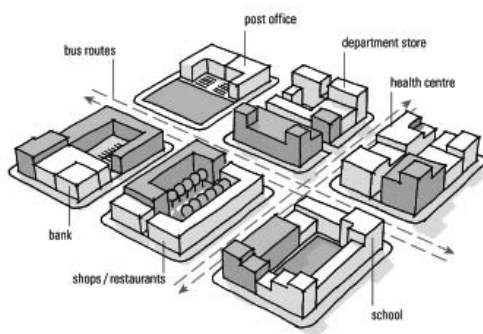
Kapiti Coast District Council 2007. *Best Practice Medium Density Housing: A design guide for developers, planners, architects and others*. <http://www.kapiticoast.govt.nz/NR/rdonlyres/59E6C7BB-BDC6-4431-A9D4-37156103686B/44648/KapitiCoastMediumDensityHousingBestPracticeGuide.pdf>



commercial  
residential



commercial  
residential



mixed use

- 1 Horizontal mixed use development.
- 2 Vertical mixed use development.
- 3 Mixed use development in a town centre.

## Mixed Use Town Centres Design Guide – North Shore City Council

### FAST FACTS

**Publication title:** *Good Solutions Guide for Mixed Use Development in Town Centres*

**Subject:** Design guide (non-statutory) concentrating on mixed use development, describing general principles and specific information with case studies in Parnell, Albany and Devonport, Auckland

**Format:** 75 page softcover book and web-based PDF with text, photos and illustrations

**Published by:** North Shore City Council, but has New Zealand-wide context.

**Publication date:** June 2005

**Website link:** [http://www.northshorecity.govt.nz/your\\_neighbourhood/Urban-design/Design-guidelines/Mixed-use.htm](http://www.northshorecity.govt.nz/your_neighbourhood/Urban-design/Design-guidelines/Mixed-use.htm)

**Case study researcher:** Aaron Sills, Sills van Bohemen Architecture



## INTRODUCTION

The *Good Solutions Guide for Mixed Use Development in Town Centres* (the Mixed Use Guide) is part of a suite of non-statutory good solutions design guides developed by North Shore City Council (the Council). Two earlier non-statutory design guides were produced in 2003: *Good Solutions Guide for Medium Density Housing* and the *Good Solutions Guide for Heritage Buildings*; and in 2006, the *Good Solutions Guide for Apartments* was published.

A mixed use development is defined in the Mixed Use Guide as one that contains both residential and non-residential uses. It may be of any scale, from a single building to an entire precinct or area. The dissimilar uses of a mixed use development may be arranged either vertically or horizontally, or as a combination of the two.

The Mixed Use Guide promotes quality architectural and urban design as integrated components of a quality development. There is also a strong emphasis on issues around a development's relationship with its context. Issues of compatibility (arrangement of uses, noise, relationship to the street and integration/streetscape character) are discussed in terms of both internal relationships (within the mixed use development) and those between the development and its context. Location of the development is seen as a key issue in the Mixed Use Guide; a site close to a town centre is optimal because of the non-residential uses that are already present in these situations. The Mixed Use Guide explains the mixed use development type as an instrument in designers' repertoires, available to be used in specific circumstances in order to achieve particular urban design goals.

Mixed use developments in town centres can:

- protect the commercial uses that provide employment – which might otherwise be lost to residential development
- help to contain urban sprawl and allow occupants to be close to new or existing services and facilities
- provide opportunities for living and working in close proximity, potentially reducing private vehicle use
- retain 24-hour vibrancy – which might otherwise be lost if residential uses predominate
- provide work-from-home accommodation that is well connected to commercial areas and their available services
- allow people to live close to recreation, entertainment and services (reducing the amount of car use or providing further opportunities for those who do not drive)
- provide low-maintenance accommodation opportunities
- provide diversity and choice in accommodation type, style and size.

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## RATIONALE FOR DEVELOPING THE NON-STATUTORY MIXED USE GUIDE

Between 2002 and 2007, the Council's planning and urban design staff identified several issues common across the urban and suburban town centres of North Shore City. These include:

- an increasing demand for residential accommodation close to town centres, with developers attempting to satisfy this demand with building typologies that achieve higher density levels (mainly apartment and terraced developments)



- a relative lack of experience amongst some developers and their designers of these larger-scale development types, and the particular issues involved in them
- several poor examples of residential developments realised, with little regard for their negative effects on the surrounding public domain
- a tendency towards stagnation of traditional main street commercial centres resulting from an increase in remote big-box retail areas and local shopping malls.

As a result, the Council decided to take a non-statutory educative approach to improve development quality. This was beneficial in developing awareness amongst designers, developers, council staff and decision makers. The Mixed Use Guide addresses the above issues by:

- explaining the mixed use form of development and its importance as residential populations of town centres continue to grow
- increasing awareness and understanding amongst designers, developers, council staff and decision makers of mixed use development and its potential to deal with urban design issues
- raising awareness of the importance of quality design
- stressing the importance of working with the best available design professionals when undertaking a mixed use development.

The production of the Mixed Use Guide may have contributed to an increased demand for higher quality developments. The Council needs to continue to train staff in the use and promotion of the Mixed Use Guide. Other statutory, rule-based methods are being developed.

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#### PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THE DESIGN GUIDE

The Mixed Use Guide was managed by the Council with Sarah Lindsay (Urban Design Advisor, North Shore City Council), the author. Research and analysis of similar design guides from New Zealand and overseas was undertaken. Input was sought from other local authorities and interested parties.

The main text concentrates on issues and solutions specific to mixed use development, such as site arrangement and capability, while also covering issues of context, sustainability, building form and pre- and post-design issues that are pertinent to other development forms. There is little else in New Zealand that is similar, other than the Auckland City Central Area and Wellington City design guides that are locality based rather than focused on a particular typology.

Four mixed use developments are used as case studies. They evaluate the design process, benefits of mixed use for that project and methods used to manage the consequences of adopting a mixed use typology. The case studies contain plans and photos of the developments and a table setting out basic project information, such as mix and distribution of uses, acoustic separation levels, street relationships, parking figures, waste management systems and applicable site bulk and location rules.

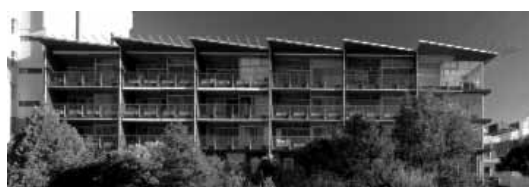
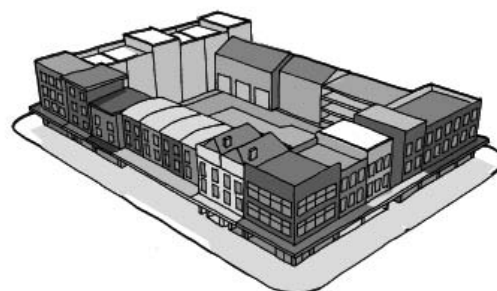
Quality graphic design of the Mixed Use Guide was considered vital, both because it should lead by example and because the audience values good design. There was also a desire for the document to be clear and non-threatening to non-designers, so the graphic style of diagrams has been kept informal and straightforward.



An urban design consultant and urban designers from local authorities reviewed a draft of the text. It proved difficult to persuade private developers or architects to comment on the draft document.

There was widespread support from other local authorities (who also gave financial support) because the document was seen as a valuable resource for regulatory planners when evaluating and discussing projects with applicants, as well as a useful means of building the urban design capacity of council staff.

The first print run of the document totalled 2,500 copies, and was distributed to local authorities throughout New Zealand. The document was also placed on the Council website for public access.<sup>1</sup> Council staff were informed of the availability of the document through in-house communication but there was no specific launch event. The Mixed Use Guide has also been used as support material for urban design continuing professional development workshops and this has aided in its promotion to potential users. In October 2007, the Mixed Use Guide was added to the Ministry for the Environment's Urban Design CD.



- 1 Mixed use perimeter block.
- 2 Hemisphere Apartments, Parnell, Auckland, is a commercial and residential mixed use development.
- 3 Queens Parade, Devonport, Auckland uses angled bays to provide a strong vertical modulation to reduce the perceived length of the development.

<sup>1</sup> See [http://www.northshorecity.govt.nz/your\\_neighbourhood/Urban-design/Design-guidelines/Mixed-use.htm](http://www.northshorecity.govt.nz/your_neighbourhood/Urban-design/Design-guidelines/Mixed-use.htm) for further information

## EVALUATION OF URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

<b>CONTEXT</b>	<p>The Mixed Use Guide was produced to provide examples and design methods for mixed use developments to reduce the negative effects on town centres of developments that were exclusively residential.</p> <p>The Mixed Use Guide emphasises the town centre as an optimal location for mixed use developments and describes how they can help maintain an active street frontage, while at the same time increasing the density, and therefore activity, of town centres through incorporation of residential units. The Mixed Use Guide also encourages mixed use developments to be designed to enhance the public domain, including the streets and street corners.</p> <p>Important mixed use issues around the combination of dissimilar uses and the interface between uses in a development and its surrounding area are discussed.</p>
<b>CHARACTER</b>	<p>The public's attitude toward, and acceptance of, a development is commonly determined by the extent to which a new mixed use development is physically and aesthetically integrated into its context. The appearance of a new building should not only relate to the existing streetscape, but should enhance it (with developing areas there should be cognisance of the desired future character). The Mixed Use Guide advocates that mixed use developments must work with nearby buildings to create a consistent, yet varied, overall character. In existing town centres this may be achieved by taking cues from nearby older buildings and reinterpreting them in a contemporary manner.</p>
<b>CHOICE</b>	<p>The Mixed Use Guide was developed to encourage further choice and diversity in urban design in the North Shore. The lack of choice in the past has created single-use, low-rise residential suburbs with long travelling distances to get to services and facilities.</p> <p>The resurgence of mixed use developments in New Zealand has been attributed to changes in how people choose to live and work, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ a desire to live nearer to one's workplace</li> <li>■ a rise in the number of people working from home</li> <li>■ a preference for easy access to entertainment, recreation and services usually found in town centres</li> <li>■ an increasing awareness that commuting by car exacerbates road congestion, creates pollution and consumes time</li> <li>■ an increasing elderly population, many of whom no longer drive</li> <li>■ a desire for low-maintenance living spaces.</li> </ul> <p>The Mixed Use Guide provides examples of how a well-designed mixed use development offers flexible space within an existing building, block or neighbourhood, for a variety of uses that change over time. It shows how different uses can work in combination – while methods exist for insulating one from the other where necessary.</p>



For example, built-in flexibility achieved through taller ceiling heights on the ground and first floors allows later changes in use.

The Mixed Use Guide shows how designing flexibility into a project to respond to changes in demand for a particular type of space can have long-term benefits. The Mixed Use Guide extends the potential lifespan of a new development without necessarily affecting construction cost in an adverse way.

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**CONNECTIONS**

Mixed use developments, by their nature, encourage a steady flow of foot and/or vehicular traffic to their premises. The Mixed Use Guide acknowledges that, while this traffic constitutes a 'built-in' passive security system, it also requires that occupants and visitors have clearly defined access points into the building or site. Access ways must safely accommodate all pedestrians and vehicles visiting the site. Integration of developments into external transport networks is emphasised by the Mixed Use Guide as important and valuable.

The Mixed Use Guide also highlights that when mixed use developments are well designed their active street frontages can serve to maintain continuity of retail areas that would otherwise be interrupted by an exclusively residential development.

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**CREATIVITY**

The Mixed Use Guide stresses the importance of using the best and most creative designers and architects on mixed use projects. It acknowledges the increased complexity inherent in mixed use projects but also highlights the benefits of using consultants who can deal with such complexities. For example, design is a key factor in determining a development's acceptance by the community, its saleability and the ease of its future management. Discussion of the importance of creativity in generating a sense of place and identity for mixed use developments is also included in the Mixed Use Guide.

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**CUSTODIANSHIP**

The Mixed Use Guide highlights that well-designed mixed use developments can be beneficial to the environment by:

- intensifying town centres, thereby reducing sprawl and conserving the city's natural environment
- enabling occupants to reduce the amount of time they spend travelling, thereby decreasing road congestion, traffic pollution and wasted time
- providing increased opportunities for using public transport, walking and cycling
- enhancing the quality of the local environment by creating lively, populated urban areas
- creating an environment that is safe by combining facilities that are active at different times of the day
- seeking to minimise the effects on quality and quantity of stormwater generated from the site
- incorporating passive and active solar design features that are integrated into the overall design and allow for future maintenance.



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## COLLABORATION

There is a strong emphasis in the Mixed Use Guide on choosing the right professionals for a mixed use project. Engaging a quality architect is one of the best ways to achieve a successful outcome for both the developer and occupants. Involving an architect who is experienced in mixed use developments early in the design stages of a project will help avoid problems that could otherwise require costly remedial measures after the development has been built.

The cost and time advantages that come from adequate consultation with local authorities is also emphasised, as well as the use of pre-application meetings and urban design review panels, where they are available.

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## LESSONS LEARNT

In order for the Council to have gained the best possible value from the Mixed Use Guide a promotional strategy should have been implemented. This would have helped to raise user awareness and understanding of the Mixed Use Guide and its use.

In addition to a promotional strategy, ongoing capacity building is needed to maximise the Council's return on investment in the Mixed Use Guide and to educate the target audience of developers, designers, architects, councillors, commissioners and regulatory planners. Further work is also required in developing a checklist to help both designers and regulatory planners to work through the various sections of the Mixed Use Guide. The effectiveness of a checklist is about to be tested for another design guide.

Sarah Lindsay, the urban designer at the Council who managed the Mixed Use Guide project says:

*... guides such as this one are most useful for raising awareness about specific forms of development, how such developments should be designed and why they are important in a larger city/regional context. However there is still work to do in promoting both the Guide and the benefits – economic, social and environmental – of good design ...*

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## VALUE GAINED

The Mixed Use Guide is a valuable resource in the establishment of a North Shore City Plan Change for new Mixed Use Zone rules.<sup>2</sup> This section of the North Shore City District Plan has been created to assist in the delivery of mixed use development in areas of Browns Bay and Albany Village; areas believed to be suitable for high-quality mixed use development. The Mixed Use Guide has been used to formulate a district plan change with new rules and assessment criteria.

The Mixed Use Guide is also a valuable resource for council planners when dealing with applicants. The document allows easy comparison between a series of benchmarks and the applicants' proposed developments. Illustrations and diagrams aid communication between applicants and processing officers. Having objective examples in the Mixed Use Guide for the planning officers to refer to avoids the tendency for applicants to assume any negative responses to elements of the proposal are subjective. Applicants who are referred to the Mixed Use Guide during a pre-application meeting tend to then self-analyse their design in terms of the Guide and refer to it in subsequent applications.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.northshorecity.govt.nz/PDFs/district-plan/NSCC-proposed-plan-change-19.pdf> for further information



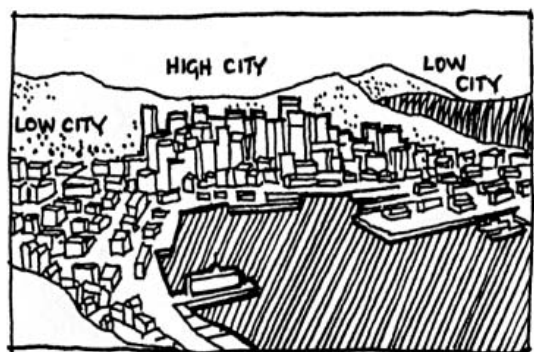


## CONCLUSION

The desire for sustainable urban communities with efficient use of infrastructure in New Zealand cities has resulted in a call for increased residential density in urban areas. Creating mixed use developments in town centres can help to achieve increased urban densities, but density on its own is not enough – good design is crucial for urban living to be a viable long-term option for New Zealanders. Statutory planning rules alone are not a guarantee of quality urban design. It is important that the campaign for quality design is addressed on several fronts. These include education and raising awareness through design guides such as the Mixed Use Guide, and the ongoing capacity building of designers and decision makers.



- 1 381–397 Parnell Road, Parnell, Auckland adds to, and reinforces, the Parnell Road streetscape.
- 2 Gladstone Road, Parnell, Auckland uses transparent windows and movable louvers enable communication with the street from above-ground residential apartments. Ground floor spill-out spaces add to the vitality of the public realm.
- 3 The Lofts, Albany, uses a landscape strip to create a visual buffer from the road.



- 1 Wellington's central area is the commercial and business heart of the city.
- 2 Wellington's central area is characterised by a 'High City' and a 'Low City'.
- 3 New buildings with poor relationships to a listed heritage building.

# Central Area Design Guide and Review – Wellington City Council

## FAST FACTS

**Publication title:** District Plan Change 48 Central Area Review

**Subject:** Statutory Central Area Design Guide implemented in conjunction with the objectives and policies contained in chapter 12 and the rules contained in chapter 13 of the Wellington District Plan

**Location:** Wellington City Council, Central Area

**Purpose:** General guidance for new buildings, and significant additions and modifications to existing buildings in the Central Area

**Format:** Specific and detailed design objectives are set out in each section, followed by generic guidelines

**Website link:** <http://www.wellington.govt.nz>

**Case study researcher:** Jeremy Blake, Senior Policy Advisor, Planning Policy Wellington City Council



## INTRODUCTION

Wellington City Council (the Council) has included design guides in the Wellington District Plan (the District Plan) since the late 1980s. The first design guide was developed in response to the poor quality of many of the buildings that were being built during the property boom of the mid-to-late 1980s. When the Resource Management Act was introduced in 1991, the design guide approach was maintained and expanded because it was seen as a natural fit for the 'effects-based' planning regime introduced by the new legislation. Each building could be assessed on a site-by-site basis, rather than through the blanket application of rule-based planning tools such as plot ratios and mandatory building setbacks.

The first design guide covered office development in the Central Area zone, which encompassed the majority of the central business district of Wellington from the port land to the north, through to the Basin Reserve in the south. This was quickly followed by two special character area design guides covering Cuba Street and Courtenay Place within the Central Area. By 2005, the District Plan contained no less than 15 design guides, with five applying within the Central Area.

The design guides were implemented through the District Plan as Controlled Activities. This activity status was chosen to provide a degree of certainty to applicants (Controlled Activities cannot be declined, the Council can only impose conditions) and to help gain acceptance of the approach.

In 2005, the Council began a comprehensive review of the Central Area chapters of the District Plan. The review gave the Council the opportunity to reassess the appropriateness of the urban design controls that applied to the Central Area in light of recent development trends, changes in legislation, evolving case law and the District Plan effectiveness monitoring that had already been undertaken.

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## MONITORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE DESIGN GUIDES

The Council began monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of its district plan in 2003. Given the importance of design guides in the District Plan, assessing the effectiveness of the guides was a key component of the District Plan monitoring programme.

The Anticipated Environmental Results (AERs) for the Central Area's design-based objectives and policies provided the benchmark to test whether those policies and objectives had been achieved. The AERs for the Central Area were:

- buildings have design qualities that create a positive relationship to public spaces and the wider city setting; and
- special qualities of identified character areas are maintained and enhanced.

From the AERs, a series of questions was developed by the Council to analyse if the design guides and rules to implement them were:

- achieving their stated aims
- improving design outcomes
- efficient and effective tools for achieving quality design outcomes
- promoting innovation and creative built environment solutions.



To answer the questions, a selection of approved resource consent applications (that involved an urban design review) were assessed and monitored by an independent Auckland-based urban designer (Barry Rae, Transurban) to understand if the guides created quality building outcomes. It was considered important to engage an urban designer who was not overly familiar with the local development market or involved in the development of the guidelines, thereby helping to ensure that the monitoring results would be free from bias.

Between July 2000 (the operative date of the District Plan) and December 2004, the Council processed 213 resource consent applications for additions and alterations to Central Area buildings or the construction of new buildings (under Rule 13.2.1 of the District Plan). Because of financial constraints, only 20 buildings within three of the six most commonly used Central Area design guides were monitored (these were the Central Area Design Guide, the Courtenay Character Design Guide and the Cuba Character Design Guide).

Barry Rae viewed each consent file, visited the site and spoke with the designer of each development. The purpose of these discussions was to elicit views about the effectiveness of the design guides from a user's perspective.

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#### MONITORING RESULTS

The main finding of the monitoring was that, of the 20 developments assessed, 60 percent achieved an urban design rating better than average. With 35 percent of the developments rated as good or exemplary.

This meant that 40 percent of the buildings studied did not obtain favourable design outcome assessments. Because of this, the monitoring report concluded that the design guides were not achieving their stated aims as well as they should be. However, the report was clear in stating that the design guides had a positive influence on urban design quality compared with the likely results of not having guidelines in place.

*We have found no evidence of the design guides stifling innovation and creativity. The remainder of the developments would have benefited from a more creative approach, the lack of which was not caused by the design guides. In fact, the poorer design outcomes suggest the need for stronger and more effective design guidance.*

The monitoring also identified that there was frustration within the development community relating to the design guides. Prior to the monitoring study, staff within the Council had already recognised that the content of some of the design guides was out of date. The monitoring report identified that this concern was shared by members of the development community.

*Many of the designers of the selected developments did not find the guidelines particularly helpful for the reasons that they are obsolete, vague, arbitrary or inapplicable to a specific situation. Further, many of the designers expressed frustration with the pre-application process because of personal views, conservative opinions and conflicting interpretations.*

The monitoring report also revealed that some applicants were frustrated at the lack of consistency in advice received from the multiple disciplines within the Council involved in assessing resource consent applications:

*Conflicting opinions were generally created by the differing approaches of different disciplines within Council, namely traffic engineering, wind engineering, heritage conservation, urban design and planning, to design elements of common interest.*



The monitoring identified several issues with the design guides. These were:

- some of the content was out of date with a focus on 1980s and 1990s large office blocks rather than the mixture of uses and building typologies that had emerged in recent years, such as rooftop additions, balconies, residential apartments and street level alterations
- the guides were not effective when implemented by way of a Controlled Activity rule because of the fact that applications could not be declined and the Council was limited in the scope of design-related conditions it could impose
- the limitations of the Controlled Activity status were often exacerbated by the relaxed bulk and location standards applying in the Central Area and the application of 'permitted baseline' scenarios to new developments
- Council design staff were often not involved early enough in the design process to integrate positive urban design elements into the proposal
- the District Plan did not deal well with conflicting issues (such as design, building height, heritage protection, pedestrian wind effects and signage) and needed a holistic approach to stop poor design outcomes
- the character areas were poorly defined (including large parts that did not share the characteristic features of the area) affecting the relevancy of the character guidelines to sites located outside the 'core' of the area.

The monitoring recognised that Wellington was generally seeing improved design outcomes because of the existence of the design guides, and the approach taken (to use design guides in the District Plan) was good. However, the guides and their implementation were not as effective as they should be, and the policies, rules, and guidelines needed to be updated to keep them relevant and improve their effectiveness. The Council's own internal processes required further refinement to ensure that the effectiveness of the design guides was not undermined by process issues.

In addition to issues raised by the monitoring, the Council was aware of several other matters that needed to be resolved. These were the operative District Plan allowing for 100 percent of a site being able to be built up to the maximum height, leading to:

- apartments being built with principal windows located on the boundary wall
- apartments being reliant on neighbouring properties remaining vacant to retain daylight and outlook
- new buildings with poor relationships to listed heritage buildings, with substantially larger buildings being developed immediately adjacent to a listed heritage item.

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## DESIGN PROCESS

### CENTRAL AREA REVIEW (PLAN CHANGE 48)

In 2005, the Council began work on the full review of the Central Area chapters of the District Plan (eventually notified as Plan Change 48). Commitment to achieving high-quality urban design in the Central Area through the District Plan provisions was a key aspect of the review, and supported by councillors and key stakeholders in workshops held prior to notification.



1 Example of active edge design at night in Courtney Place.

2 Example of building defining public space.

Prior to Plan Change 48, the focus for development fell largely on compliance with the rules regarding height, site coverage, wind and servicing, with issues of context and design coming (an often distant) second. The challenge for the Council was to reverse this mindset so that new buildings were designed in response to their setting, rather than just to the bulk and location rules in the District Plan.

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#### URBAN DESIGN ISSUES

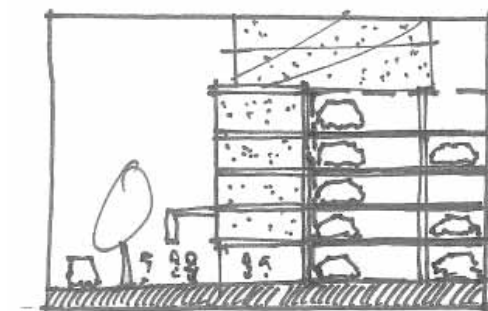
The Council had an established history of design control on which to build when it reviewed the Central Area chapters of the District Plan. The challenge for the review was how to work smarter and ensure that the District Plan provisions were as effective as possible. The project team for the review included: from the Council Gerald Blunt (urban designer), Barbara Fill (heritage advisor), Jeremy Blake, Elizabeth Moncreiff, Marian Smith (planning advisors) and consultant Graeme McIndoe (architect and urban designer). A key task for the team was to better integrate the wide range of district plan provisions that contributed to the built form of the central city. The three major areas identified as influencing built outcomes in the Central Area were building height, design criteria and heritage protection. Other design factors that influenced built outcomes included active frontages, management of wind effects, vehicle access restrictions, sunlight, access to parks and the creation of vacant lots.

In terms of the management of new buildings and their impact on the quality of public spaces, the Central Area review made the following changes:

- a complete review of the content of all Central Area design guides, to update them and direct the focus to key urban design principles
- the design guides were restructured to remove duplication, with a single Central Area Design Guide and appendices being developed for heritage areas or specific design issues



- the design guides were applied as a Discretionary Activity (Restricted) with the Council's discretion limited to design, external appearance and siting, and the location of building mass
- a building mass provision of 75 percent was included to ensure that new buildings provided amenity, adequate daylight onsite and were able to manage adverse effects on the public environment
- new policies were developed to provide guidance as to when it may be appropriate to develop over-height buildings in the Central Area, with a specific policy on the need for design excellence of extraordinary tall buildings
- eight new tightly defined heritage areas were proposed around significant clusters of heritage buildings and important public spaces to ensure areas with unique character and heritage values were retained
- within the heritage areas, building height limits were lowered to accurately reflect the scale of existing buildings in each area and as a starting point for new building applications
- new buildings that seek to exceed the building height limit in heritage areas must demonstrate that they will make a positive contribution to their heritage neighbours and the character of the area for the Council to have discretion to grant consent
- where possible, rules, rather than design guides, are used to achieve key urban form outcomes, for example, active street edges, a building's relationship to the street and sunlight to public spaces.



- 1 Example of building defining public space, and articulation of form and facade to give visual interest.
- 2 Parking located behind a veneer of activity, maintaining an active edge to the street.



## EVALUATION OF URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

<b>CONTEXT</b>	Ensuring that new buildings respect their context is an important element of the Council's approach to urban design. This message is clearly articulated in the Central Area Urban Design Guide, and a policy has been added to the District Plan to the effect that the Council will require high-quality building design that acknowledges, and responds to, the context of the site and the surrounding environment.
<b>CHARACTER</b>	The Central Area plan change deals with character on several different levels. At the macro level, the Council is seeking to preserve the 'high city/low city' model of urban form that is so important in defining the character of the central city. At the neighbourhood level, the identification of eight heritage areas is a reflection of the Council's commitment to maintaining and enhancing the sense of place, heritage values and character that these unique precincts provide to the city.
<b>CHOICE</b>	<p>The Central Area provisions allow significant land use flexibility and choice to users and occupants of the Central Area. The Central Area is covered by a single zone, where almost all land use activities are permitted, allowing the conversion of existing buildings for new uses and contributing to the vitality and vibrancy of the Central Area.</p> <p>The bulk and location controls also provide for a wide range of design responses. The building mass provision, in particular, does not predetermine any specific built typology, and allows building form to be manipulated to suit the requirements of the project and characteristics of the site.</p>
<b>CONNECTIONS</b>	<p>While the Central Area provisions do not create barriers for people wishing to enhance connectivity, neither do they work to actively encourage it. Specifically, the decision on the Central Area plan change recognised the need to undertake further work to identify options for the retention and expansion of informal pedestrian links throughout the central city.</p> <p>The Central Area plan change provides guidance on active street edges and connections between the building front and the street. Servicing and car parking guidance is also given on street edge connections and entrance ways.</p>
<b>CREATIVITY</b>	In managing the urban design outcomes in the central city, the Council has always sought to encourage innovative responses to the site, context and requirements of the development. No specific design solutions are contained in the design guide, and the bulk and location rules have been drafted to avoid provisions such as setbacks or plot ratios that can impact on design options. Accordingly, the provisions allow for an almost infinite range of massing configurations for new buildings to suit the requirements of the setting and project. Initial indications are that the new 75 percent building mass requirement is resulting in further variation in the design of new buildings, because utilisation of 100 percent mass is no longer available as the starting point for new developments.





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<b>CUSTODIANSHIP</b>	<p>At present, the Central Area provisions seek to encourage the incorporation of sustainable design features through policy guidance. The science and policy around the development of green buildings and sustainable spaces is advancing rapidly, and it is likely that the Council will investigate further measures to facilitate the uptake of sustainable building construction.</p> <p>The Central Area Design Guide also includes key elements of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) to help ensure that new buildings do not reduce the safety or comfort of adjacent public spaces.</p>
<b>COLLABORATION</b>	<p>Collaboration across the Council is required to reduce the possibility that applicants receive conflicting advice from different parts of Council during the pre-application and consent processes. Mixed messages can lead to confusion and frustration for applicants and undermine the achievement of quality urban design outcomes.</p>

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## LESSONS LEARNT

Before embarking down the design guide path, councils need to be satisfied that they have access to the appropriate resources and expertise to write effective design guides, and to assess and consider consent applications. Design guides require suitably qualified professionals to undertake assessments. Wellington City Council is fortunate in that it has an in-house team of skilled urban designers, and access to a pool of consultants from the lecturers at Victoria University of Wellington School of Architecture during periods of high demand. For the Council, being able to provide consistent, timely feedback and advice on proposed designs is key to successful design guidance.

When preparing urban design guides, councils need to:

- avoid content that is likely to date over the life of the design guide – that is, guides based on a specific development style or phase of development, such as office blocks as opposed to apartments or entertainment
- consider flexible approaches to accommodate changes over time due to changes in fashion, market forces and/or legislation
- consider how future design guides will be incorporated into the document structure, because the number of design guides tends to multiply over time
- future proof the design guides by placing high-level generic guidelines in an overarching ‘master’ design guide with scope to add area- or issue-specific guidelines as appendices
- phrase guidelines so that they cannot be taken as literal design solutions, with ‘approved elements’ being incorporated into the building design leading to a poor design outcome because the building is an assemblage of parts rather than a coherent design.

When implementing design guides, councils should:

- focus their energy on the pre-application stage of the consent process where the greatest gains can be made in terms of influencing building design and location to deliver quality urban design outcomes



- be honest when necessary – if the design is bad, they should say so as early as possible
- make sure their internal processes provide transparent, consistent advice on consent applications
- make provision for independent design review so that their urban designers are not accused of bias or imposing architectural preferences when the applicant has reached an impasse on key urban design issues that can not be resolved
- provide training and explanatory material for their officers, applicants and the community.

#### **DO DESIGN GUIDES NEED TO BE INCLUDED IN THE DISTRICT PLAN?**

The question of whether design guides should be located inside or outside the District Plan was discussed during the Central Area review. Those in favour of retaining the design guides in the District Plan felt that they carried increased weight and would be less open to legal challenge if they were included. Supporters also noted that it was easier to encourage clients into changing designs if they could be shown that the design guides were part of the District Plan.

The principle advantage of locating design guides outside the District Plan was that they could be updated without having to go through the plan change process. The question was asked whether, in reality, they would be updated any more frequently even if outside the District Plan. If a design guide is located outside the District Plan, it was agreed there would need to be strong policies that set a clear direction for the management of urban design rules and assessment criteria.

The Council decided that the benefits of including the design guides in the District Plan in terms of weighting significantly outweighed the negatives in terms of the time required to update the content of the design guides.

#### **DOES THE ENVIRONMENT COURT RECOGNISE DESIGN GUIDES?**

The legitimacy of utilising design guides as a planning tool has not been questioned by the Environment Court. Indeed, in the Council's experience, the Court has often found design guides useful in helping to assess whether a proposed development is appropriate and consistent with council policy. On two separate occasions, the Environment Court has directed the Council to prepare design guides for specific locations as part of a package to resolve appeals.

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### **VALUE GAINED**

#### **URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENTS**

The urban design assessment process, while not perfect, has resulted in the construction of better quality buildings than the Council could otherwise have expected. Monitoring of the consent process indicated the urban design quality of buildings improved as a result of the urban design process. Improvements were particularly apparent for proposals that were at the lower end of the quality spectrum when they were first lodged with the Council.

#### **DESIGN GUIDES**

The design guide documents, if prepared correctly and implemented consistently, can be a useful source of advice for applicants. They can also be used by architects and designers to influence the design briefs that they receive from clients.



The design guides are also important because they provide a structure for discussions between the Council and applicants. If there is a significant disagreement between the Council and applicant on aspects of a development proposal, the design guides provide an important framework for negotiations.

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## CONCLUSION

The application of design guides has led to an improvement in the quality of buildings being constructed in the Wellington central city area, particularly for buildings where the initial resource consent applications were of poor design quality. The first generation of design guides have helped the Council to achieve at least satisfactory design as the bottom line for central city buildings. A recent change to the Central Area Design Guide has been implemented to further improve building design in the central city.

It is important not to underestimate the ongoing cost and effort required to implement design guides. Their preparation and incorporation into the District Plan is only the start. The effectiveness of the design guides is principally determined by the Council's ability to provide high-quality design advice in a consistent and timely manner.

The Council's experience has been that demand for urban design controls increases over time. As the public's expectations and awareness of urban design matters grow, so does demand to apply design controls more widely. This usually results in an increase in the number of consents that are subject to an urban design assessment and the workload for those who provide urban design advice.



## City Urban Design Strategy – Hamilton City Council

### FAST FACTS

**Subject:** *CityScope* is a design-led urban design strategy on the future planning and development initiatives within Hamilton City

**Location:** Hamilton City Council

**Population:** Population 131,400 in 2005; projected 159,600 by 2016

**Implemented from:** 2006

**Website link:** <http://hamilton.co.nz/CityScope>

**Case study researcher:** Viv Heslop, Vivacity Consulting Ltd

- 1 *CityScope* projects include enhancing Hamilton City as a safe and attractive destination for night time activities.
- 2 How a city looks and feels is a crucial part of its identity – *Vista Think Again*.



## INTRODUCTION

The Hamilton City Council Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP), prepared in 2006, envisages:

*An urban environment with a strong and unique sense of place, where interaction of people is supported by an urban fabric of places, spaces and buildings that capture a sense of vibrancy, community and safety at a truly people scale.*

With its population growing, Hamilton City Council (the Council) wanted to capture the community's urban design aspirations and provide positive strategic planning on how the city would grow and develop. In particular, a clear urban design direction was required for the three main growth areas of Rototuna, Rotokauri and Peacocke. To achieve this, the Council developed the CityScope design strategy, with collaborative input from many groups and organisations.

The purpose of *CityScope* is to guide Hamilton City towards a sustainable, quality urban environment. *CityScope* achieves this by providing a strategic and visionary urban design framework that informs and shapes all aspects of the Council and community's decision-making processes. These span service procurement, joint venture projects, education programmes, regulatory planning, and align with strategic thinking around creativity and identity, social well-being and economic development.

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## THE CITYSCOPE PROCESS

Between February and June 2005, the Council initiated a series of urban design presentations and workshops involving key stakeholder groups (developers, planners, surveyors, engineers and architects). The purpose was to help the Council understand what it would take to deliver a city that reflected the aspirations of the Hamilton community.

In August 2005, the Council established a *CityScope* working party. This included representatives from senior management at the Council, the New Zealand Institute of Architects, New Zealand Planning Institute, New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, Property Council of New Zealand, New Zealand Institute of Surveyors, New Zealand Historic Places Trust, the Arts Council of New Zealand and an independent facilitator.

The working party's role was to develop a strategic framework of quality urban design initiatives and an implementation programme that would see *CityScope* initiatives expressed in all council activities.

The *CityScope* working party drew on the Ministry for the Environment's *The Value of Urban Design* report that showed the benefits of quality urban design and the costs of poor design. The working party recognised that the city's economic future and long-term prosperity were based on quality development and design.

The draft *CityScope* strategy was approved by the Council in December 2005 and a summary document circulated to all Hamilton residents as part of consultation on the draft 2006–16 LTCCP. The response was overwhelmingly positive, and the Council adopted *CityScope* in June 2006, unchanged.

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## CITYSCOPE – A DESCRIPTION

*CityScope* links urban design initiatives and civic leadership with a framework for future development of the built environment. The framework is based on six Ps, and a three-year programme of initiatives fall under these, with the aim of improving the design quality of Hamilton's built environment.



- 1 *Hamilton is a place that engages the imagination of our people and visitors – everything is an opportunity for delight and innovation – Vista design quality element.*
- 2 *Hamilton is a collection of neighbourhoods that reinforce a sense of local community – Vista sense of place design element.*

The six Ps are:

**Principles:** a visionary and strategic approach to city design. The principles fall into three areas: Distinctively Hamilton vision, design-led planning and international best practice.

**People:** enabling others to act.

**Place:** inspiring a shared vision.

**Process:** challenging the process.

**Promotion:** encouraging the heart.

**Projects:** modelling the way.

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## OUTCOMES TO DATE

### INCREASED URBAN DESIGN CAPACITY

The Council recognised that building internal and external capacity was an essential element in the successful implementation of *CityScope*. Initiatives included urban design training for staff and external consultants, recruitment of urban design specialists, and establishing a staff forum to exchange opinions, ideas and experiences on urban design matters.

### COUNCIL TOOLS AND PROCESSES

Since the adoption of *CityScope* in June 2006, the Council has worked with the design, arts and property industries to develop new tools and processes to help improve the city's built environment. The Council has now developed and adopted *Vista* – the Hamilton City Design Guide.

*Vista* outlines the Council's expectations for better-designed environments and highlights the key urban design principles that are fundamental to Hamilton's successful development. It is a non-statutory guideline to help design buildings and spaces that work well, now and in the future. *Vista* has been used as the basis for the Urban Design Advisory Panel that was established in 2008 to provide advice on significant private and council development proposals, and to secure the highest standard of urban design wherever possible.



The Panel will act in an advisory capacity. It is anticipated that it will also assist with improving the quality of resource consent applications.

A City Heart Revitalisation project is underway and is based on 'Inquiry by Design' workshops. These workshops explore a range of initiatives to ensure that future concepts and master plans for the city centre and important river sites are aligned with the aims and aspirations of *CityScope* and the Council's other key strategies.

To further support the *CityScope* principles, the Council has a programme of district plan variations. These include variations to increase subdivision connectivity and heritage provisions. In addition, structure plans have been notified for the growth areas of Rotokauri and Peacocke.

The Council's Planning Guidance Unit has introduced pre-application meetings for developers, before they lodge resource consent applications. Uptake of this service suggests that developers see the value of early council advice. The Council has also noticed the flow-on effects of improved design quality in submitted resource consent applications.

The Council's Building Control Unit has introduced the services of an eco-design advisor to support new and innovative sustainable building design solutions. The eco-design advisor is available to provide free and independent information on a range of environmental design issues to both homeowners and designers/trades people.

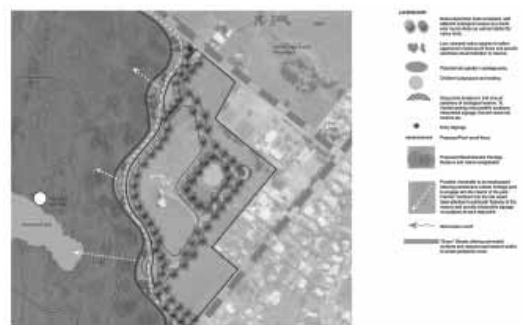
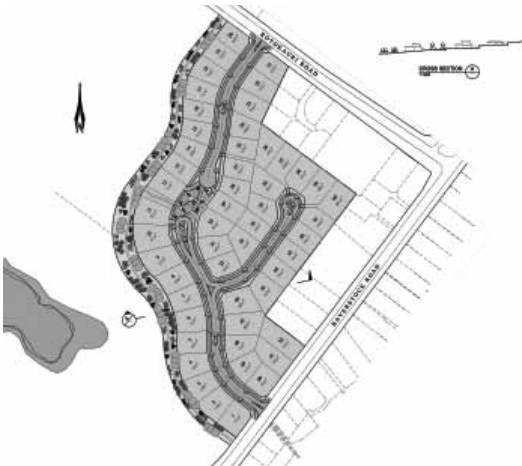
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#### SMART SUBDIVISION – AN OUTCOME HIGHLIGHT

SMART Subdivision is a demonstration project initiated by the Council as part of its commitment to implementing *CityScope*. The Council's aim is to pursue a sustainable approach to development in a high-growth area of Hamilton City, and to show the development industry and community the benefits of good design and environmental sustainability.



- 1 Development should enhance and celebrate Hamilton's character and reflect the special qualities of the site – Vista sense of place design element.
- 2 Development should ensure that Hamilton is easy to get around so everyone can access services and facilities – Vista access design element.



- 1 Location map of Smart Subdivision site next to Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Area.
- 2 Conventional subdivision.
- 3 CityScope principles used in the Smart Subdivision.

The SMART Subdivision is planned within the Rotokauri residential growth area. Rotokauri is to the northwest of the city, occupies 956 hectares and is anticipated to house a population of 20,000. The Council owns a 5 hectare piece of land adjacent to the proposed 50 hectare Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Area.

Two concept plans for the subdivision were originally commissioned. The first, based on the provisions of the District Plan, was a conventional subdivision with three cul-de-sacs, two of which were joined using a walkway. The plan comprised 48 lots, some of which were back lots. The design was likely to see back fences constructed on the boundary with the Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Area, and one pedestrian connection with the area. Section sizes ranged from 650m<sup>2</sup> to 800m<sup>2</sup>.

The second concept plan, designed by Chow:Hill Architects, was based on the principles in *CityScope* and would work within, but challenge, the provisions of the district plan. Called the SMART Subdivision, this plan originally featured 63 lots and innovations that included:

- a connected, pedestrian-friendly 'green street', with several low-impact design features, including permeable surfacing rain gardens
- a central open space and playground to help create a sense of openness and community
- a range of housing types, from single level dwellings to two-storey town houses
- incorporation of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, including having all properties built facing onto reserves rather than backing on them, providing for passive surveillance
- section sizes that ranged from 400m<sup>2</sup> to 650m<sup>2</sup>.

A cost-benefit exercise by the Council compared the SMART Subdivision with the conventional concept. Because there was no similar subdivision





in the local area to benchmark against, the results found that the short-term profit margin was less for the SMART Subdivision. However, recent anecdotal evidence suggests the market for resource-efficient homes is increasing and a premium could now be sought.

The Council recognises there will be significantly greater long-term social and environmental benefits with subdivisions such as the SMART project. Since the Rotokauri structure plan notification, the Council is now working with developers to expand on the demonstration project. It is currently exploring a partnership with McConnell Properties Ltd to develop the subdivision, and will be retaining Chow:Hill Architects as part of the project team. The Council and McConnell Properties Ltd are redesigning the SMART Subdivision design to better achieve efficient land use, higher building density and improve stormwater outcomes.

## EVALUATION OF URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

CONTEXT	<p>The conventional response to housing growth in Hamilton has tended to be low density with cul-de-sacs. Through <i>CityScope</i>, the Council is signalling that this kind of development will not deliver ‘an urban environment with a strong and unique sense of place’.</p> <p>Through the <i>CityScope</i> programmes, the Council is seeking to ensure that future developments fit in better with a new Hamilton context. These programmes include provision of design guidance, establishing pre-application resource consent meetings and reviewing the district plan.</p> <p>The importance of the new <i>CityScope</i> context is being demonstrated through the SMART Subdivision. A key feature of the site is its location beside Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Area. The concept plan shows a strong connection between the subdivision and the park, with some houses fronting on to it, and others having a view of the park.</p>
CHARACTER	<p>Through <i>CityScope</i>, the Council has established characteristics that it believes reflect a distinctively Hamilton vision. These characteristics include recognition of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ the Waikato River as a key city icon</li><li>■ Hamilton as home to 25 percent of New Zealand’s research scientists</li><li>■ the emergence of the central business district as a vibrant city heart.</li></ul> <p>It is intended that these characteristics will be promoted in detail in the Council’s other key strategies, such as the Creativity and Identity Strategy and the City Heart Revitalisation project.</p> <p>Also, the establishment of the Urban Design Advisory Panel will provide further expertise to the Council and developers to help interpret and apply Hamilton’s unique character elements, as identified in <i>Vista</i>.</p>
CHOICE	<p><i>CityScope</i> contains a number of programmes and projects that will increase choice in the urban environment by providing for a range of section sizes and housing types. Other initiatives include the development of concept plans for a neighbourhood centre</p>



and town centre within the structure plan growth areas. These plans consider public transport, and cycle and pedestrian networks, which provide choices in travel options.

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#### CONNECTIONS

*CityScope* is supportive of the need for connectivity in the urban environment as demonstrated through:

- the SMART Subdivision demonstration project, which incorporates connectivity and pedestrian linkages as a key design principle
- district plan variations that increase subdivision connectivity and heritage provisions
- proposed structure plans that are based around nodal concept plans and a five-minute walking circle to encourage connectivity
- work planned for the city centre through the City Heart Revitalisation project, which will focus on improving connections to the Waikato River and other key destinations in Hamilton
- the Access Hamilton strategy.

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#### CREATIVITY

*CityScope* is supportive of innovative and imaginative solutions that will build a city known internationally for its unique design, stunning architecture, exciting public spaces and all-round functionality. Projects include work on growth areas, public open space, circulation, art and culture, city revitalisation and city lighting.

Initiatives such as the SMART Subdivision demonstration project have provided creative solutions to subdivision design. The Council, in partnership with McConnell Properties Ltd, is undertaking further modifications on the concept plan prior to subdivision construction.

Council processes, such as pre-application resource consent meetings and the Urban Design Advisory Panel, also provide opportunities to discuss new ideas and work with developers to obtain innovative urban design solutions.

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#### CUSTODIANSHIP

*CityScope* initiatives are promoting sustainable development principles and challenging processes on Hamilton's urban development. They include:

- the integration of Hamilton Sustainable Development policies into *CityScope* and the Sustainable Environmental Design Programme
- an eco-design advisor being employed to support new and innovative sustainable building design solutions, and a continuing focus on education around sustainable urban design
- the SMART Subdivision demonstration project.

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#### COLLABORATION

*CityScope* has been developed through collaboration between the Hamilton City Council, the community, key stakeholders and professional institutes. Enabling people to act is a key initiative of *CityScope*, and its success in shaping the city's future depends



on the actions of Hamilton's people, along with stakeholders, institutions and investors. The pre-application resource consent meetings and establishment of the Urban Design Advisory Panel are all part of the collaborative process.

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## LESSONS LEARNT

### CHAMPIONS

The development of *CityScope* was championed by the former mayor, Michael Redman (now Hamilton City's Chief Executive Officer). His leadership proved invaluable in getting internal and external support for the *CityScope* principles. He was also a strong internal champion for improved design and development outcomes, and played an important role in building relationships with key stakeholders and the community.

### POLITICAL SUPPORT

Political support and stability was extremely important for both *CityScope* and the SMART Subdivision demonstration project. Councillors have been taken on several field trips to Auckland to visit the Harbourview development in Te Atatu, Earthsong in Waitakere and Addison in Takanini (see case study: Master Planned Community, Addison, Papakura, Auckland). Demonstrating examples of quality urban design proved to be an integral part of gaining the councillors' support.

### EXTERNAL FACILITATION

The Council used an external facilitator and the services of Chow:Hill Architects, Boffa Miskell, MWH and Connell Wagner to develop the SMART Subdivision demonstration project. With this approach, the Council was able to turn a collection of ideas and the *CityScope* strategic approach into a concept plan for a real subdivision project.

### ALIGNMENT OF POLICIES AND PLANS

The aim is to align Hamilton's district plan with the principles, aspirations and aims of *CityScope* and the *Vista* design guide. Structure plans have been notified for the growth areas of Rototuna and Peacocke before they are made available for urban development. These structure plans illustrate the likely extent of future infrastructure provision within a growth area.

### ORGANISATIONAL PROCESSES

Council processes need to support the strategic approach of *CityScope*. Initiatives used in Hamilton include:

- pre-application resource consent meetings – these are key way to influence the quality of development being proposed
- bringing in outside expertise to run workshops and forums to raise internal capability, enabling staff to support the implementation of *CityScope*
- building capacity within the Council by recruiting staff from varied backgrounds who have experience in, or knowledge of, sustainable urban design and development.



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## CONCLUSION

*CityScope* sets a strategic framework and visionary approach for urban design in Hamilton. To enable its implementation, the Council recognised the need to change past design and development practices. This required strong leadership and the support and buy-in of stakeholders, including the Council, community and development industry. Through its programme of new tools and resources, the Council has been able to raise both internal and external awareness of the benefits of quality urban design and, as a result, is seeing positive urban development changes.

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## RESOURCES

Hamilton City Council 2005. *CityScope: Shaping Hamilton Intelligently, Sustainably and Creatively*.

Retrieved from <http://hamilton.co.nz/page/pageid/2145836447/CityScope> (15 April 2008).

Hamilton City Council 2006. *City Design Guide*. Retrieved from <http://hamilton.co.nz/file/fileid/3919> (15 April 2008).

Hamilton City Council 2007. *Vista: Hamilton City Design Guide* Retrived from <http://hamilton.co.nz/file/fileid/3919> (1 May 2008)

# Urban Development Strategy – Greater Christchurch

## FAST FACTS

**Publication title:** Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy

**Subject:** Urban development and land use strategy to manage urban growth in the greater Christchurch region

**Location:** Urban area of Christchurch City Council, the Lyttelton Harbour Basin and the eastern parts of Waimakariri and Selwyn districts

**Population:** Population 414,000 estimated in 2006; projected 549,000 by 2041

**Timeframe:** From 2004, and implemented from June 2007

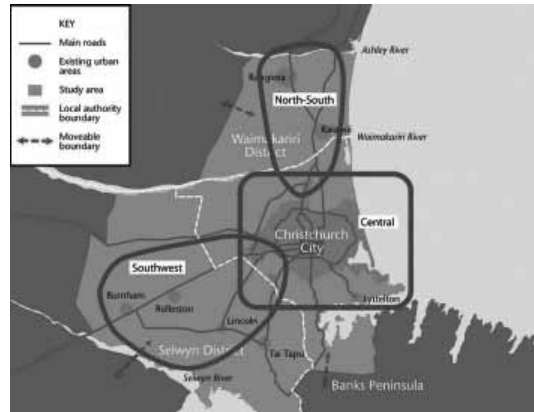
**Strategy aim:** Improving the quality of life, focusing on urban boundaries and concentrating development within the existing urban form

**Proposed settlement pattern:** Sixty percent of all future growth to be accommodated in intensified development within the existing urban area, with the remaining 40 percent in greenfield areas

**Website link:**

<http://www.greaterchristchurch.org.nz/>

**Case study researcher:** Janet Reeves, Context Urban Design Ltd



- 1 Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy study area.
- 2 Aerial of Christchurch urban area from the north.



## INTRODUCTION

The *Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy* (the Strategy) is a broad-scale, long-term land use strategy for the greater Christchurch area prepared under the Local Government Act 2002. It aims to provide a basis for managing growth in the region in a proactive, integrated and sustainable manner. The Strategy will be implemented through tools such as the Regional Policy Statement and amendments to the Regional Land Transport Strategy, district plans and Long Term Council Community Plans (LTCCPs). The Urban Development Strategy Partners (the UDS Partners) are Christchurch City Council, Environment Canterbury, Selwyn District Council, Waimakariri District Council, Transit New Zealand (Transit NZ) and the community.

The Strategy area encompasses eastern parts of the Waimakariri and Selwyn districts and the urban and some rural areas of Christchurch City, including the Lyttelton Harbour Basin.

Key growth issues addressed by the Strategy include:

- dispersed urban growth in the greater Christchurch area resulting in a loss of connectivity between living and working, with people travelling increased distances
- increasing traffic volumes and congestion
- high-quality open space becoming increasingly scarce, as densities increase
- increasing urban development putting pressure on suburban centres and townships to maintain their individual and district identities
- maintaining neighbourhood character in infill housing areas
- maintaining the quality and quantity of groundwater so it remains suitable for human consumption without treatment
- developing infrastructure to support an aging population.

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## URBAN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY PROCESS

By 2004, Christchurch City Council, Waimakariri District Council and Selwyn District Council had individually completed plans or projects on the future growth for each council. There was, however, no agreed long-term or comprehensive vision beyond these plans and projects amongst the councils, their respective communities and Transit NZ. Several key combined growth issues across the boundaries of the UDS Partners were therefore not being addressed. Land use and settlement patterns, transport, utility servicing, business needs, recreation and community facilities and the natural environment needed to be integrated and planned together.

When the 2004 strategy process began, the UDS Partners recognised that the greater Christchurch area functioned geographically as one social, economic and cultural entity, but with decisions often being made in isolation. An urban development forum was established in March 2004, with terms of reference adopted by the UDS Partners that established the process, scope, governance and management structures for the forum. The Urban Development Forum (the Forum) comprised elected members from the four councils and key stakeholders. The Forum met regularly (once every two months on average) throughout the preparation of the Strategy, from April 2004 until April 2007. The staff and consultants of the UDS Partners were responsible for managing the project, reporting to the Forum and their own councils.

The first step in developing the Strategy was undertaking extensive background research, including population projections for the Strategy area. This led to the identification of a series of issues, grouped under



the headings of land use, transport, community identity and natural environment. These were summarised in a brochure that was widely distributed in February 2005, which marked the beginning of the involvement of the public. In April 2005, the public was presented with four potential growth options for the area:

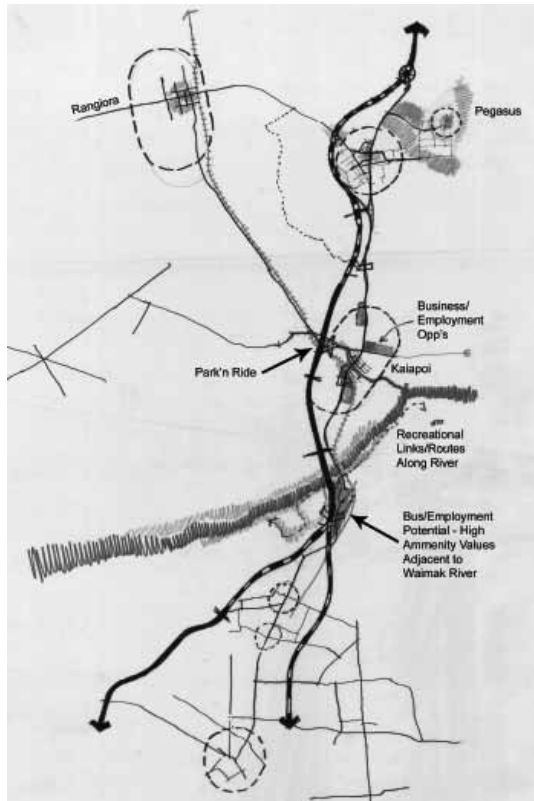
- Option A: concentrating development within Christchurch City and at larger towns in the surrounding districts
- Option B: balancing development between existing built areas, with some expansion into adjacent areas
- Option C: dispersing development in the greater Christchurch area away from established urban areas
- a fourth option known as the 'Business as Usual' or 'Do Nothing' option.

A communications and consultation exercise was used to raise the community's awareness of the options and encourage participation in the process. Over 3,250 submissions were received with 63 percent favouring Option A and 22 percent choosing Option B.

A newsletter on the submissions was widely circulated in late 2005. The newsletter commented that there were similar concerns throughout the area, with most submissions recognising the need to protect water, valuable soils and open spaces, safeguard community character and provide well-planned communities linked by good transport systems. People also wanted energy-efficient housing based on sound, sustainable urban design principles and concentrated development patterns that included recognisable villages or centres of activity. The community expressed a desire for the councils to work together more closely, and was adamant that it be given a chance to respond to any draft strategy, once drawn up by the UDS Partners.



1 Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy process.



- 1 Preferred patterns of urban development developed in Rangiora and areas north of Christchurch at the Inquiry by Design workshops.
- 2 Inquiry by Design workshops.

A health impact assessment of the Strategy (Canterbury District Health Board 2006) was carried out to predict its potential effect on the health and wellbeing of the affected greater Christchurch population. The assessment compared the 'consolidation' option (a combination of Options A and B) with the 'Business as Usual' option, and was used to link urban design, health determinants and health outcomes. It concluded that urban design had a strong influence on health outcomes.

A community charter was launched in June 2006. The charter introduced the vision and set out the guiding principles, strategic direction and actions for implementation of the Strategy. This charter was derived from the consultation feedback, analysis of the options process and relevant guiding national policy documents, particularly the *Sustainable Development for New Zealand Programme of Action* (Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet 2003).

Two, week-long 'Inquiry by Design' workshops held in August and September 2006 were led by consultants from Urbanism Plus. Over 100 technical staff from the UDS Partner councils and relevant government agencies worked together to develop the proposed settlement pattern.

The sessions adopted a design-led approach to translate the wealth of statistics, research and outcomes of consultation into a broadly agreed urban form. Different combinations of social and cultural elements, environmental, growth, conservation, movement networks and land use concepts were designed and evaluated. Residential growth and intensification designs were tested to analyse different growth options and opportunities, for example, in Rangiora, a town north west of Christchurch.

This resulted in the development of preferred growth options for open space, waterways, transportation, community facilities and centres of employment and commerce in, for example, areas such as the south-western sector map.





A comprehensive list of spatial planning actions was identified and used to inform the Strategy.

The draft Strategy was released in November 2006 for public consultation and submissions. Over 300 submissions were received and these were considered in early 2007 by a formally constituted hearings panel, comprising representatives of the UDS Partners. This resulted in minor amendments to the Strategy. The amended Strategy was adopted by the UDS Partners in April and the final document launched in June 2007.

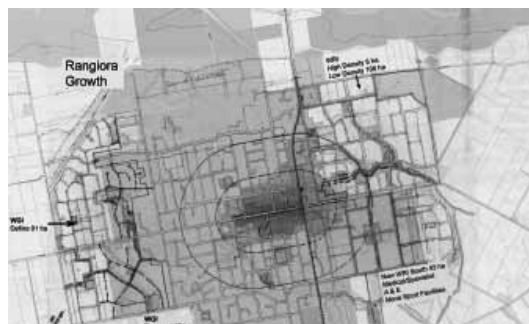
## STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Strategy contains implementation actions grouped under six strategic directions: enrich lifestyles, enhance environments, encourage prosperous economies, manage growth, effective governance and leadership, and integrate implementation.

Key tools for implementation across the boundaries of the various local authorities are identified as:

- a new chapter in the Regional Policy Statement on urban growth, the settlement pattern and infrastructure, covering the greater Christchurch area
- amendments to the Regional Land Transport Strategy to incorporate the strategic transport system for the area
- amendments to LTCCPs
- making changes to city and district plans – to ‘localise’ the Strategy’s strategic planning priorities
- identifying priorities in both Land Transport New Zealand’s and Transit NZ’s 10-year programmes.

The Strategy contains a memorandum of agreement that binds the UDS Partners to supporting and endorsing the Strategy and its co-operative and co-ordinated approach, with a three-year review period.



- 1 Rangiora testing of possible intensification design options in the Inquiry by Design workshops.
- 2 South-western sector map, with the preferred spatial planning options with patterns of growth, networks and land uses from the Inquiry by Design workshops.



An Urban Development Strategy Implementation Committee (the Committee) has been established and will operate until 2010. This is a joint committee of the Christchurch City Council, Selwyn District Council, Waimakariri District Council, Environment Canterbury and tangata whenua. Its purpose is to overview and drive implementation of the Strategy. The Committee has delegated authority to execute the Strategy Action Plan. It has been charged with numerous tasks, including leading the integration of plans and policies and aligning them with the Strategy, ensuring sufficient organisational systems and resources exist and facilitating engagement with the community. As the Strategy points out:

*The challenges here should not be underestimated. It involves in many situations, a different way of working and not just doing one's own thing. (Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy and Action Plan 2007, p 178.)*

A significant feature of the Strategy is that it commits the partners to shaping the future of the sub-region in accordance with urban design principles and practice. This will be achieved through a series of actions that will ensure good urban design is an integral part of the planning and regulatory framework of all UDS Partners. Mechanisms, such as urban design strategies, structure plans and masterplans are to be developed to inform future district and city plan changes.

The most obvious outcome of the Strategy to date has been the release of a proposed Plan Change No 1 to the Regional Policy Statement in the form of a new chapter 12A entitled 'Development of Greater Christchurch'. This chapter provides direction for the growth, development and enhancement of the urban and rural areas of the greater Christchurch sub-region for the period to 2041. The methods for achieving the plan change are specific and directive, with all UDS Partners endorsing it prior to its publication. This was a major shift in how policy has been previously developed in the greater Christchurch area.

#### EVALUATION OF URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

CONTEXT	The Strategy takes a long-term, 35 year view of the development of the greater Christchurch area. It sets development in a wider context than simply council administrative boundaries. The Strategy has used urban design principles, backed by community consultation, to plan the urban form for the entire sub-region. There is a clear distinction between urban and rural areas, nodes of higher density activity within the built-up areas and provision for controlled expansion on the edge of the city and around townships. The integration of land use, transportation and infrastructure planning is a key component of the Strategy. It seeks to understand the history, stories and features of localities so that they can be integrated into planning and design for expansion and intensification.
CHARACTER	The Strategy has highlighted community concern at the perceived loss of both rural and urban neighbourhood character. A strong message permeates the Strategy that future growth and intensification will need to be controlled and managed to conserve and enhance existing character and identity, and also promote high-quality new places and spaces. One of the priority actions is to develop an urban design strategy to apply the principles of good urban design, reflecting the character and diversity of the communities in the greater Christchurch area.



<b>CHOICE</b>	<p>Within the sub-region, the Strategy provides for the continuation of a range of urban and rural living environments, varying in size, price, density and location. Further choice will arise as new approaches to intensification are adopted and higher density, mixed use neighbourhoods evolve. The centre of Christchurch is the cultural, economic and social hub of the greater Christchurch area, providing a variety of activities and experiences not found elsewhere in the region. The revitalisation of central Christchurch continues to be a priority with the implementation of the Christchurch Cities Central City Revitalisation Strategy.</p>
<b>CONNECTIONS</b>	<p>A major component of the Strategy is to maintain and develop key transport networks and corridors across the greater Christchurch area to connect markets, transport hubs and communities and to provide a framework for the public passenger transport network to be developed further. Higher density development should be located within walking distance of transport corridors and activity centres. At the local level, the Strategy signals that development, whether in greenfield, intensification or key activity centres, will be of a form and design that provides good, safe connections within the area and to surrounding areas. For example, the draft Regional Policy Statement requires that outline development plans (structure plans) be prepared prior to any change in zoning of greenfield areas in the District Plans. The outline development plans are to show, among other things, principal through-roads, pedestrian walkways, cycleways and bus routes, both within the development and connected to the surrounding area.</p>
<b>CREATIVITY</b>	<p>Consultation with the community was important and incorporated a range of creative methods. These included a consultation booklet, website, articles in the councils' newsletters, posters, media releases, a mayoral forum and public lecture, and a roadshow, with 32 sessions at 18 different venues within the study area. A hybrid electric–petrol vehicle, provided by Honda, was branded with the Strategy's slogans and images and used as a display at all roadshow venues throughout the consultation period. The regional newspaper, <i>The Press</i>, ran a special week-long series of feature articles entitled 'Where will we grow?'. These articles helped to raise the profile of the project and increase the number of community submissions.</p> <p>In the implementation stage, the Strategy will bring together the plans of neighbouring territorial authorities in a creative way that has not before been achieved in Canterbury.<sup>3</sup> The new chapter 12A in the Regional Policy Statement introduces specific and directive policies to reflect current-day urban design and sustainable development best practice. It sets out urban limits designed to provide sufficient land to cater for predicted population growth and provisions for the progressive release of specific sites. This will ensure there is timely, efficient provision of infrastructure and that a critical mass of people live in an area sufficient for a community to develop and facilities to be viable.</p>

<sup>3</sup> A similar growth management strategy for the greater Auckland region has been accompanied by an enabling Act of Parliament.



The proposed change to the Regional Policy Statement also outlines what the Christchurch City Council needs to do to cater for intensification, including the selection of areas for specific council initiatives. The Council will develop urban intensification plans for all such selected areas. The way the Strategy helps direct ‘from above’ would not have been acceptable had Environment Canterbury unilaterally developed an urban development strategy.

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#### CUSTODIANSHIP

The Strategy is working towards a sustainable urban form, with clear boundaries between urban and rural areas. It sets out parameters for growth to curb the bias towards lower density greenfield development, a dispersed settlement pattern and unsustainable urban sprawl. It adopts a ‘consolidation’ approach, with a target of 60 percent of all new housing to be in intensification areas in Christchurch City by 2041. The emphasis on intensification will make use of existing infrastructure, reduce the need to travel, enable energy savings and safeguard agricultural land and rural landscapes.

Greenfield development will continue, particularly in the early years of the Strategy’s implementation. Christchurch City Council is working to develop and encourage intensification and has outlined an indicative distribution and sequencing of household growth on a location-by-location basis. The Strategy strengthens the existing settlement patterns and structure of the sub-region by defining three broad activity corridors, which link the sub-region with the wider area, and by reinforcing several existing activity centres.

The Strategy promotes quality urban environments that are responsive to natural systems, where water quality, reduced energy usage and waste minimisation are considered at the building design and construction stage. Incentives, education, collaboration and new and extended monitoring systems have all been identified as necessary to ensure the implementation of this element of the Strategy.

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#### COLLABORATION

The process of preparing the Strategy has led to the adoption of collaborative ways of working and improved working relationships for both governance and management with all UDS Partners.

*Those who participated gained immensely from the process. Not only did they find it enjoyable to broaden their perspective on the role of urban design in achieving good health for the community, but they were also inspired by the opportunities presented through the necessary collaboration between a range of sectors and stakeholders. (Geoff Fougere, Chair, Public Health Advisory Committee, personal comment.)*

The Strategy seeks to anchor this collaborative approach throughout its implementation by setting out a vision and parameters for urban growth and the means for achieving it over time. Lead and support agencies, cost implications, implementation tools and timing are all set out within the Strategy to ensure that everyone is working together toward the same end.



*The success of the Strategy is directly related to the quality of the working relationships between the agencies responsible for its implementation. The essential difference between the Strategy and earlier growth management initiatives is the long-term formal commitment to collaboration between key agencies. (Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy and Action Plan 2007, p 124.)*

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## LESSONS LEARNT

### POLITICAL CO-OPERATION

Political will and co-operation were essential to the development of the Strategy. The mayors of the greater Christchurch area were willing to work together. Similarly, the chief executives agreed to collaborate. The selection of the then Mayor of Banks Peninsula, Bob Parker, as chairperson of the Urban Development Forum proved to be a good choice, not only for his skilled facilitation, but also because of his neutral position.

The development of the initial round of LTCCPs helped to shift thinking to a collaborative and integrated way of working. A major and ongoing challenge will be the setting aside of parochial interest by the UDS Partners, in favour of a sub-regional view, throughout the implementation of the Strategy.

### PROJECT LEADERS

Mid-way through the process, following the departure of the initial project leader, the project suffered something of a hiatus. This was resolved with the appointment of external consultants Ken Tremaine and Bill Wasley as management team project leaders with experience of similar strategies in the Bay of Plenty (Smart Growth) and South East Queensland.

### TIMEFRAMES

The UDS Partners focused on setting and meeting key dates. It was imperative that the Strategy was adopted by the UDS Partners prior to the local body elections in October 2007 and looming private plan changes. In addition, timing was crucial to tie in with local and central funding cycles and to keep faith with the community.

### ADEQUATE RESOURCES

Initially, the project was not well resourced, having only a few council staff dedicated to it. The UDS Partners realised the Strategy needed to be made a priority, so staff work schedules were reorganised and experienced consultants appointed. Now that the Strategy document is complete, the ongoing challenge will be to ensure that sufficient resources are directed to implementing its actions. Both intra- and inter-organisational multi-disciplinary teams will need to be continued or established and sustained over time.

### IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

The Strategy sets out several actions to implement. Twenty of these are identified for an immediate focus and include preparing and implementing district plan changes, which can be lengthy and costly processes. There is the danger that 'business as usual' will be unavoidable for some time to come. A huge shift in approaches and attitudes is necessary for greater Christchurch councils to end up with a denser but better place to live, work and play.



The Strategy will require:

- acceptance of different forms of living
- quality designed higher density urban development
- designers with the skills to design new and denser building forms
- builders/developers with the capacity to build comprehensive housing developments
- further innovative forms of housing layout
- an increased understanding of mixed use developments.

Some issues, however, were not able to be resolved, with the Strategy opting for a status quo position in respect of rural residential lots (between 5,000m<sup>2</sup> and 1.5 hectares). There was perceived to be a clear demand for allotments of this size and provision in existing district plans. However, continuing to offer this choice of lifestyle has the potential to undermine the consolidated approach to growth that was chosen by the community. The UDS Partners recognise that there is a need to develop a rural residential zoning policy and assessment criteria for use by all councils.

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#### VALUE GAINED

It is anticipated that there will be positive outcomes from more integrated planning frameworks.

Infrastructure providers, both local government and others (such as gas, energy and communication companies), will benefit from working to an agreed overall plan. A sequencing approach to greenfield development will lead to more efficient provision of infrastructure rather than the situation where infrastructure is underutilised because development proceeds slowly in several dispersed locations.

The health impact assessment trialled a new process, with people from the health sector and local government working together for the first time. The sectors spoke in different languages, 'health inequalities' on the one hand, 'sustainability' on the other, but gained new understanding and a different perspective. Discussion that occurred with workshop participants from a range of fields led to development of new concepts and networking opportunities.

The 'Inquiry by Design' process brought together a variety of experts and elected members, and required them to think spatially. While for some, such as transportation planners, this was their usual way of working, for others, such as social policy analysts, it was not. The individual discipline 'interest' groups reached their own preference on how the Strategy should be developed. These were then overlaid (or vertically integrated) and developed into a preferred spatial structure. This generated a cross-fertilisation of ideas and increased understanding of the relationship between social and physical issues. The workshops highlighted where there were conflicts and these were able to be addressed and design options developed.

*A few months ago I hadn't heard of 'New Urbanism' or 'urban villages' – and now I talk about them all day long. (Project working group member.)*

Many of those who made submissions on the Strategy sought adherence to quality urban design principles, such as a desire to focus on the development of urban villages or neighbourhood activity centres designed around walking and cycling. The response from the public demonstrated clearly that a drive for quality urban design was not confined to urban design professionals.



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## CONCLUSION

The *Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy* is a sub-regional growth planning exercise. Its interest lies in the collaborative and holistic approach that was adopted, and the development of new governance and implementation arrangements. The Strategy is supported by the UDS Partners and, most importantly, the community. This will help in the next stage of plan changes within the UDS Partner council's individual district plans.

While the Strategy is broad in its scope, urban design principles underpin and permeate it. The community has clearly stated its preference for a high-quality sustainable environment with an increased interventionist approach to planning.

It is too early to say whether the Strategy will deliver its vision. It has established a clear framework so that everyone knows what needs to be done. The challenge will be to allocate sufficient resources and keep it on track over the coming years.

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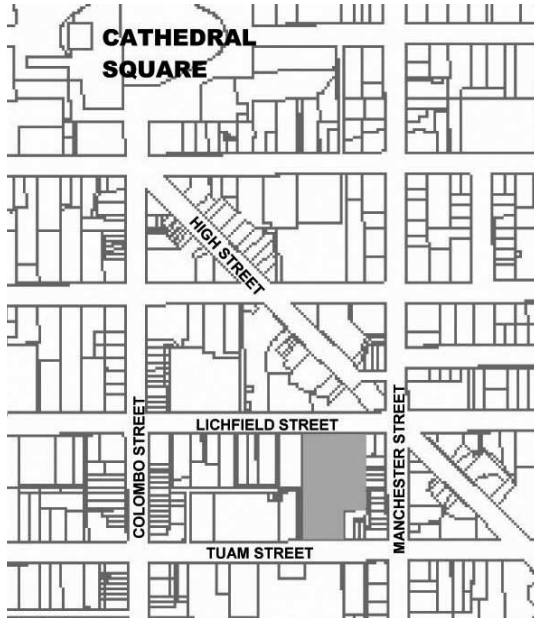


## ■□ Quality Developments – Introduction

The development case studies in this section cover a range of scales, activities and locations across New Zealand. They have been chosen because they demonstrate the practical application of the 'seven Cs' as outlined in the *New Zealand Urban Design Protocol*: context, character, choice, collaboration, connections, custodianship and creativity.

The case studies here look at large-scale neighbourhood or master planned projects that:

- revitalise inner city areas
- undertake community renewal
- create a mixture of uses next to a heritage area
- create a master planned community.



1 Context of South of Lichfield.

2 Site aerial view of South of Lichfield.

## City Revitalisation – South of Lichfield, Christchurch

### FAST FACTS

**Location:** Bounded by Lichfield Street, Manchester Street, Tuam Street and Colombo Street, Christchurch

**Project type:** Revitalisation of historic commercial buildings and spaces to create a mixed use accommodation, retail and entertainment quarter

**Revitalisation project timeframes:** 2004–2008

**Property developer and owner:**  
Property Ventures Ltd, Christchurch

**Website Link:** <http://www.sol.net.nz>

**Case study researcher:** Janet Reeves,  
Context Urban Design Ltd

### KEY STATISTICS

**Site area:** 5,500m<sup>2</sup>

**Approximate percentages of use mix:**

Retail floorspace: 12 percent

Hospitality floorspace: 25 percent

Office floorspace: 33 percent

**Number of residential units:** 77



## INTRODUCTION

The South of Lichfield lanes revitalisation project is located in the old warehouse district to the south-east of Cathedral Square in central Christchurch. This area contains a wealth of historic character buildings. The buildings typically have decorative façades that face onto the main streets, with rear plain-brick walls facing onto a network of lanes and service yards. In the 1990s, many of these character buildings were empty or neglected and the lanes rundown.

Several studies recognised the potential of these historic warehouse buildings, such as the 1998 study of the blocks east of Manchester Street, prepared for Christchurch City Council (the Council). However, there was little enthusiasm from developers for pursuing these revitalisation ideas because of the complex nature of multiple ownership and lack of financial support from the Council.

Between 1998 and 2004, the Council continued to explore ways to revitalise this area, and some-small scale, piecemeal redevelopment of existing buildings occurred in the area. At this time, the Council also set up a 'facelift' project for historic buildings and streetscapes (the High Street Heritage Project) in the southern stretch of High Street, running diagonally across the main street grid to the east of Manchester Street and the South of Lichfield project area. The Council worked with owners to remove excess wiring, signage and unsightly fire escapes, repaint buildings and renew lighting.

The High Street Heritage Project was completed in 2002 and came at a time when High Street was starting to be transformed from an underused secondary shopping street into an upmarket street, with independent fashion boutiques and cafés on the ground floor buildings and residential and other uses on the upper floors. The adjoining Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology added its own vibrancy to the area by introducing fashion and jazz schools on the corner of Tuam and High Streets. In addition, private developers began to accumulate land to the east and west of Manchester Street.

In March 2006, the Council held a week-long 'Future Directions' charrette exploring opportunities for revitalising the whole central city area south of Lichfield Street and east of Colombo Street, around 10 street blocks. The South of Lichfield block was in the north-western corner of the 'Future Directions' charrette area. The outcome was 22 council actions to stimulate revitalisation.

A Central City Lanes Plan was adopted by the Council in 2007. It covers the network of lanes in the Christchurch central city, including those in the South of Lichfield area. The Lanes Plan sets out how to administer requests to improve or create back lanes running through the primary city blocks.

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## DESIGN PROCESS – THE 'SOUTH OF LICHFIELD' PROJECT

The South of Lichfield project, known locally as SOL, has created a vibrant, mixed use area from historic commercial buildings and back access lanes. South of Lichfield currently comprises a group of buildings that front onto Lichfield Street in the north and Tuam Street in the south. The area is bisected east–west by Struthers Lane, a public right of way. Lichfield Street is a busy one-way street, on the north side of which is the Christchurch Bus Exchange, Christchurch's central bus station building.<sup>4</sup> The southern side of Lichfield Street has an almost continuous building frontage comprising heritage and character buildings. Prior to the South of Lichfield project, these buildings were under-occupied and poorly maintained. The Council offices are in Tuam Street, immediately to the west of the project.

<sup>4</sup> Ministry for the Environment. 2005 *Urban Design Case Studies*.



- 1 Lichfield Street.
- 2 92 Lichfield St.
- 3 96 Lichfield St.

Property Ventures Ltd is a Christchurch-based development company. Its first project in South of Lichfield was an apartment/hotel completed in February 2004. Conversion and upgrading of the existing buildings has progressed steadily since then. Renovation is now nearing completion on three major buildings, the creation of a new lane, a new square, re-paving of an existing lane and the installation of street furniture and artworks. Work continues on improvements to the streetscape and the alteration and conversion of further buildings.

The strong determination and vision of Dave Henderson, the managing director of Property Ventures Ltd, has played an important role in the success of this development. Dave Henderson felt that Christchurch was suburban in character and lacked the high density, vibrant urban centre commonly enjoyed in cities elsewhere. He wanted to create a neighbourhood with its own sense of place, and focused on the area south of Lichfield Street because it was rundown and likely to meet with less opposition from existing occupiers and interest groups.

The South of Lichfield project comprises the following elements.

#### **NO 92 LICHFIELD STREET**

Built as a receiving depot for imported British merchandise in 1893, this is now occupied as a steak house restaurant and dance club on the ground floor, the Christchurch City Council call centre and offices on the first floor and apartments on the second floor.

#### **NO 96 LICHFIELD STREET**

Built for the Wellington Woollen Manufacturing Company in 1919, this now houses bars, restaurants and shops on the ground floor while the upper three floors have been converted to living space, which provides long- and short-term affordable accommodation in 110 rooms, together with theatre rooms, a library, cooking and dining areas and an outdoor courtyard.



### **HIS LORDSHIPS LANE**

Adjacent to No 96 Lichfield Street, this was built as an eatery and hostel. Known as His Lordships Larder, it was destroyed by fire in 2000. The space it occupied has been converted into a paved thoroughfare, known as His Lordships Lane. This lane provides a new link through to Struthers Lane, allows access to new shops and bars on either side and provides a sheltered outdoor seating and gathering space.

The lanes through the development have been upgraded and repaved, and new lighting and overhead artworks have been installed. The street space is occupied by planters, tables and chairs, signboards and heaters, which are moveable.

### **NO 110 LICHFIELD STREET**

This was purpose-built for Bells Motor Works in 1920. It now accommodates His Lordships Café and bar on the ground floor and a Mexican restaurant on the upper floor.

### **179 TO 187 TUAM STREET**

These two buildings were built for the Lichfield Shirt Company in 1932 and 1954. The front part of the buildings, facing Tuam Street, now house a large record store on the ground floor while upper floors are being converted to offices. To the rear, some of the outbuildings have been demolished to create a new plaza, known as South of Lichfield Square. Pedestrian access is afforded to the square from Tuam Street by walking through the record store. South of Lichfield Square is edged with cafés and bars, which have an active frontage with the square. The upper floors of these buildings, overlooking the square, are mainly occupied by nightclubs. The rear of the building on the north side of the square accommodates a large screen, which turns into an open-air theatre at night.

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### **URBAN DESIGN ISSUES**

The revitalisation of the Christchurch central city area relies heavily on the actions of private



1 His Lordships Lane at night.

2 110 Lichfield Street.

3 179–187 Tuam Street.



developers. The Council strategies, policies and plans, such as the Cathedral Square improvements, new Bus Exchange, a 'first hour free' parking scheme and a central city marketing campaign, have helped promote the central area. However, because the Council has limited funds to create its own revitalisation projects it must provide the right conditions for private revitalisation and be ready to respond to, and take advantage of, any developments that are occurring.

Several design issues have arisen with the development of the South of Lichfield project. These are:

- Heritage fabric demolition and alterations, and the effect on the integrity of the buildings: While the developer wants to see positive adaptation of the buildings, there is mixed opinion over the extent to which heritage fabric should be altered.
- Permeability of large blocks with back lanes and the safety of the public space: Lanes and small backyard squares break down the large 220m × 100m Christchurch blocks. Where lanes are opened up to public use, safety issues need to be addressed. For example, the spaces need to be well overlooked, have clear sightlines through them and sufficient levels of activity to ensure casual surveillance.
- Getting the right combination of uses: The South of Lichfield project provides a mix of hospitality, retail, office and accommodation uses. It is predominantly an area for night-time activity, catering to a young market. Retailers, however, need high foot traffic during the day time to survive, and can have difficulties with night-time rubbish being left for them to clean up in the morning. Problems with residential uses are limited because apartments are not immediately adjacent to outdoor spaces, and tenants are required to sign a 'no complaints' clause.
- Private and public space all reads as public space in the South of Lichfield project: Issues arise if people who are attending events block the public right of way or if vehicles stray into the private squares.
- Obtaining statutory consents can be complex and time consuming: Requirements such as earthquake strengthening, fire engine access, wheelchair access, development and reserve contributions all combine to inhibit the physical and economic viability of the South of Lichfield project.

## EVALUATION OF URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### CONTEXT

The South of Lichfield project demonstrates the social and economic value of embracing the existing character of an area, and shows how heritage buildings and spaces can be reused and adapted to create a vibrant mix of new uses and spaces. The project demonstrates the importance of recognising latent potential in a neglected area and the need for vision and tenacity to bring a renewal project to fruition. The South of Lichfield project is a catalyst project, where new activities can be used to develop further activities in the wider area.

South of Lichfield has responded to its context in many ways. Its location, close to the vibrant tertiary education centre, city centre, Christchurch Bus Exchange and Council offices, has been capitalised upon by creating short-stay accommodation, bars, nightclubs, shops, cafés and restaurants. Vibrant and productive uses have been found for the heritage buildings and spaces of the area. Large city blocks have been opened up and the network of lanes and backyard squares extended.



<b>CHARACTER</b>	<p>The South of Lichfield project recognised the distinctive character of this part of Christchurch. Its predominance of brick buildings, narrow streets and enclosed spaces has a different character to the main streets of the city centre. The developers and designers have been careful to maintain the hard urban feel and robust semi-industrial theme. For instance, the paving is grey, extends from façade to façade and is simple in design. Elaborate patterns or coloured pavers would be out of character here, deflecting attention away from the buildings. There is little soft landscaping, with greenery being confined to large concrete or metal planter boxes, some (deliberately) painted with graffiti art. The introduction of free-standing signage by individual occupants has the potential to undermine the simple, uncluttered industrial look.</p>
<b>CHOICE</b>	<p>South of Lichfield provides choice for Christchurch residents and visitors in that it offers a new and different urban quarter. In particular, it is an alternative to the nightlife of the well-established Oxford Terrace 'strip' on the western side of the central business district. It also provides a further opportunity for inner city living and thus allows people to choose a less car-dependent lifestyle. The opening up of lanes through the block provides a choice of routes for pedestrians, and an alternative to walking around the perimeter of the block. The introduction of a new lane (His Lordships Lane) has further increased the choice of routes.</p> <p>The flat ground surface, devoid of kerbs, permits wheelchair access and allows the spaces to be adapted for new uses.</p>
<b>CONNECTIONS</b>	<p>The lanes of South of Lichfield are, predominantly, a pedestrian environment, with vehicular use confined to accessing properties within the quarter. The lanes provide connections through the block, although their role as short cuts is limited (that is, for most people, it is just as quick to walk around the edge of the block). This has meant that the lanes are places in themselves, rather than merely thoroughfares.</p> <p>The South of Lichfield block is currently a little isolated from the centre of Christchurch, and its existence is not obvious to those unfamiliar with the area. It is unlikely that it will ever become a main connecting link and, therefore, will need to rely considerably on adjacent activity or being a destination in itself. There is the potential for revitalisation of further buildings and spaces along connecting lanes.</p>
<b>CREATIVITY</b>	<p>The South of Lichfield initiative has brought 'something different' to Christchurch. There are unusual elements to the development, such as overhead artworks, a car placed high up on a building façade, the 1950s-themed Minx restaurant, a large indoor/outdoor gas fire. In addition, warehouse features, such as metal fire escapes and façade signage, have been preserved. The project has endeavoured to be quirky and vibrant and create its own identity. The developer has 'asserted artistic authority' to achieve an eclectic unplanned composition, redolent of places that have evolved incrementally over time. Property Ventures Ltd retains ownership of the complex, and each tenant is carefully selected to add to the mix. Almost all are one-off enterprises and not chains or franchises.</p>



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#### CUSTODIANSHIP

The South of Lichfield initiative has utilised existing building stock, with its adaptive reuse of historic and character buildings. It has opened up previously private backyards for public use. However, issues remain with the lack of activity at certain times of the day and night in the lanes, especially in the wider area. The residential population of this part of the inner city will need to be considerably increased through the progressive revitalisation of the lanes. Increasing the number of people on the streets will not only add to the feeling of safety but also enable the establishment of local supporting services, such as corner dairies.

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#### COLLABORATION

The South of Lichfield project is part of a vision to upgrade the lanes and city centre as a whole. Both the Council and developer share this vision and are working steadily towards achieving it in mutually supportive ways. While the Council has not provided any financial assistance to the South of Lichfield project, it has contributed by upgrading the public lane running through the area.

The 'Future Directions' charrette was an opportunity for building owners and stakeholders in the area to become involved, develop a collective and detailed understanding of the issues and contribute to the renaissance of these city blocks.

The Central City Lanes Plan was widely circulated (although with little response) and provides the basis for others to participate in the revitalisation of similar back lanes.

There has been little public consultation in the South of Lichfield area because all of the buildings are privately owned.

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#### LESSONS LEARNT

The area south of Lichfield Street is large enough to develop into an urban village, with its own amenities. Because the cost of property in this area is lower than in other parts of the city, Property Ventures Ltd is considering including affordable housing and small retail and business ventures alongside more profitable concerns. This would allow a good mix of uses and users to be assembled, which is critical in attracting people to live in the area. The challenge will be in retaining affordability as demand accelerates and property values increase.

South of Lichfield is comfortable to be in and human in scale. This is because of the existing buildings and careful attention to detail on the part of the developer. The elements in and around the outdoor spaces have evolved incrementally, rather than being part of an overall masterplan. Tenants have been selected on their ability to be interesting and enliven the edges of the spaces. There have been elements that have not worked and these have been changed. For instance, a low wall at one edge of the square that was initially retained is now being removed because it hinders the flow of the square. The developer, lacking a knowledge base of mixed use developments, is learning as the project proceeds and uses are selected to suit the spaces, their location within the complex and to complement each other.

The Council is supportive and encouraging of the project. Property Ventures Ltd has had a good relationship, in particular, with the former mayor, and with the leader of the Central City Revitalisation team. It would be preferable to secure a dedicated council liaison person for large projects like South of Lichfield.





The developer has highlighted the need for a change in approach in Christchurch to a more urban way of thinking. Urban, rather than suburban, solutions to inner city issues are required, along with the acceptance of some disadvantages in exchange for advantages. For example, a noisy environment and restricted parking may need to be endured in return for being able to have all the attractions and conveniences of the city within walking distance.

Multiple ownership of land and buildings is a barrier to further urban renewal in this area. The accumulation of sufficient land and buildings by Property Ventures Ltd has enabled a comprehensive renewal project to proceed. Nevertheless, there is a difficulty in extending the project beyond its existing boundaries because adjacent owners have different ideas, motives and circumstances.

The development does not have a high profile, since its core is tucked away behind the main street frontages and the project is yet to be well connected to other central city attractions. An aggressive marketing campaign will be needed to draw people into the area. Once there, people are attracted by the celebration of the history and character of the locality, and the activities in the new lane draw people in to discover the centre of the block.

Lichfield Street is a busy, two-lane, one-way street. This creates a traffic-oriented environment, which is contrary to the relaxed, comfortable atmosphere of the South of Lichfield project. A previous attempt by the Council to introduce a two-way traffic system into Lichfield Street was thwarted by opposition to the transfer of the one-way system to a parallel street.

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#### VALUE GAINED

The South of Lichfield development has saved an historic part of the Christchurch urban fabric by finding new uses for old buildings, and building



1 South of Lichfield Square during a daytime concert.

2 South of Lichfield Square at night.

3 South of Lichfield artwork.



1 Potential wider lane improvements around the South of Lichfield area.

upon the existing urban form. This intrinsic character gives the development a competitive edge over other potential sites that tenants might choose. South of Lichfield has helped to enliven this part of the city and has shown how a viable and profitable revitalisation project could be created in other parts of the Christchurch central business district.

The density and mix of uses brings vitality and vibrancy from midday to late at night, and this activity helps to make these lanes feel safe. The development provides a place for people to meet, gather and interact.

Moveable street furniture maintains the adaptability of the outdoor spaces so that they can be used for a variety of purposes.

The paving, artworks, lighting, shop fronts and building façades and activities all combine to create a high-quality environment, which is attracting residents and visitors to shop and spend their leisure time in the area.

The South of Lichfield initiative is seen by the developer as the start of a much larger revitalisation initiative of Christchurch's inner city. The development of South of Lichfield Square serves to anchor the first corner of a new urban neighbourhood and give it a personality. As more buildings are brought back into full and intensive use, there will be the scope for neighbourhood amenities, such as bakeries and convenience stores and the restoration of a theatre in Tuam Street.

Property Ventures Ltd has acquired several properties in the larger area south of Lichfield Street and is already underway with a new development that will provide flexible living/working spaces. There is strong demand from potential businesses and residential purchasers, and other developers are showing interest in this previously undesirable locality.



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## CONCLUSION

The South of Lichfield project and other initiatives in the area south of Lichfield Street are now gaining momentum after a long gestation period. Because of the lack of development pressure in the past, the historic buildings were not demolished and the urban fabric remains to be adapted for present-day use. The residential component of the revitalisation is critical, and success will be dependent upon a large increase in the inner city population and supporting uses to make it comfortable, convenient, vibrant, attractive and affordable. The South of Lichfield project is demonstrating that such urban design qualities can be achieved.

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## Community Renewal – Housing New Zealand Corporation, Talbot Park, Auckland

### FAST FACTS

**Location:** Glen Innes, Auckland

**Site:** 5 hectare block in Glen Innes, Auckland (including 1 hectare existing public reserve)

**Completed:** March 2007 and public parks completed May 2008

**Client:** Housing New Zealand Corporation

**Partnership between:** Housing New Zealand Corporation, Auckland City Council and the Glenn Innes Community

**Design Project Teams:**

Masterplan: Geoffrey Walker Urban Design and Planning, with HNZN and Auckland City Council

Detailed masterplan: Boffa Miskell with HNZN and Auckland City Council

Housing development: Architectus, Bailey Architects, Boffa Miskell, Common Ground, Design Group Crosson Clarke Carnachan Architects, Design Group Stapleton Architects, Design Group ASC Architects, Pepper Dixon Architects

**Website link:** <http://www.hnzc.co.nz/hnzc/web/councils-&-community-organisations/community-groups/community-renewal.htm>

**Case study researcher:** Aaron Sills, Sills van Bohemen Architecture Ltd

### KEY STATISTICS

**Existing dwellings:** 167 Housing New Zealand Corporation residential units

**Existing residential density:** 33.4 units per hectare

**Redeveloped dwellings:** 111 new and 108 refurbished residential units

**Redeveloped residential density:** 43.8 units per hectare

**Budget:** \$46 million

**Residential 8b Zone:** Adjacent to residential areas one unit per 100m<sup>2</sup> and up to four storeys (maximum 17m)



## INTRODUCTION

The Talbot Park development is part of one of six community renewal projects initiated by Housing New Zealand Corporation (HNZC) in 2001.<sup>5</sup> The primary goal of these community renewal projects is to “address social exclusion and foster strong sustainable communities”. The projects are in areas of existing HNZC housing in Christchurch, Wellington, Rotorua, Manukau City, North Shore City and Auckland City.

HNZC is by far the biggest provider in the social housing market in New Zealand – it expects to build 1,000 houses a year. In comparison, other social housing providers such as the New Zealand Housing Foundation build 80 new houses, and Habitat for Humanity build around 20 new houses per year.

Talbot Park sits in the suburb of Glen Innes, in the Tamaki area of eastern Auckland. Around 16,000 people live in the area in about 5,000 dwellings, and HNZC is the owner of 56 percent (or 2,840) of those dwellings. Talbot Park consists of a 5 hectare block of land bounded by Pilkington Road, Point England Road and Apirana Avenue. It was chosen as a HNZC community renewal project to demonstrate quality urban design principles, sustainable building practices, community partnerships and innovative architectural design in medium density housing.

A wide range of ethnicities are represented in Glen Innes, with about half the population being of Pacific Island descent. It is a low socio-economic area with a high dependency on social assistance. Talbot Park’s ethnic mix is approximately 50 percent Pacific peoples, 20 percent Māori, 20 percent Asian and 10 percent Others (including Iraqi, Iranian, Fijian Indian and European). English is the second language for most residents.



1 Talbot Park neighbourhood context.

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.hnzc.co.nz/hnzc/web/housing-improvements-&-development/property-improvement/community-renewal.htm> for further information



Prior to the Talbot Park Renewal Project (the Project), 90 percent of the existing HNZN housing stock in the Tamaki area consisted of two or three bedroom dwellings, with more than half being built prior to 1960. The majority of HNZN applicants required further variety in the number of bedrooms. However, applicants needing four, five or six bedroom houses would normally have to wait more than twice as long for a house to become available as people wanting two to three bedroom units. For example, in 2004, the average time on waiting lists for a three bedroom house in Tamaki was two months, while for a five bedroom house it was nearly five.

The concentration of HNZN properties in the area has attracted other privately owned low-income rental housing, further concentrating deprivation in the Glen Innes area. Much of the private rental housing is of a lower grade and is being maintained to a lesser extent than the existing HNZN stock. High concentrations of functionally obsolete housing in one locality have compounded problems of social exclusion.

The existing Talbot Park site consisted of 1960s public housing in poor condition. The site had a history of ongoing security and social problems, partly associated with the internal public park based on the 'Radburn' concept. The public park ran through the site, with HNZN properties backing onto it. The urban designers (Geoffrey Walker from Urban Design and Planning, with HNZN and Auckland City Council) found the current relationship between the HNZN properties and the park lacked boundary definition. This resulted in residents feeling unsafe in the Talbot Park public green spaces. Increasing the sense of safety in the area became a primary objective of the Project.

The Project was launched in 2002. It was seen by HNZN as a partnership with the local community and Auckland City Council. It involved major refurbishment of 108 existing dwellings (apartment units within nine apartment blocks) and the construction of 111 new dwellings to achieve a total of 219 dwellings with a variety of typologies. The public spaces and street network of the block were also radically changed.

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## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The philosophy behind the HNZN community development approach was aimed at increasing participation by involving local people and resources in addressing local problems to improve the wellbeing of the individuals who live there and increase the amount of social capacity available within the community. The primary objectives of the HNZN community renewal programme were to work with the community and a range of other agencies to:

- improve and enhance the physical environment and amenities
- provide targeted needs-based tenancy and property management services
- use principles of community development and implement community-led solutions
- create links to programmes that increased resident employment and business growth
- provide access to affordable and appropriate community services and facilities that responded to changing community needs
- improve neighbourhood safety and reduce crime
- build social networks to facilitate residents supporting each other.



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## PROJECT PROCESS

A project office was set up in the centre of Talbot Park as the first part of the Project. This office, located in two existing neighbouring HNZN houses, served as both a base for project co-ordination as well as a location for the provision of all HNZN services in the area. This was intended to demonstrate the organisation's commitment to the project and to combat the likely local perception that change was being driven from the outside. HNZN now intends to use this local presence approach for all future community renewal projects.

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## MASTERPLAN

Geoffrey Walker from Urban Design and Planning developed an initial masterplan in association with John Tocker and Morgan Reeve of HNZN, as well as Auckland City Council representatives who participated in joint workshops. The masterplan was initially called a structure plan and then later a neighbourhood plan because the term 'masterplan' was seen as giving the impression that HNZN was not working with the community.

The initial masterplan included a site layout of public and private space, streets and housing typologies, and set several guiding design principles for the development, including:

- removal of the existing spine of public park through a land swap with Auckland City Council to create two new parks with improved urban relationships to residences (it retained the same total area of public park)
- provision of a new internal road layout, increasing site permeability and connectivity, with narrow streets to slow traffic
- creation of improved street and park frontages with further dwellings overlooking public areas
- provision of a range of medium density building typologies catering for a variety of family types – resulting in units ranging from one bedroom apartments, to eight bedroom family houses
- placement of higher density apartment buildings against the busiest road (Apirana Avenue)
- location of children's facilities on public open space in the quieter interior of the development
- limiting total units to 205 (in order to be at an acceptable building height and density for the community, and for HNZN long-term social housing management).

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## CHANGE TO RESIDENTIAL 8 ZONING

During the period from 2000 to 2002, there was public debate in Panmure and Glen Innes over the issue of increasing urban density. Auckland City Council notified the new Residential 8 zoning<sup>6</sup>, which was aimed at allowing higher densities in the areas determined as 'growth corridors'<sup>7</sup> in Auckland. Talbot Park was earmarked as the first area to have its zoning changed to Residential 8. Because of public opposition to high densities, it was decided to reduce the density in Talbot Park. The 4 hectares of building lots would have a theoretical capacity of 400 units and a height of four storeys under the Residential 8b rules. In reality, this would have required underground car parking spaces. The Apirana Avenue edge of Talbot Park is the only area where HNZN might have extended to four storeys, because extra building height would have been more in

<sup>6</sup> See Res 8 Strategy for further information.

<sup>7</sup> See [www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/default.asp](http://www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/default.asp) for further information.



- 1 Talbot Park masterplan.
- 2 Talbot Park detailed unit masterplan.

scale with the wide road and created a buffer for the rest of the site from the busy road.

Once the initial masterplan was approved by the Minister of Housing and Auckland City Council, Boffa Miskell was engaged to develop a detailed masterplan (called a neighbourhood plan). Boffa Miskell led a collaborative process with the community (not only HNZN tenants), Auckland City Council and HNZN staff. This consisted of a series of community workshops, focus groups, surveys, open days and newsletters. Boffa Miskell envisaged this as a 'bottom-up' approach, rather than 'top-down'. There was initial scepticism about the amount of community collaboration to be undertaken, but Doug Leighton of Boffa Miskell noted that this was soon dispelled once the process was under way, and the benefits of the community collaboration became evident.

The detailed masterplan developed through this process retained the configuration of the initial masterplan and general disposition of buildings. Building typologies were developed and presented to the public, and the apartment block closest to the northern reserve (Atrium Block) was reconfigured in order to achieve more surveillance of the open space. Higher density apartments were positioned along the busy street of Apirana Avenue. Concepts for internal roads were further refined to include rain gardens (partly subsidised by Infrastructure Auckland and subsequently Auckland Regional Council grants).

The initial masterplan was presented to the Auckland City Urban Design Panel and several panel recommendations were made. These were addressed during the development of the detailed masterplan (neighbourhood plan) and the revised scheme was re-presented to the Urban Design Panel.

*Developing this Neighbourhood Plan before bringing architects on board to design buildings was an essential element of the process. This approach*



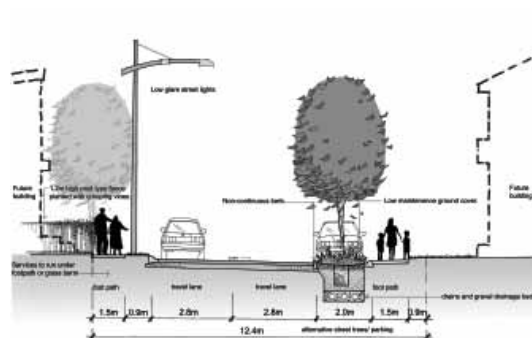


*allows the site layout, public spaces, interconnections, public safety issues (in relation to site layout), to be worked through an urban design process before the architects become involved and the focus switches to the buildings and their immediate surrounds. (Stuart Bracey, HNZN project manager.)*

The roading network and parking in the detailed masterplan became an issue because of a conflict between urban design-based road width requirements and those required when new roads are vested in council under the “code of urban subdivision and development”. There was also opposition to the incorporation of rain gardens in roads being vested, because they would complicate council maintenance. These issues were worked through with Auckland City Council, through a joint project team process. For transport engineers and the New Zealand Fire Service, wider roads were necessary to allow passage for emergency vehicles, while for the designers, narrower roads (10m wide) were necessary to reduce vehicle speeds and to increase safety and the sense of community and place. In the end, reduced road widths were used, with a road reserve width of 12.4m, including a carriageway width of 5.6m and 2.0m of parallel parking on one side of the road.

Stuart Bracey, HNZN, notes that the internal roads were designed to be 30km per hour but, at the time, there was no way of designating this speed on a public road. Auckland City Council now has a bylaw that allows lower speed limits, and HNZN is hoping to have speeds in Talbot Park reduced legally.

The new apartment developments have a parking ratio of one car park per unit and no visitor parking spaces, which was lower than the Residential 8 requirements of one car park per unit and one visitor park for every five resident parks. However, existing data on HNZN tenants’ parking requirements, as well as the creation of new roads



- 1 Talbot Park road section.
- 2 Two storey duplexes.
- 3 Three bedroom terraced housing.



- 1 Two bedroom apartments.
- 2 Existing Star Block apartments prior to refurbishment.
- 3 Refurbished Star Block apartments.

with parallel parking, was used to justify this reduction to Auckland City Council.

The front yards of the detached family houses incorporate parking for cars and small areas of planting to separate children from vehicle manoeuvring on and off the road. There is also a 10m × 10m fenced and secured rear yard for each detached house, to allow children to play safely.

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#### BUILDING DEVELOPMENT

Doug Leighton of Boffa Miskell had the role of project leader during the development of the detailed masterplan, and once that was complete he briefed and co-ordinated the architects who were to work on individual buildings. Boffa Miskell was also the statutory planning consultant and landscape architect for the entire project, with responsibility for co-ordinating each of the architectural firms working on the project on the landscaping for individual lots.

HNZC was anxious at the beginning of the project to avoid too much uniformity in the building designs. Both the variety of typologies utilised and architects employed have resulted in architectural diversity across the project. Individual multi-unit block designs vary, but none have been designed to avoid repetition within the block (apart from superficial colouring in the Triplex apartments).

The existing three storey Star Block apartments (nine blocks, with 108 units in total) were retained and renovated first. This served to demonstrate goodwill to the local community by dramatically improving the environment for tenants. Open homes were conducted to display the renovations to the community. Improvements included adding decks, punching through and glazing ground floor lobbies to open them up and make them safer, new roofs, stainless steel kitchen benches, heating and landscaping. Externally, the alterations were not particularly in keeping with the original architecture but they provided practical improvements for tenants.



The 167 existing HNZN tenants were relocated at different times during the renovations and were all given the option to return. However, the Project provided the opportunity to implement medium density residential living rules for tenants that were stricter than in previous tenancy agreements. These included such things as: no dogs allowed (found to be a big safety and noise issue for the community during consultation), no pets in apartments, no unreasonable parties after 10pm and tenant responsibility for their own visitors and their visitors' parking behaviour. Tenants sign on to these living rules and are moved if they cannot comply. All of the people who have been given the opportunity to live in Talbot Park have accepted these conditions on moving in. A tenancy manager (based onsite in the Project office) deals with the enforcement of the rules as part of their job. A ban on smoking within dwellings was also considered but not pursued.

EVALUATION OF URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

CONTEXT	<p>A key feature of the Project was the restructuring of public space, including parks and streets. A land swap with Auckland City Council has meant that the long and narrow Talbot Park, which caused many safety issues with its position at the rear of dwellings, has been transformed into two individual parks that are well overlooked by housing. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles have been followed, with careful design for maximum surveillance, use of permeable fences between public and private open space and vandal-proof fixtures and fittings.</p> <p>The higher density apartment blocks were positioned along the busy street of Apirana Avenue in order to shield the internal areas of the site, while detached houses were located closer to the eastern side of the site where they related better to the surrounding detached houses. The higher density buildings also have a direct connection to the train station to the north of the site.</p>
CHARACTER	<p>The general aesthetic quality of architecture in the development is high. There is, however, a sense of impermanence in units where fibre-cement sheet cladding has been used, and the Triplex apartments are painted in bright colours in a way that may characterise them as 'social' housing. A sense of identity for the community comes from the diversity and quality of the buildings. This should develop further once the landscaping of the parks is completed by Auckland City Council and they become a focus for the neighbourhood.</p> <p>Stuart Bracey of HNZN notes that the brief for the detached houses was to have a 'Pacifica' aesthetic. The mix of colours and the horizontal timber battens over the steel cladding lends a Pacific character to the designs.</p>
CHOICE	<p>Both the variety of typologies utilised and the architects employed have resulted in architectural diversity across the project, giving further choices in housing to tenants. Out of a total of 219 units, there are 20 that are fully accessible to wheelchair tenants, 16 that are accessible friendly (served by lifts), and 15 family homes have accessible ground floor bedrooms and bathrooms. Accessibility was a focus for designers. However, cost was a major factor in decisions on the degree of accessibility in units (for example, the electronics for a self-opening door can cost \$4,000).</p>



With the detached family houses, there are two general plan arrangements with kitchens either at the road end or in the middle of the house, and between four and eight bedrooms. This provides for the high demand large family homes required by HNZC tenants. These homes were also designed to accommodate a variety of cultural lifestyles. Having a second living area off the entry that can be used for formal reception of guests has proved to be a flexible arrangement for many different cultural groups. Single attached garages are also being used in a flexible way by tenants – as an additional room for a gym or entertaining, for example.

The number and type of units are as follows:

- 108 units refurbished in nine Star Blocks (three storey apartment buildings); architects: Pepper Dixon; construction: Canam Construction
- four, three bedroom Duplexes; architects: Bailey Architects; construction: Fairway Homes; 32–38 Salima Talagi Street
- 24, two bedroom Atrium units; architects: Architectus; construction: Pepper Dixon and Federal Residential (design–build novated); 340 Apirana Avenue
- 21 large family homes (four to eight bedrooms); architects: Common Ground; construction: NZ Built
- 24, two bedroom apartments; architects: Design Group: CCCA Ken Crosson; construction: Canam Construction (design–build novated); 360–366 Apirana Avenue
- 16, three bedroom terrace houses; architects: Design Group – Neil Cotton and Craig Roberts; construction: Fairway Homes (design–build novated); 1–33 Tippet Street
- four, one bedroom accessible units; architects: Pepper Dixon; construction: GJ Gardner; 51–57 Tippet Street
- 18, two bedroom Triplex units; architects: Pepper Dixon; construction: Canam Construction (design–build novated); 45–49 Tippet Street.

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#### CONNECTIONS

Connections through the site were considered from the first discussions. Designers focused on the existing flawed street, park and building layout of the site, with the defective internal public park causing major problems.

New streets were created, and the project team debated the form of these internal roads and the character they should have. They set the goal to slow traffic and to make streets that could be used safely by the community.

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#### CREATIVITY

A diverse group of people have brought their creative talents to this project. This includes professional designers and architects, members of HNZC, Auckland City Council and community members.

The employment of a variety of architectural firms has increased the diversity of buildings in the development – which HNZC was anxious to achieve. HNZC brought all



the architects together during the design period to ensure their designs related well to each other. These meetings provided an opportunity to discuss colour themes and the general landscaping with Boffa Miskell (because all soft landscaping was separate from the building construction contracts).

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#### CUSTODIANSHIP

The Project combines the provision of high-quality medium density housing with the creation of community networks and community spirit. HNZN was clear from the beginning that the Project was not just asset development and refurbishment, but the improvement of the whole community.

Sustainability and low-impact design were major factors in the Project, both in the design of dwellings and the street and exterior space design. Sustainability issues were addressed through the incorporation of:

- higher levels of insulation than code requirements
- passive venting in aluminium windows
- range-hoods in all kitchens to extract damp air and reduce internal condensation
- solar water heating in some units – including all the Atrium apartments (capital cost approximately \$6,000 per house and \$2,000 per apartment)
- rainwater collection into garden tanks supplying toilets and garden irrigation in some of the detached houses (capital cost \$4,000/house) and one apartment complex
- rain gardens within the streets for treatment and detention of stormwater
- permeable paving to reduce the amount of stormwater leaving the site
- a detention tank system to clean out solids from the stormwater of the large parking areas beside the Atrium apartments (capital cost \$50,000 – viable only through an Infrastructure Auckland grant).

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#### COLLABORATION

HNZN's philosophy was aimed at increasing community participation in the project and developing community capacity. HNZN set up a project office in the centre of the project to demonstrate its commitment to collaboration directly with the community. Collaboration between organisations was also a strong feature of this project, with a bottom-up rather than top-down approach to design. A series of community workshops, focus groups, surveys, open days and newsletters was used to develop the Project.

There seems to have been little collaboration with the owners of the few private properties (both rented and owner occupied) in Talbot Park to encourage upgrading of their properties. This may, however, occur naturally over time.



1 Family houses.

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## VALUE GAINED

### ECONOMIC

The recent HNZC developments generally have a higher building and urban design standard than private low-cost rental developments in the area. This standard of public housing decreases tenant turnover and better meets the needs of HNZC tenants. HNZC also owns a large percentage of housing stock in the Tamaki area, so any increase in quality positively affects the overall value of other HNZC housing in the area.

HNZC also feels that the demand for larger dwellings from those on low incomes is being ignored by the private sector. The use of design-build contracts with construction companies was seen as a way of encouraging the private sector to begin to consider, and eventually provide for, low-quality housing.

Contractors on the project were required to employ local people where possible. This led to the employment of 25 people from the area, with five becoming permanent employees.

### SOCIAL/CULTURAL

The Project has resulted in a low tenant turnover in Talbot Park. At the beginning of the project, tenant turnover per annum was about 50 percent, it now sits at about 5 percent. This is likely to be because of the development of housing that is better suited to tenants' needs, and the greater investment in onsite tenancy management. The value to tenants is reduced occupant stress, as well as social and economic benefits for those who do not have to move to alternative accommodation. The management of the mix of tenants is also an important part of the success of the project.

An outcomes evaluation of the six HNZC community renewal programmes was undertaken from 2005 to 2006. The evaluation found that the programmes were moving towards achieving all their targeted outcomes and were demonstrating



examples of 'best practice'. Highlights from the key findings were that:

- the projects engaged with their local communities
- individuals were empowered
- there was increased resident pride and ownership
- reduced social exclusion fostered strong, sustainable communities
- the physical environment was improved
- outsider perceptions of community renewal areas improved
- there was an increase in available and responsive housing services.

A key success for the project was gaining public and community acceptance of the Talbot Park detailed masterplan by addressing the main crime and safety concerns raised by residents. A safe public environment has been created through the reconfiguration of the area, together with better streetscapes and lighting.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY**

Several sustainability and low-impact urban design features were incorporated into the Project. The design of the houses has resulted in healthier living environments for the tenants, with warmer, drier and better ventilated houses. Solar water heating and rainwater collection units are being currently monitored to assess the likely cost reductions to tenants and HNZC.

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#### **LESSONS LEARNT**

Housing interventions alone cannot achieve HNZC's community renewal vision. Reducing social exclusion requires partnership with others, such as Auckland City Council, to create a physical environment with good-quality housing in a healthy, safe and sustainable environment that is appropriate to the needs of the families and community.

The Residential 8 zoning change by Auckland City Council, with the threat of increased density, resulted in approximately 800 submissions mainly in opposition to the plan change. This meant the project team had to work hard to ensure there was good community consultation and participation in the project.

Doug Leighton of Boffa Miskell initially had in mind the concept of Home Zone, or Woonerf, as a goal for the internal streets of the development. In the end, narrow streets with rain gardens and parking on one side were chosen (Residential 8 dimensions). This has been successful in slowing traffic, but HNZC is also working to have the speed in these streets reduced to 30km per hour under a new Auckland City Council bylaw.

The interpretation of car parking rules by Auckland City Council caused difficulties.

*We were eventually allowed to offset the new street parking against the visitor parking required. HNZC research had shown that family houses would have high parking demand whereas the apartments would have low demand, and are underutilised. (Doug Leighton, Boffa Miskell.)*

Starting the project without comprehensive survey information also caused problems, according to Doug Leighton. A false assumption, based on a lack of survey information, resulted in a row of poplars requiring removal – and this became a sticking point, despite their exotic status. Related information on an overland flow path was also unavailable at the outset and subsequently affected the design of the area by requiring



gaps between buildings, extra retaining walls and raised floor levels.

The process of building procurement has also caused issues. HNZN used a traditional lump-sum tender process for all detached family homes, duplex houses and single bedroom units, and a design-build, arrangement for all multi-unit buildings. In a design-build, arrangement the building company contracts to the client to provide a building for a fixed price based on the preliminary design, and the architects are novated (contracted directly) to the building company at the end of the preliminary design stage. The main contractor therefore has more influence in the detailed design and construction documents as they are developed – which can lead to better resolution of construction detail but also pressure to reduce costs, without the knowledge of the client.

Both procurement systems had their strengths and weaknesses. Design-build saved time but there was some loss of control; HNZN expected to take part in a design evolution process with the contractors but the contractors did not believe this to be the case. With a traditional process of lump-sum tendering, the client has control over the design and more flexibility; when designs evolve there is also increased transparency on costs.

Permeable paving was used in some parts of the project to reduce the amount of stormwater leaving the site. However, this has generally been disappointing because it is prohibitively expensive and relies on underground drainage.

To allow for at least a full year of occupation to test systems, a post-occupancy evaluation was initiated at the end of 2007. The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) has tested solar systems and Landcare Research has evaluated the water harvesting systems. Occupant satisfaction evaluation of both the Atrium apartments and the family homes is underway, with other housing typology evaluation surveys to follow.

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## CONCLUSION

In January 2007, the Talbot Park community renewal project was fully occupied – although work on the two new parks was completed by Auckland City Council in May 2008. The project is the first HNZN community renewal project completed in Auckland and to test the Auckland City District Plan's Residential 8 zone.

The Project has fulfilled the original intentions of the participants to test several community collaboration, urban design, environmental and building typology initiatives. The Project has also been a successful exercise in collaboration between many organisations, including HNZN, Auckland City Council, Auckland Regional Council and Infrastructure Auckland, as well as several consultants and contractors.

A fundamental endorsement for the project is that HNZN housing applicants are now specifically requesting to live in the Talbot Park project area.



## Mixed Use Development – Church Lane, Queenstown

### FAST FACTS

**Location:** Between Church and Earl Streets, central Queenstown, Otago

**Timeframe:** Around seven years, from 2000 to 2007 (from purchase of site to completion of construction), with one undeveloped lot remaining

**Developer:** Arrow Farms (John Martin, John Guthrie, Bryan Collie and the late Howard Paterson)

**Owner:** Various (subdivided into 14 lots; some re-amalgamated)

**Designers:** Archimedia for the original concept; Archimedia, 2 Architecture Studio, Jackie Gillies, Noel Tapp, Maurice Orr and Architectural Design Queenstown for the individual buildings

**Case study researcher:** Rosalind Groves, John Edmonds and Associates Ltd

### KEY STATISTICS

**Site area:** 2,993m<sup>2</sup>

**Site coverage:** entire site 75 percent; each lot 73–100 percent

**Buildings:** two to three storeys

**Maximum height:** 8.5m

**Total floor area:** 5410m<sup>2</sup>

**Current uses:**

Retail: 623m<sup>2</sup>

Offices: 1,567 m<sup>2</sup>

Visitor accommodation: 1,220 m<sup>2</sup>

Restaurant/bar/café: 1,693m<sup>2</sup>

Vacant: 307m<sup>2</sup>



- 1 Aerial view of Church Lane development near the edge of central Queenstown.
- 2 Queenstown Lakes District Plan, with Church Lane development marked in red.



## INTRODUCTION

Church Lane is located in central Queenstown, between Church and Earl Streets near the edge of the town centre, close to the Lake Wakatipu waterfront. The Church Lane development demonstrates how quality urban design outcomes can result from negotiations between private developers and councils. Discussions between the Queenstown Lakes District Council (the Council) and site owners led to the creation of a pedestrian walkway and design controls attached to land made available for commercial development.

Church Lane mixed use design elements include:

- mixed use: retail, office space, restaurants and visitor accommodation
- building heights stepped back from Lake Wakatipu to maintain views
- varied building designs with verandas, balconies and use of local materials
- internal pedestrian-oriented public space
- incorporation of heritage elements.

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## DESIGN PROCESSES

The design process started in the mid-1990s when the private developers who owned Williams Cottage sold it to the Council. Williams Cottage is a Category I Historic Place and is believed to be the earliest remaining cottage in Queenstown. Williams Cottage is part of the Marine Parade Historic Precinct in the Partially Operative District Plan, recognised by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust for its aesthetic, architectural and historical significance.

The Church Lane development is located on land that was recently occupied by the Mount Cook Landlines bus terminal. At the time of applying for consent to develop the site, the bus terminal was no longer in use. The bus terminal was used for long-distance bus services and ski shuttles to nearby ski fields (Coronet Peak and The Remarkables), before the owner, Mount Cook Group, sold or divested the bus services and ski fields. The site was zoned Commercial in the former Transitional District Plan, and Queenstown Town Centre Zone in the then Proposed District Plan (now the Partially Operative District Plan).

Operating as Arrow Farms, four local developers, John Martin, John Guthrie, Bryan Collie and the late Howard Paterson, bought the former bus terminal in 2000 for around \$2 million and had previously purchased two smaller sites adjoining it. The developers commissioned Archimedia (architecture, interiors and urban design) to design a modulated building for the entire site, in keeping with the bulk and location provisions of the District Plan.<sup>8</sup>

The developers then examined the viability of finding tenancies for one large building and, as a result, considered a series of individual buildings as an alternative way to develop the site. The developers and the Mayor of Queenstown at the time, Warren Cooper, discussed the site and, in particular, site coverage. Archimedia reviewed the original design for creating individual lots. The idea of a pedestrian walkway to utilise the non-site coverage area was considered and discussed with the Council and its regulatory services provider at the time, CivicCorp (now Lakes Environmental, a council-controlled organisation). The ideas for the site, being a series of individual buildings with individual lots, were accepted in principle by the Council.

<sup>8</sup> For the purposes of this case study, 'District Plan' refers to the plan at the time, the Proposed District Plan (1995).



Archimedia devised the design controls that would be attached to the title of each new lot. These were based largely on studies into pedestrian spaces, including an assessment of the successful and not so successful aspects of nearby Ballarat Mall. The pedestrianised Ballarat Mall contains a mix of retail and other activities and is on a larger scale than Church Lane. An informal workshop process between the developers and their team of architects, planners, surveyors and lawyers refined the overall design and led to the preparation of the Church Lane resource consent application.

The developers applied for consent in 2000 to amalgamate the existing titles that comprised the bus terminal and adjoining sites, and then subdivide the site into a different configuration of 14 smaller lots fronting the new pedestrian walkway. Consent was also sought to exceed the site coverage rule in the District Plan, which contains a rule for maximum building coverage of 70 percent for the Church Lane site. The development proposed 73–100 percent site coverage for each individual lot, or approximately 75 percent overall site coverage.

The District Plan site coverage rule was interpreted by the Council as applying to the individual lots created, with the view that the ‘spirit’ of the rule is to restrict the overall coverage of an entire combined site. CivicCorp did not believe that the District Plan fully anticipated the type of title structure created through the Church Lane subdivision. CivicCorp considered that the effects on the built environment of the Church Lane proposal with 75 percent site coverage would be reduced because of the individual building design rather than a strict adherence with the 70 percent site coverage rule.

The District Plan contains different building coverage rules for each special character area identified in the town centre. The relevant rule for Special Character Area – Precinct 2, within which Church Lane is located, specified a maximum building coverage of 70 percent. In contrast, the building coverage rule for the adjacent Special Character Area – Precinct 1 (which includes Ballarat Mall and other pedestrian walkways and lanes within the heart of the Queenstown town centre) is:

*Minimum building coverage – 95%; except where a public open air pedestrian link to an existing or proposed walkway is provided, the minimum site coverage can be reduced by the amount necessary to provide for that link.*

The subdivision application created 14 developable lots and set aside one lot for the pedestrian walkway, to be called Church Lane. Church Lane Management Limited was established for the maintenance of the walkway, to be held in equal ownership by the surrounding lot owners. A right-of-way restrictive covenant under Church Lane Management Limited covers specified design elements, including:

- maintenance of the streetscape
- verandas and balconies at first and second levels
- a high standard of development and landscaping
- noise controls.

The covenant or legal restriction was attached to the new Certificate of Titles, with design controls for developing the individual lots, including the following:

- not permitting detached or semi-detached building forms
- proposals for new buildings to be subject to the written approval of the Queenstown Heritage Trust



- 1 Mixed use development of Church Lane, with bars (left) and hotel accommodation (right).
- 2 Church Lane steps connecting through the lane from Marine Parade.

- stepping the development back from Lake Wakatipu to maintain views from the upper levels of future buildings through height controls.

The application was considered on a non-notified basis under delegated authority. Once consent was granted, subdivision and sale of the lots followed. When the final lot sold in 2004, the 120–160m<sup>2</sup> sections were considered affordable commercial land for central Queenstown. Other than the Paterson estate, the original developers have all retained some ownership. For example, John Martin kept one lot and bought two more to develop the Spire Hotel, boutique visitor accommodation, and Inspire restaurant.

#### URBAN DESIGN ISSUES

The main urban design issues that arose during the development process were:

- developing the site in an alternative way to the District Plan by exceeding the site coverage rule
- ensuring that future buildings on the site would be developed to a high urban design standard
- establishing and maintaining a pedestrian walkway through the site
- protecting historic buildings and heritage elements, while enabling predominantly modern building designs rather than historic reproductions
- making effective use of high-value land in central Queenstown through a mix of uses.

These issues were negotiated between the private developers and the Council through the pre-application and consent application processes. Design controls were attached to the new titles to ensure that buildings would be designed and built to a high standard. A covenant attached to the new titles also ensured that the walkway would be



established and well maintained. Each lot was developed by the new owners in accordance with the design controls and through individual resource consents. A design review panel was set up to ensure that the original developers approved the design of each new building. The design process pre-dated the Queenstown and Wanaka Urban Design Panels, which were established in 2004.

The development process included protecting the existing historic buildings and some interpretations of the original built fabric through sympathetically designed extensions to Archer Cottage. Most of the building designs within the lane are contemporary, rather than historic single storey reproductions with a residential style and pitched roofs as described in Special Character Area – Precinct 2 of the District Plan.

The contemporary style has raised concerns because of its introduction of a design vocabulary that has nothing to do with the Queenstown town centre history. However, the end result is a design that fits well with the Queenstown town centre which is characterised by small lots and buildings of two or three storeys. Building designs that are considered appropriate for Queenstown are described in the Draft Queenstown Town Centre Building Design Guidelines, released in May 2007. The Church Lane buildings set a positive example for the Queenstown town centre with small section sizes and diverse building forms. This is reinforced by the façade design, with different pallets for each building made out of stone, plaster and weatherboard that complement the adjoining Queenstown buildings.

Property owners in high-priced central Queenstown face the challenge of what to do with the upper floors of their commercial buildings so as to make an economic return. If office tenants cannot be found, visitor or residential accommodation may be considered. Having residents living in the town centre is viewed as positive: they provide ‘eyes on the street’. In contrast, visitors may not be aware that their accommodation lacks, for example, noise-insulated windows. This can lead to a disappointing visitor experience. The Council intends to notify a district plan change for the town centre in the next few years to address noise and other matters.

Urban design principles are gradually being interpreted for the Queenstown context, through the Urban Design Panels, guidelines and district plan changes. For example, a district plan change for ‘Improving Amenity in the High Density Residential Zones’ includes an interpretation of the seven Cs for multi-unit developments within those zones.

## EVALUATION OF URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### CONTEXT

Queenstown is experiencing rapid development; the Queenstown Lakes District area was the fastest growing area in New Zealand between 2001 and 2006. Many of the growth pressures that the Queenstown faces are driven by forces outside of the district. The district is an international tourism destination that supports economic growth across the southern part of the South Island, and draws in a large amount of investment – both local and international – in homes, services and visitor-related activities.

Church Lane is bounded by Earl and Church Streets near the edge of the Queenstown town centre. The site is within five to 10 minutes’ walking distance of nearby hotels and other visitor accommodation, the Queenstown Gardens scenic reserve, Lake Wakatipu waterfront and public car parking. The Church Lane development relates well to its setting within the town centre and provides an interesting public space, as well as commercial opportunities.



The mix of uses within Church Lane contributes to Queenstown's predicted growth requirements through the provision of additional retail and business floor space. The development contributes positively to the vitality and viability of Queenstown through its central location and effective use of existing resources (land and infrastructure). The development avoids concerns such as fragmenting the town centre or inappropriately locating business activities outside the town centre.

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**CHARACTER**

Historic buildings surrounding Church Lane include Archer Cottage and Williams Cottage. Williams Cottage displays the early (colonial) architectural vernacular of residential buildings as described in the District Plan: small-scale, single storey, with a pitched roof and set back from the street.

Development of the lane has facilitated the protection and restoration of those historic buildings. The buildings have modern uses: Williams Cottage is a design store and café; Archer Cottage incorporates sympathetic extensions and contains legal offices. The contemporary building designs within the rest of Church Lane, however, are not consistent with the historic character described in the District Plan, but create locally appropriate architecture and spaces.

The lane provides view corridors towards the iconic Remarkables mountain range and the hills behind Queenstown. The upper levels of the buildings within the lane have views towards Lake Wakatipu. The lane has a visually interesting roofscape when viewed from the many elevated vantage points within and around the town centre. The human scale of the lane ensures it does not attempt to detract from the grandeur of the surrounding mountain scenery.

The buildings along the lane relate well to one another through strong horizontal elements – windows and verandas or balconies. The buildings are of contemporary design and include interpretations of traditional features, such as decorative balconies. Balconies and verandas were required by the design controls attached to each lot.

Detailed building articulation provides interest to the front façades. Each storey is broken up with detailing at the human scale, including doors and recessed windows. Timber screening is used to provide privacy for upper level apartments or to conceal air conditioning units. The colours used for the buildings are subtle and natural.

Use of locally appropriate materials, such as copper and stacked schist, alongside modern materials, reflects Queenstown's geology, heritage and emerging urban character. The materials and colours reflect what is increasingly being recognised as the local vernacular, incorporated into modern architectural design.

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**CHOICE**

Church Lane contributes towards the vibrancy and vitality of the Queenstown town centre by providing a mix of ground level retail, restaurants and a café, and upper level visitor accommodation and offices within a pedestrian-friendly environment. The mixed use characteristic of the lane is partly a result of building owners finding financially viable tenants (such as offices or visitor accommodation) for the upper floors of the



commercial buildings, and applying for consents for changes of use if required by the District Plan.

The buildings generally have flexibility to respond to changing demands in the future through changes of use. Changing to less compatible uses, such as visitor accommodation next to late-night bars, can lead to conflicts or reverse sensitivities over noise and nuisance, as has occurred in Church Lane. Conflicts need to be resolved through design and location so that residential and commercial activities in the town centre can be acceptably combined.

The lane is generally accessible and disability-friendly, apart from one section near the café that has several sets of steps but does not include a ramp.

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#### CONNECTIONS

The creation of a public walkway is a vital part of the success of the Church Lane development. The walkway links the development to the rest of the Queenstown town centre as well as other nearby amenities. The lane links to the historic grid pattern of streets, with entrances or exits off Church Street, Earl Street and Marine Parade. The buildings connect with adjoining development, including construction around historic St Peter's Church at the northern end of the block.

The lane contributes to the historic pattern of pedestrian linkages in Queenstown – an important means of promoting pedestrian permeability throughout the town centre. If town centre traffic and parking issues are resolved, and visitor numbers continue to increase, it is likely that Queenstown will become more pedestrianised over time. As Lou Alfeld, the local urban design champion commented:

*Queenstown has a special pedestrian flavour that encourages leisurely exploration by tourists. Urban design needs to reinforce the human scale, and sense of delight and discovery.*

The lane is inward looking and creates an inviting environment at an intimate, human scale. The public space provided by the walkway can be a quick thoroughfare or place of exploration. The entrances to the lane, however, can somewhat inhibit pedestrian entry because they are partly concealed by angle car parking and loading zones along the adjacent streets. The lack of visibility may hamper visitors unfamiliar with Queenstown from finding or entering the lane. The lane is near the edge of the town centre; this is an unavoidable limitation to pedestrian activity.

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#### CREATIVITY

Establishing a walkway through the site, with increased site coverage and retail frontage, was a resourceful way to make use of the high-value land. Individual development of each lot has enabled varied building designs. The buildings along Church Lane are of different styles because they have been designed by different architects. Despite differing designs and construction times, the buildings have been built to a high standard, and relate well to one another, the lane and surrounding streets. This is largely a result of the design controls attached to the Certificate of Title for each lot. Each new building required the approval of the original developers to ensure that the designs were compatible with their vision for the lane.



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**CUSTODIANSHIP**

Because consent was obtained for a higher intensity of building coverage, the site has been developed effectively and efficiently, while creating a valuable public space. The public walkway is held in equal ownership by the individual lot owners, ensuring that it will be maintained to a high standard in the future. Good lighting provides a safe environment to walk through. Verandas on some buildings provide protection from the weather, keeping the lane attractive and convenient for pedestrians. Local materials, such as schist, have been used for some buildings.

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**COLLABORATION**

The overall design and site development process was the outcome of negotiation between the private developers and Council. The Council was supportive of the creation of a public walkway and, as a result, a better quality urban design outcome was achieved than was generally anticipated by the District Plan, despite concerns over heritage values.

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**LESSONS LEARNT**

The modern building designs within Church Lane are considered to be attractive and appropriate for the Queenstown town centre. However, they are contrary to the Special Character Area – Precinct 2 as described in the District Plan.

District plan rules that restrict flexible design options may not always lead to quality or creative urban design outcomes. Negotiation between the private developers and Council has resulted in the establishment of a public walkway space within the development. Had the developers chosen a conventional building layout, the walkway may not have been established.

Providing connections that simply allow through-access for pedestrians is generally considered to be insufficient. A considerable weight of evidence indicates that there must also be attention to the quality of those connections if they are to attract use. The management of the street edges of Church Lane do not encourage pedestrian access. The entrances from both Church and Earl Streets are somewhat obscured from general view by car parking and loading zones on adjacent streets.

There is no pedestrian crossing or other active or passive visual cue, such as landscaping, to encourage people walking from the main town centre to cross Church Street and enter the lane. Although Church Street is one-way, it has a regular flow of traffic that, together with the angle parking, can make crossing the street difficult and potentially unsafe.

At present, there is no clear and inviting pedestrian connections from the lane to the rest of the town centre. In between Church Lane and the main town centre is a disused minigolf site above an underground public car park. This site has a footpath through to Searle Lane, which in turn connects to Ballarat Mall and beyond. The minigolf site has been vacant for some years and is owned by one of the developers who established Church Lane, John Martin. The developer's intention is that a walkway will be maintained through the site during planned development into retail and commercial buildings.

The lack of visibility and welcome, combined with the lane's location near the edge of the town centre and lack of clear connection to the rest of the town centre, along with the consequent effects on levels of foot traffic, has meant that ground level retail in Church Lane is not thriving as well as might be expected in a popular tourist town. Recent retail and commercial development around St Peter's Church adjoining Church





Lane may attract further people to the block and into the lane.

Quality urban design encourages a diversity of activities within mixed use developments. Such developments create interesting and vibrant street life and have economic advantages over single-use developments, by combining uses that can support one another, such as accommodation next to town centre retail activities. Mixed use developments, however, have to be designed to resolve reverse sensitivity conflicts, such as noise.

The location of the mixed uses and adequate design features, including insulation and air conditioning, should be considered during the early design phase of a development. Because of inadequate design features and the inappropriate location of uses in Church Lane, the Spire Hotel patrons have suffered from excessive noise from the late-night bars in Church Lane and the bars have suffered from noise enforcement action taken against them. The Council, landlords and bar owners have met to discuss the difficulties of noise control, and the Council is assisting bar owners to comply with the District Plan noise standards. Physical alterations, such as installation of double doors to the bars, may be required to reduce the noise.

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#### VALUE GAINED

Church Lane is an example of a mixed use development with a blend of retail, restaurants, bars and cafés, offices and visitor accommodation.

The individual buildings consist of:

- 8 Church Street – ground floor retail (Air New Zealand Holidays, 150m<sup>2</sup> floor area), Thai restaurant (150m<sup>2</sup>) on the first and second floors
- 10A Church Street (1 Church Lane) – ground floor retail (real estate agent and computer shop, 140m<sup>2</sup>), offices/apartments on upper two levels (286m<sup>2</sup>)



1 Looking into Church Lane between Williams Cottage (right) and Archer Cottage extension (left).

2 Church Lane connection to Marine Parade.

3 Church Lane connection between Church Street and Earl Street and the Novotel Hotel.



- 10B, 10C and 10D Church Street (3–5 Church Lane) – ground floor restaurant (Inspire, 482m<sup>2</sup>), hotel on upper two floors (Spire Hotel, 964m<sup>2</sup>)
- 12 Church Street – restaurant/bar on ground and first floor (Monty's, 388m<sup>2</sup>)
- 12B Church Street and 17B Earl Street – ground and first floor restaurant/bar (12 Bar, 540m<sup>2</sup>)
- 9A Earl Street – ground floor retail (art gallery, 128m<sup>2</sup>), upper levels offices/apartments (256m<sup>2</sup>)
- 9B Earl Street (7 Church Lane) – ground floor retail (British Lolly Shop, 79m<sup>2</sup>), upper levels apartments (158m<sup>2</sup>)
- 11 Earl Street – ground floor retail (art gallery, 126m<sup>2</sup>), upper floor offices (252m<sup>2</sup>)
- 13 Earl Street – vacant site (151m<sup>2</sup>)
- 15 Earl Street – ground floor currently vacant (156m<sup>2</sup>), first floor offices/apartments (156m<sup>2</sup>)
- 17A Earl Street – ground floor café (133m<sup>2</sup>), first floor legal offices (133m<sup>2</sup>)
- 17 Marine Parade (Archer Cottage) – ground and first floor legal offices (Anderson Lloyd, 740m<sup>2</sup>)
- 21 Marine Parade (Williams Cottage) – Vesta café and design store.

Church Lane is linked to other developments within the block, including recent development around historic St Peter's Church consisting of a café and retail space, and the Marine Parade Historic Precinct, including apartments under construction.

Church Lane provides a pedestrian-friendly environment within the town centre. The lane contributes to health benefits by encouraging walking, as well as providing a sense of discovery as people walk through it. The lane provides a pedestrian connection to an adjacent hotel on Earl Street, the Queenstown Gardens, a hospitality college and beyond to the wider residential and visitor accommodation areas of Queenstown.

By subdividing the development into individual lots, a diversity of building designs has been able to be constructed. The buildings have been established to a high standard, with a variety of contemporary designs that relate to the character of the town centre and that use local materials.

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## CONCLUSION

The small-scale mixed use development of Church Lane in the Queenstown town centre has resulted in contemporary building designs with a wide range of uses. It provides a pedestrian-friendly environment that adds to the relaxed Queenstown town centre streets and laneways.

Some aspects of Church Lane could be improved. A ramp replacing one set of steps near the café would improve the lane's accessibility. The Council and lane owners and occupiers could work together to make the entrances to the lane more inviting, for example, by reconsidering the appropriateness of angle car parking in Church and Earl Streets, or at least immediately surrounding the entrances to the lane. A pedestrian crossing, coloured paving stones or other landscaping cues on Church Street would assist in linking the lane to the rest of the town centre. It is hoped that the disused minigolf site will be redeveloped with the proposed pedestrian link through it to Church Lane.

By working to resolve noise conflicts, the Council and lane owners and occupiers will ensure that mixed use remains a viable and vibrant development form for Church Lane, as well as providing guidance for future mixed use developments in other parts of the town centre.



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- 1 Addison within its wider context.
- 2 The metropolitan urban limit (the thick black line) at the edge of urban areas and Addison development in the wider context of the Auckland region.
- 3 Site within the context of the Structure Plan (depicting an outline of the site and Areas 1a and 1b).

# Master Planned Community – Addison, Papakura, Auckland

## FAST FACTS

**Location:** Takanini, Papakura, Auckland

**Construction:** 2003–2011 (ongoing; 20 percent complete at June 2008)

**Developer:** Addison Developments Ltd (part of McConnell Property)

**Design:** Stage 1: Masterplan – Ian Craig (Harrison Grierson Consultants)  
Stage 2: Bob Earle (Oculus)

**Case study researcher:** Lisa Mein, Boffa Miskell Ltd

## KEY STATISTICS

**Site area:** 84 hectares

**Dwellings:** 1,500 terraces, detached dwellings and apartments (the majority are three, four and five bedroom homes, from 140–160m<sup>2</sup> gross floor area, up to 220m<sup>2</sup> gross floor area)

**Gross density:** average of 20 units per hectare (that is, gross average density of 1:500m<sup>2</sup>, including roads and pocket parks)

**Average lot size:** around 270m<sup>2</sup> over the entire development

**Range of lot sizes:** 120–400m<sup>2</sup>, made up of rear loaded attached/terrace housing of 120–180m<sup>2</sup> lots (approximately 35 percent) and predominately detached housing of 270–400m<sup>2</sup> lots (approximately 65 percent)



## THE ADDISON DEVELOPMENT

Addison is an innovative, intensive residential development located just north of the Papakura town centre, Takanini, and to the east of Great South Road and the Southern motorway. The development site is bounded by the main trunk railway to the west, Airfield Road to the north and Walters Road to the south. Porchester Road bisects the development, connecting it with the proposed new transit-oriented centre of Takanini and the existing Papakura town centre to the south.

The development process was initiated in 1999 as a direct response to the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy (the Strategy). The Strategy identified Takanini as a future growth centre because of its proximity to current and proposed public transport (road and rail) connections. Hawkins Property and, subsequently, McConnell Property made a decision to construct an intensive residential development that incorporated a range of housing typologies and communal open spaces. Hawkins Property selected a design team comprising Harrison Grierson Consultants (as urban designers/master planners), Cook Sargisson and Pirie Architects (as architects for the dwellings) and Isthmus Group (as landscape architects). This team developed the original masterplan concept.

When McConnell Property took over the development in late 2002 it changed the design team, opting to use a designer it was familiar with. Thus, Bob Earl from the Australia-based Oculus took over. Shanahan Architects were engaged to provide housing architecture and to refine and execute the masterplan. Isthmus Group was retained for the design of the streetscape and open spaces.

The concept for the development is to create a community with a residential neighbourhood core.

The key design elements of the masterplan include:

- a community gathering place that includes a children's playground, restaurant, café, six-unit retail space and childcare centre
- a matrix of parks to link the development with the existing Takanini railway station (and a proposed station at Glenora, now unlikely to happen) and the community to Takanini's commercial core
- an overall landscape concept that integrates Bruce Pulman Park, some 63 hectares of large, centralised open space, sport and recreation facilities, into the development through a tiered level of reserves and parks
- two storeyed houses, on compact sites, to create extra living and outdoor space
- dwellings that front onto the street or communal open space
- 'Crime Prevention through Environmental Design' (CPTED) principles, to ensure a safe living environment (as a rule, houses that front onto commons and neighbourhood parks encourage good, passive surveillance of these open spaces).

## DESIGN PROCESS

Several key steps have led to the creation of the guiding masterplan for the Addison development.

### TAKANINI STRUCTURE PLAN

The Southern Sector Agreement (an agreement between the Auckland Regional Council, Manukau City Council and Papakura and Franklin District Councils as to the form and timing of urban growth) provides for an additional 35,000 persons for Papakura.



1 Addison housing development masterplan.

2–3 Houses fronting Bruce Pulman Park.

In 2000, the Papakura District Council (the Council) initiated a charrette planning process for Takanini. This was designed to identify the constraints and opportunities of the land. The process established an overall framework for the planned growth and development of the Takanini area and led to the Takanini Structure Plan being adopted by the Council in November 2000. The Structure Plan anticipates a high level of residential growth (an additional 20,000 people) and job creation (an additional 3,000 jobs) for Takanini over a 50-year timescale.

The Addison development is set within the context of the Takanini Structure Plan. The Structure Plan area has been broken into three sub-areas for staged implementation. The first stage is referred to as the Glenora Structure Plan (Areas 1a and 1b). Area 1a is a mixed use (retail/residential) and medium to high density residential living area along the southern rail corridor at Glenora and was subject to another plan change that was notified in March 2007. The Addison site forms part of development Area 1b.

#### RESIDENTIAL 8 ZONE

In 2000, the Council engaged Harrison Grierson Consultants to prepare Plan Change 3 to a new Residential 8 zone to Area 1b. The objectives of the Residential 8 zone are to achieve medium density residential development within close proximity to public transport routes, Bruce Pulman Park and the proposed mixed use node in the Takanini Structure Plan area. Plan Change 3 was adopted in 2003. Within the zone, medium density housing development (defined as a residential development comprising four or more household units on a site with a minimum area of 1,400m<sup>2</sup> and at a density of greater than one household unit per 350m<sup>2</sup> net site area) is a restricted discretionary activity.

The Residential 8 zone includes detailed design assessment criteria for subdivision and medium density residential development. This assessment



criteria set out five design matters to which the Council's discretion is restricted:

- public interface and external appearance
- dwelling design, position and orientation
- private outdoor spaces
- visual and acoustic privacy
- parking and access.

This criteria has guided the development of the Addison masterplan and provided the Council with a tool for assessing each resource consent application. However, the criteria do not provide adequate assessment of rear terrace housing, and this was of particular concern to the Council.

#### **THE MASTERPLAN**

A non-statutory masterplan for the Addison housing development was initially prepared in 2000 by Harrison Grierson Consultants for Hawkins Property. This plan is still evolving.

The concept masterplan was developed according to the following urban design principles:

- transit-oriented development (TOD)
- highly connected network of roads
- pedestrian-oriented development – good connectivity and permeability
- quality public open spaces
- streetscape amenity
- landscape themes – street tree planting that reinforces road hierarchy, and reserve planting that provides character for the neighbourhoods
- solar orientation
- innovative, low-impact solutions for treatment of stormwater.

The masterplanning of the Addison development has been based on defined neighbourhoods, each with its own neighbourhood-scale reserve (1,500m<sup>2</sup>). A concept of 'neighbourhood commons' was also developed. These are small neighbourhood parks or open spaces of 500m<sup>2</sup> to 800m<sup>2</sup>, fronted by a small cluster of houses.

The concept masterplan was instrumental in testing the anticipated yield at an average of 20 households per hectare over the entire site (compared with around 10 to 12 households per hectare in the surrounding, established residential neighbourhoods) and for ensuring the development would meet the basic urban design principles, such as good connectivity and solar orientation.

The Council was not involved in the development of the masterplan, so it varies from the Takanini Structure Plan. For example, the masterplan has omitted an east-west arterial connection under the railway line, favouring, instead, a network of inter-connected, local roads. The most notable departure, however, is that there is no mixed use nodal area in the masterplan.

The Addison project was the first, comprehensive medium density residential development of this magnitude within the Papakura district. There are, however, challenges, because the Council must assess and approve



all the different approaches to density, the shape and size of reserves, narrow road widths and road reserves, and the new approaches to stormwater management that are present in the development. Added to this, infrastructure issues were not resolved before the development began.

The staging of the development evolved in response to market demands in house sizes and as supporting infrastructure has become available. The first stage of the Addison project was deliberately developed adjacent to Bruce Pulman Park, with a road around its perimeter (see figures 5 and 6) creating interaction/engagement between the park and private dwellings, providing surveillance and security, and adding value to the properties.

The local streets in the development are generally much narrower than the accepted standard of the Council, but provide appropriate engineering solutions. McConnell Property negotiated these road standards at an early stage with the Council to create roads that were pedestrian oriented, with less focus on vehicle passage.

The Addison dwellings are all two storeys high, and set on compact sites that range from 120m<sup>2</sup> to 400m<sup>2</sup>. This layout departs from other conventional subdivisions in the area, which consist of single storey, detached dwellings on sites that range from 500m<sup>2</sup> to 1000m<sup>2</sup>. The range of housing typologies includes:

- terraces that front onto pocket parks, with access lanes at the rear
- large terraced homes that front onto the street
- large detached family homes, with double garages and gardens
- detached compact dwellings on small sections.

In all instances, the compact terrace dwellings front onto open space to create amenity within this higher density environment. This layout requires the homes to have access through rear lanes.

The houses are designed and built to a high standard because the Addison development employs strict guidelines for the use of quality materials, construction and finishes. Furthermore, covenants are in place on the land to help maintain the residential environment in its current state.

McConnell Property has established an incorporated residents' society, to ensure ongoing maintenance of access lots, reserve lots and commons, to enforce the covenants and to protect and maintain standards. All new and future homeowners are required to be members of the society, and existing homeowners within the development have the opportunity of becoming a member. This initiative is a response to the lack of community titles that bind similar freehold developments in Australia. The residents' society can levy members for costs associated with the expenses of the society.

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## URBAN DESIGN ISSUES

The focus of the Addison housing development has been on place-making and creating something 'urban' in a traditional suburban environment. Physically and visually, it succeeds in presenting an alternative to the conventional subdivision, and provides a greater degree of residential choice to homebuyers.

One of the early motivators for the intensive development of this site was the location of a proposed new railway station at Glenora, however, this is unlikely to occur. The Takanini railway station is a five minute walk from the north-western part of the site, but it is not easily accessible to those living to the east of Porchester Road. Bus connections are also poor. Thus, while the intent was to be transit-oriented, this aspect of the





development has not materialised.

The Addison development contains a range of road types and sizes. The narrowest of these are the shared surfaces that service groups of up to 16 dwellings. They have a carriageway width of 2.4m to 5m, with no footpaths or parking, and give the appearance of a driveway. These streets need to be short so all residences are within reach of a fire hydrant. Road reserves increase incrementally in width (although retain traffic lanes at a maximum of 5.5m to 7.5m) to provide increased access to houses, and include parking and footpaths on both sides. However, as a consequence of the low-impact solutions to stormwater management and the addition of cycle lanes, some of the major distributor roads through the development, are significantly wider than originally planned (Porchester Road the central spine road is 28m in width from boundary to boundary).

In contrast, the rear lanes (typically 6.5m wide) have been used as access to the terrace houses that front onto the reserves. The lanes were introduced by McConnell Property to remove garages from the street frontage, thus allowing a narrow site frontage and an improved connection to the open space. The Council has concerns about the appropriateness and safety of the rear access lanes but has had difficulty in assessing them because the Residential 8 zone assessment criteria do not refer to them specifically.

The dwellings are all two storey to make efficient use of land (resources), and generally cannot support additional levels because of the peat sub-surface ground conditions. There are some limited three storey apartments planned in proximity to the retail centre. However, the construction of these will be dependent on engineering issues.



1-3 Terraces fronting onto parks.

■□ Emphasis has been placed on the streetscape and open spaces, to create a sense of place, an intimate scale of houses clustered around open spaces and a hierarchy of parks and reserves that includes:

- a central town park that is located adjacent to the Takanini commercial core
- a series of neighbourhood parks of a size that enables the opportunity for active recreation and play (1,500m<sup>2</sup>)
- community commons for the houses that surround the parks
- link commons
- reserves that connect open spaces and walking routes.

Most of the parks are vested with the Council, however, the Council has reservations about the establishment of small reserves and links in future development stages. It has not yet been established how the Addison residents' society will maintain such open spaces.

The development incorporates Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles for safety and security, including:

- no front fences
- all the houses overlooking the street and/or other properties
- ensuring rear access lanes have good sightlines
- eliminating entrapment spots, and monitored security.

The proposed retail centre within the Addison development deviates in location from earlier versions of the masterplan, and from the centre anticipated by the Takanini Structure Plan. The Council's Structure Plan seeks consolidation of commercial development within a new (greenfields) Takanini centre, located 200m from the proposed retail centre and is scheduled for a council hearing (no date had been set at the time of writing). A community gathering place, within walking distance of the central part of the community, is seen as being essential for the health and interaction of the people who live within the Addison development.

## EVALUATION OF URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### CONTEXT

The Addison residential development is located within an area identified by the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy for residential intensification. It is well located, and within five to 10 minutes' walking distance of the Southgate shopping centre. It is also within a five minute walk of the open space provided by Bruce Pulman Park and its associated recreation centre, primary schools and a proposed secondary school, and rail links.

The suburban nature of much of the surrounding area means there are limited employment opportunities within walking distance of the site, so most residents are required to travel to work. However, the majority of the 3,000 jobs anticipated within the Takanini Structure Plan are likely to be generated within close proximity to the site by 2020.



<b>CHARACTER</b>	<p>The existing character of the area is low-lying peatlands and, therefore, lacks any distinguishing landforms. The distinctive character of the development – clusters of homes fronting inter-connected common green spaces – fosters an identity that would not otherwise exist. Bruce Pulman Park, where the first houses were built, has helped anchor the development.</p> <p>This is complemented with street planting and a colour palette that is distinctive to the development, and covenants prevent these elements from being altered materially.</p>
<b>CHOICE</b>	<p>In 2007, Takanini was one of the reasonably priced areas for first homebuyers within the Auckland region. For all homebuyers, the Addison housing development provides an alternative to the traditional suburban environment by presenting two styles of terrace houses and two styles of detached homes to suit different household types.</p> <p>The varying types of housing encourage a mix of residents, from professionals without children, to families to post-family couples. However, despite the development providing alternatives to the existing area, there could have been, in the initial stages, further choice in housing types, particularly in size and in the number of bedrooms they had. The housing all comprises three to five bedrooms. The covenants in place prevent housing being leased to Housing New Zealand Corporation, thereby not allowing any social housing within Addison.</p>
<b>CONNECTIONS</b>	<p>The narrow roads, combined with inter-connected reserves, create a pedestrian-friendly environment, enabling residents and visitors to walk freely and safely throughout the development and neighbouring streets. Around 40 percent of the Addison development is open space, which consists of walkways, commons, linear parks and roads. Cycle lanes are incorporated into the wide shared paths along major routes, including Porchester Road. There is also a dedicated cycleway along High Street. Connections between Addison and the Takanini rail station will be developed to foster improved pedestrian/ cycle linkages.</p> <p>The development is well connected to the rail network, being within a 20 minute walk of Takanini station, one of Auckland's regular services between the city and Papakura. However, bus services and choice of routes are still deficient, although these should improve as the demand for such services increases as a result of the influx of people from the Addison development.</p> <p>Addison is also well connected to major arterial roads (including Great South Road) and the Takanini motorway interchange. Until regional transport improves, these roads provide the best transportation options for journeys.</p>
<b>CREATIVITY</b>	<p>The development provides an alternative environment to the conventional suburban subdivision. It also shows that alternative housing typologies are acceptable and, indeed, attractive to buyers when they are of a high-quality and well-designed architecture.</p>



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## CUSTODIANSHIP

Addison has, overall, employed an efficient approach to land use through the clustering of two storeyed dwellings around usable, open spaces and narrow roads. This has resulted in more usable open space than is available in many similar housing developments and conventional subdivisions. The visual amenity has also been increased through high levels of visual connectivity between dwellings and the public realm. Roads generally orient north–south to create east–west oriented dwellings. This maximises solar access into the principal, habitable rooms.

The design of the development has incorporated Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles.

The ownership status of the private rear access lanes, and whether they contribute to, or detract from, liveable neighbourhoods, are issues still being debated between the Council and McConnell Property. To clarify these issues, McConnell Property and the Council have jointly developed a set of 13 design criteria to endeavour to ensure the best design outcome for the rear access lanes.

Low-impact design methods for stormwater management and disposal, such as rain gardens and swales, are being investigated and will be employed in the development, where possible. However, there are issues relating to these solutions in this particular environment (for example, it is low-lying land with a high water table) in terms of cost of both the operation and ongoing maintenance, both of which will require particular input from the Council.

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## COLLABORATION

Addison has developed through a collaborative working approach between McConnell Property and the Papakura District Council and, in particular, through the plan change that has been guiding the development. The Council has become increasingly involved in the project as it has progressed, largely because it has been developing its own urban design capacity and capability.

The two parties have a good working relationship and hold weekly meetings to discuss progress on this large and complex development. A project manager, who is based at the Council but funded by McConnell Property, has been employed (since mid-2005) to handle all ongoing requirements of the project. This has significantly improved the level and detail of communication between the two parties, and has helped with the early identification, resolution and management of any issues.

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## LESSONS LEARNT

As with any large-scale development, knowledge is gained as the project progresses. From the perspective of the developer, the masterplan should have been completed before construction began. The first stage of the development began before the masterplan had been finalised and many issues required greater input and negotiation than the developer had first appreciated. On a project of this significance, communication is critical and must involve an open, collaborative process between the developer and the Council.



McConnell Property realises it under-estimated the complexity of this type of development and this was a major learning experience. This was, in part, because of Resource Management Act 1991 consenting issues and current thinking in urban design, versus standard practice in subdivision. Had some of the critical infrastructure issues, like stormwater management and the location of roads, been addressed at the beginning of the development, the regulatory processes would have been more efficient.

The Council has been expanding its urban design capacity and capability to respond to the intensive residential development of Addison. From the beginning of the project, it did not have a clear idea of all the issues pertaining to medium and high density housing. The Council standards have thus been formed in tandem with the development process.

From an urban design perspective, the developers feel they could have created better physical connections through to Porchester Road at the beginning of the development. While in the long term, Porchester Road will be the principal north-south central spine road, at this stage it forms the western edge of the site. From an urban design perspective, it would have been better to build some of the proposed houses fronting this road at an early stage in the development process.

Rear lanes are used widely for accessing the terrace houses. The Council has expressed concern about whether these lanes are an appropriate urban design solution in the New Zealand context. As stated in 'Custodianship' above, both parties have subsequently developed a set of 13 criteria that help assess rear lane access to terrace housing.

The Addison development was designed as a transit-oriented development. The cycle lanes provided throughout were intended to connect to the once proposed Glenora railway station. This



1-3 Detached family homes.



is great in principle, but fails because the development has preceded viable public transport by several years, thereby creating a car dependency that will be difficult to change in the future.

From an urban design perspective, the 'legibility' (ability to read) of the development could be improved through increased choices in the design, housing typology, materials and colour of the built form.

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#### VALUE GAINED

In general, the Addison housing development is succeeding in establishing a community. It is attracting a greater diversity of people to Takanini (and the Papakura district) than would otherwise have chosen to locate there. Residents have indicated they enjoy the strong sense of community and interaction that occurs at Addison.

The standard of housing is superior to anything else on offer in Takanini, and this is reflected in the property values. Sale prices for the complete house and land packages have exceeded expectations, and are well above the initial prices of \$300,000. The latest house sales are between \$380,000 (for a three bedroom terrace house) to \$480,000 (for a large, stand-alone house). These figures are about \$80,000 more than other properties selling in the local market.

The Addison development generally adheres to recognised principles of good urban design, such as including walkable neighbourhoods with inter-connected streets and open spaces that create good connections and encourage residents to walk to local facilities. A residential neighbourhood of this scale will increase the viability of local shops, services and facilities.

Interestingly, the charrette focus groups noted the lack of bus stops within the development. Medium density developments such as Addison should serve to increase the viability of public transport services by creating an intense population base around transit nodes. In turn, such developments then require a frequent and reliable transport network to provide a genuine alternative to the private vehicle.

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#### CONCLUSIONS

The Addison residential development is a large-scale, high-quality, medium density greenfield residential development that has been based on clear urban design principles. It is already adding considerable economic, social and environmental value to Takanini and the wider Papakura district.

McConnell Property and the Papakura District Council have both faced many challenges in advancing this development. Both are equally committed to quality outcomes, but have different, and sometimes conflicting, approaches. The practicalities involved in addressing the low-impact, contemporary solutions to infrastructure in this particular environment is one such debate. The ownership and ongoing maintenance of public space areas and rear access lanes is another. The lessons learnt from this process will be invaluable for informing best practice in the New Zealand context for future medium and high density residential developments.

Finally, because less than 20 percent of the development has been constructed to date, just how the development will fit into its landscape, once 1,500 homes are constructed, will need to be examined. The effect of the Addison housing development on the economic, social and environmental values in the area will also require re-evaluation once the development is complete.



## RESOURCES

Addison Masterplan Document – Revised Draft II, October 2005.

Baikie, R, Craig, I and Cox, D 2004. *Planning in Partnership – Innovative Approaches to Growth Management in Papakura District*.

Papakura District Council, Papakura District Plan (Operative June 1999) – Residential 8 zone provisions (Part 16).

Property Economics for McConnell Property Ltd 2006. *Addison Focus Groups*.

Urban Initiatives for Papakura District Council 2000. *Takanini Structure Plan*.

Wes Edwards Consulting 2004. *Local Roads for Liveable Neighbourhoods*.

## USEFUL WEBSITES

[www.mcconnellproperty.co.nz](http://www.mcconnellproperty.co.nz)

[www.addison.co.nz](http://www.addison.co.nz)

[www.papakura.govt.nz](http://www.papakura.govt.nz)

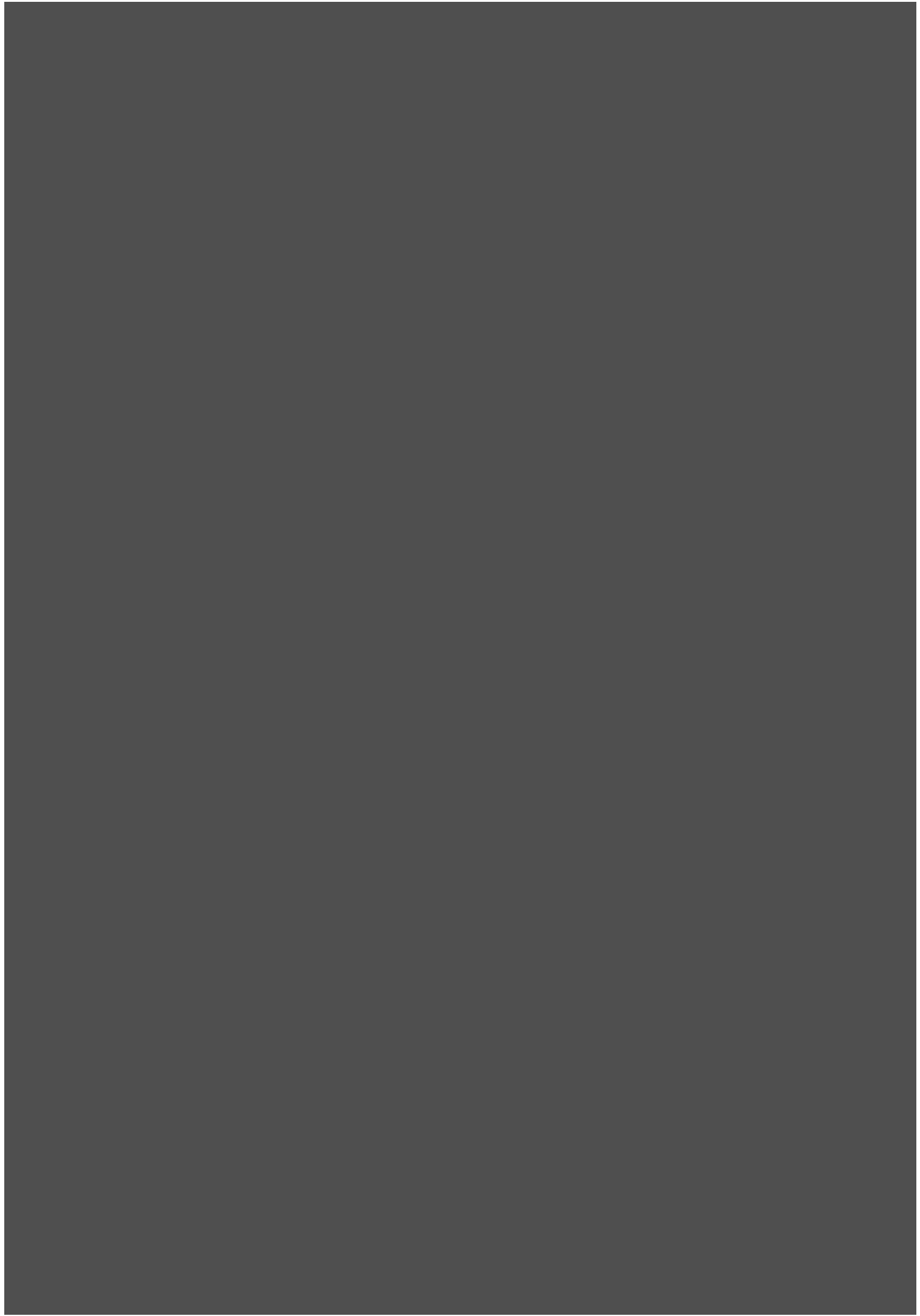
[www.arc.govt.nz](http://www.arc.govt.nz)













## URBAN DESIGN PROTOCOL



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