

Information sheet

24 June 2021 | Pūroro Āmua Planning & Environment Committee decisions

Key Committee decisions resulting in changes to the Spatial Plan

Our City Tomorrow: A Spatial Plan for Wellington City – An Integrated Land Use and Transport Strategy (the 'Spatial Plan') was adopted by the Pūroro Āmua Planning and Environment Committee ('the Committee') on 24 June 2021.

A number of resolutions to amend the Spatial Plan were agreed by the Committee. The full set of resolutions made by the Committee are detailed in the minutes of the meeting available [here](#).

Resolutions that have required changes to be made to the Spatial Plan include the decisions to:

- Extend the spatial extent of walking catchments around all rapid transit stops to 10 minutes (previously a mix of 5 and 10 minutes)
- Extend the spatial extent of the walking catchment from the edge of the Central City to 15 minutes (previously 10 minutes)
- Reduce the spatial extent of Character Precincts back to the 'sub-areas' proposed in the Draft Spatial Plan (with removal of the general character overlay)
- Remove the proposed unlimited building heights for the Central City and revert to the settings in the Draft Spatial Plan
- Include a stream network map, and
- Change the nature and focus of the proposed 'Our Place Project' to be city-wide engagement focused on future housing needs.

These changes have been incorporated into the final adopted version of the Spatial Plan that is available on the Planning for Growth website by clicking [here](#).

The remaining resolutions made by the Committee relate to actions associated with other work programmes or projects, completing investigations and/or report backs on specific matters. Progress on implementing the resolutions will be regularly reported to the Committee.

The following information summarises the key Committee decisions and the associated changes made in relation to the following aspects of the Spatial Plan:

- Character Precincts
- Walkable catchments
- Central City building heights
- The 'Type 4' housing typologies.

Character Precincts

The Draft Spatial Plan proposed a more targeted approach to the protection of pre-1930s character buildings within Inner Suburb locations than is currently the case under the operative District Plan.

In the current operative District Plan, there are 307 hectares of character areas within the Inner Suburbs that are subject to strict controls over the demolition and development of pre-1930s buildings. To support

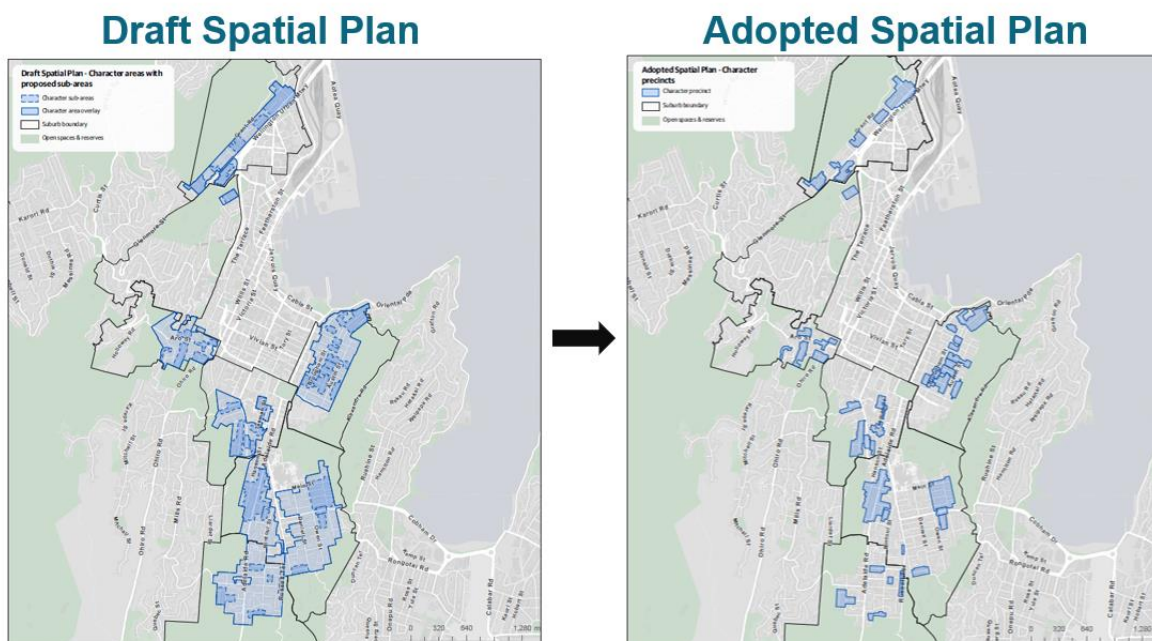
opportunities for more housing development within the Inner Suburbs, the Draft Spatial Plan proposal was to reduce the extent of the character areas subject to the pre-1930s building demolition rule controls by more than two-thirds and to focus the demolition controls on much smaller areas identified as character 'sub-areas' (totalling approx. 88 hectares).

Outside of the 'sub-areas', the Draft Spatial Plan proposed a 'general character overlay'. The general character overlay was intended as a buffer or transitional area around the character 'sub-areas'. This was a policy consideration overlay and had no rules associated with it.

In response to submissions made on the Draft Spatial Plan, officers undertook further work which led to revised 'Character Precincts' being recommended to the Committee. The changes proposed by officers were to rename the protected character sub-areas as 'Character Precincts' and to also increase the size of some of the areas where the pre-1930s demolition controls would apply (extending to protecting approx. 127 hectares). The officer recommendations also included the removal of the general character overlay and the enablement of intensification as per the NPS-UD requirements in areas outside of 'Character Precinct' areas (ie. enable at least 6 storeys within the walkable catchment of the edge of the central city).

At the meeting on the 24 June 2021, the Committee resolved to go back to the smaller spatial extent of the Draft Spatial Plan's proposed character 'sub-areas' but agreed to remove the general character overlay and enable intensification (at least 6 storeys) outside of identified character areas within a walkable catchment of the edge of the central city (consistent with the NPS-UD's intensification requirements). The character 'sub-areas' will be referred to as 'Character Precincts' in the final Spatial Plan, consistent with district plan terminology required by the National Planning Standards.

The below picture provides a summary comparison of the Draft Spatial Plan's character 'sub-areas' and 'general character overlay' with the final adopted Spatial Plan's Character Precincts.



Walkable catchments

Consistent with the [National Policy Statement on Urban Development \(2020\)](#), the Draft Spatial Plan proposed to enable housing intensification (i.e. enable at least 6 storey buildings) in areas within a walkable catchment of:

- The edge of the Central City
- The edge of the Johnsonville metropolitan centre, and
- Around rapid transit stops (rail stations)

The Draft Spatial Plan proposed that the walkable catchment areas should be:

- 10 minutes from the edge of the Central City
- 10 minutes from the edge of Johnsonville centre
- 10 minutes around the following rail stations:
 - Johnsonville and Tawa
- 5 minutes around all other railway stations

Officers recommended to retain the 5- and 10-minute walking catchments as above, but some changes were recommended to the spatial extent of walkable catchments to reflect updates made to the City's walking network model and data. Additionally, a 10-minute walking catchment around the Kenepuru railway station (which is in Porirua City) was added where it extends into the Wellington City Council land area.

At the meeting on the 24 June 2021, the Committee resolved to increase walkable catchments to enable more capacity for housing intensification as follows:

- Provide for 10-minute walkable catchments around all rail stations, ie. increase all of the 5 minute walking catchments to 10 minutes, and
- Increase the walkable catchment from the edge of the Central City from 10 minutes to 15 minutes.

Central City building heights

The Draft Spatial Plan proposed several changes to the current Central City building height settings in the operative District Plan, including:

- An increase to the maximum permitted building height in Te Aro to at least 10 storeys
- Increase building heights in areas on the edge of the Central City to be at least 6 storeys and up to 8 storeys (i.e. areas along the edge of the city in Thorndon, Aro Valley, and Mt Victoria)
- A minimum building height of 6 storeys.

The [National Policy Statement on Urban Development \(2020\)](#) directs building heights and density of urban form in city centres to realise as much development capacity as possible in order to maximise the benefits of intensification. This means the Spatial Plan should seek to maximise development capacity within the Central City area.

In response to submissions and consistent with the NPS-UD directive and our compact city goal, officers recommended that the Spatial Plan signal the introduction of an unrestricted maximum building height over the majority of the Central City including Te Aro and Adelaide Road but excluding the Thorndon Quay area (where the existing 35m maximum permitted height limit would be retained) and other areas subject to 'qualifying matters' as provided for by the NPS-UD. The unlimited height provisions would

not apply to heritage buildings or heritage areas (eg. Cuba Street), the waterfront, public open spaces, or areas within identified viewshafts etc. Any new building in the Central City would continue to require a resource consent (enabling the consideration of key matters such as building design, amenity, natural hazards and infrastructure), and be subject to District Plan design controls and guidance to encourage better apartment design, particularly the size, accessibility and usability of internal space, and amenity considerations such as access to natural light, privacy/outlook and outdoor living areas.

It was proposed that the details of the Central City building height settings would be developed and tested through the District Plan review process.

At the meeting on the 24 June 2021, the Committee resolved to remove reference within the Spatial Plan to introducing unrestricted building height limits in the Central City and to go back to the Draft Spatial Plan's height settings for the Central City and Te Aro, that is:

- an increase to at least 10 storeys in Te Aro
- a minimum building height of 6 storeys
- transitional building heights of at least 6 and up to 8 storeys applied on edge of city centre
- operative District Plan building height retention for bulk of central city area.

'Type 4' housing typologies

The Draft Spatial Plan proposed six housing typologies, including a 'Type 4a' (up to 6 storeys) and a 'Type 4b' (enable at least 6 storeys) as follows:

- Housing Density **Type 1** - Low Density Housing [1-2 storeys detached, semi-detached, infill housing]
- Housing Density **Type 2** - Medium Density Housing [2-3 storeys terrace type housing]
- Housing Density **Type 3** - Medium Density Housing [3-4 storey apartment buildings, may be mixed use in centres]
- Housing Density **Type 4a** - Medium Density Housing [Mixed use and apartment buildings up to 6 storeys]
- Housing Density **Type 4b** - Medium Density Housing [Mixed use and apartment buildings at least 6 storeys - areas within a walkable catchment as per NPS-UD Policy 3c requirements]
- Housing Density **Type 5** - High Density Housing [Mixed use and apartment buildings 8 storeys in centres and along existing and future high frequency public transport routes]

In response to submissions made on the Draft Spatial Plan, officers proposed to simplify the Type 4a (up to 6 storeys) and Type 4b (enable at least 6 storeys) housing typologies by consolidating them into one housing typology called 'Type 4 (enable 6 storeys)'.

At the meeting on the 24 June 2021, the Committee resolved to go back to the two separate typologies used in the Draft Spatial Plan, i.e. Type 4a (up to 6 storeys, which applies to suburban growth centres) and Type 4b (enable at least 6 storeys, which applies to areas within walkable catchments of the edge of the central city and Johnsonville centre, and rapid transit stops).

Note: the spatial extent of areas impacted by the NPS-UD 'policy 3c' requirement (ie. enable intensification of at least 6 storeys within walkable catchment areas) is separately identified within the Spatial Plan by a separate hatched overlay to clearly indicate the location of these areas.

Other changes

'Our Place Project'

Councillors resolved that the proposed 'Our Place Project' (as described in the 24 June Planning and Environment Committee Spatial Plan [report](#)) be changed to city-wide engagement with a focus on young people, renters, disabled people, and other communities that Council has less engagement with. The engagement will be about their future housing needs and how that can be enabled through the District Plan.

The Committee decisions related to the 'Our Place Project' mean the proposed project and associated engagement approach is being re-scoped to respond to the new resolution. A revised approach will be reported back to the Committee later this year for consideration.

Stream network mapping

Councillors also resolved to include a stream network map which shows above and underground streams to complement the Green Network Plan which is being developed alongside the District Plan review.

In response to this, a stream network map layer has been added to the Spatial Plan's GIS base maps alongside the public open/green space information. Council currently has limited GIS map information showing underground streams within the City but this will be added to as new mapping information becomes available. In addition, as part of the District Plan review, Wellington Water Ltd are updating the City's flood mapping information and this will form part of the Draft District Plan to be consulted on later this year.