

***Section 32 Report  
Proposed District  
Plan Change 56***

**Managing Infill Housing Development  
5 May 2007**

### PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE 56 - Managing Infill Housing Development

#### 1. Purpose of this Report

Section 32 of the Resource Management Act (RMA) stipulates a requirement to consider alternatives and assess the benefits and costs of adopting any objective, policy, rule, or method in the District Plan. Before publicly notifying a proposed District Plan change, the Council is required to prepare a Section 32 Report summarising these considerations.

#### 2. Background

The District Plan sets out policies and rules to manage the city's natural and physical resources. It guides development and land use activities in the city. One of the key issues it addresses is how and where the city will grow to accommodate an increasing population. The Plan zones land specifically for residential activities (ie. most suburbs), but is also reasonably permissive about residential activities occurring in other areas of the city (eg. city centre apartments, townhouses in former industrial areas or as part of shopping centres).

The main principle of the Plan is to promote a sustainable city. The Plan hopes to achieve this by drawing on one of Wellington's key strengths, being its compactness. The Plan aims to retain a compact city and does this by supporting *infill housing* throughout the city.

Infill housing is not a new phenomenon as it has been occurring throughout the city for decades, especially from the 1950s onwards. However, the scale and nature of infill in recent years is now causing significant concern. As a result of this concern, the Council identified a project to review the better management of infill housing as the priority issue in the Long Term Council Community Plan 2006 (LTCCP).

For the purposes of this review the infill housing definition is as follows:

***Residential infill relates to new development within an existing suburb of older houses. It includes one or more dwellings built behind, in front of, or beside an existing dwelling. It also includes two or more dwellings built where an original house has been removed or demolished.***

The review of infill housing management is split into two parts.

- **Part 1 – Better management of Residential Infill adverse effects**

This examines the specific District Plan provisions affecting the **adverse effects** of infill development in residential areas, focussing more closely on infill in the Outer Residential Area. This work is designed to respond quickly to immediate concerns about infill with a change to crucial rules in the District Plan that affect the quality of infill.

- **Part 2 – Targeting residential infill and intensification**

This project reviews the Council's current approach to infill (allowing it almost anywhere), with the objective of developing a more refined approach for the location of infill development and also areas of greater housing intensification. This includes how such development will produce a better fit with land use and transport infrastructure. The review will consider areas where greater intensification may be appropriate and areas where residential growth may be constrained. Any change to the current approach will be reflected

in amendments to the Urban Development Strategy and, in time, in the District Plan. This project is still in its infancy and no decisions have been made on this issue yet that are relevant for this plan change.

**This Plan Change and Section 32 Report focuses only on the first part of the infill housing review.**

### 3. Approach to Plan Change

This plan change aims to ensure that the adverse effects associated with residential infill are better managed in order to reduce the effect it has on the amenity of surrounding neighbours and the character of the suburbs (ie. **Part 1**). This plan change is not intended to change the current policy approach of providing for infill housing in most locations of the city. It is noted here though, that work carried out in **Part 2** of the infill review may result in recommendations to change the current policy approach to infill and, if changes are recommended, then they will be addressed in a subsequent district plan change.

This plan change purposefully does not involve a comprehensive review of the residential rules, but rather focuses on making a handful of pivotal changes to the rules to improve the way that residential infill fits into existing suburbs. As a result, it does not address every single issue raised in the background research either because some issues are not matters able to be addressed by changes to the District Plan, or because it is likely that they will be addressed as part of any future plan change to responds to a 'targeted approach to infill housing'.

Section 4.3 outlines in more detail those elements within the scope of this plan change.

### 4. Policy Analysis & Consultation

#### *4.1 Strategy and Policy Context*

In reviewing the specific current District Plan provisions that influence the quality and management of residential infill housing, attention has also been given to a range of relevant national, regional and local level documents, plans and strategies. These documents provide the context and justification for reviewing the current infill housing provisions.

#### *National Direction*

The purpose of the RMA is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. Sustainable management includes managing the use and development of natural and physical resources to enable people to provide for their health and safety. The Act also contains an explicit obligation for Territorial Authorities to *maintain and enhance amenity values* and the *quality of the environment* and allow for the *efficient use and development of natural and physical resources* (s7 RMA).

#### *Regional Strategies and Policies*

The **draft Wellington Regional Strategy** is relevant in that it outlines a vision for the future management of the region. It includes a focus on protecting the character of traditional low-density suburbs by managing infill carefully.

This strategic direction at the regional scale is being incorporated into the review of the **Regional Policy Statement**. This planning document is currently undergoing its 10 year review. In considering the proposed options to improve infill, officers have had regard to the

Regional Policy Statement and are of the view that the approach adopted is consistent with its content where relevant.

#### Local Level Strategies and Plans

The Council has a number of strategy and policy documents that collectively set out a vision for the district. The **Urban Development Strategy** outlines the Council's approach to growth management over the next 50 years. The strategy aims to direct growth to where the benefits are greatest, where adverse effects are minimised, and delivers on quality. It includes concepts such as the growth spine to guide how and where future population growth should occur.

Projections indicate that Wellington City will grow by 33,000 people in the next twenty five years. This level of growth will require approximately 19,000 new homes. With the current trend towards smaller households it is anticipated that demand for higher density dwellings will continue to increase.

The **Sense of Place Plan** aims to ensure that what makes Wellington special is preserved while the city grows. In preparing the Sense of Place Plan, research was undertaken to determine what Wellingtonian's treasure about their city, and what gives the city its unique character or essence. From the range of factors identified, the following are relevant to this proposed plan change include:

- the compact and integrated urban layout;
- the distinct character of communities, neighbourhoods, urban quarters and suburban centres – people and buildings – and the city's confident, unpretentious personality; and

#### *4.2 Research*

A number of initiatives and research projects have been completed in the past 12 months to better understand the drivers for infill housing, its positive and negative effects (particularly in respect of Wellington), the concerns of residents, and lastly the extent to which poor outcomes occur as a result of the current planning provisions or other factors.

#### Urban Development Strategy – Working Paper 6

In February 2006 the Urban Development Team produced Strategy Working Paper 6, which surveyed literature on infill housing and looked at the social and environmental effects of infill housing development in New Zealand. The survey included research from government agencies and local authorities, as well as academic research and reports in the print media.

The key benefits of the report is that it was able to establish that the costs and benefits generated by infill housing is dependant on the *quality* of development (design, materials and construction) and the degree of population density increase generated by development. More specifically, the review was able to pinpoint a comprehensive definition of residential infill developed for the Christchurch City Council which is also ideal for the Wellington city context.

#### Council officer and external interviews

Over a six month period the project officers interviewed key staff within Council, as well as external parties who have a particular expertise or experience directly related with residential and development markets.

Internally, Council officer interviews were undertaken with consents and compliance, urban design, building control, infrastructure and drainage, arboriculture and landscape design, city housing, traffic and roading. Council officers were able to pin point areas of concern, particularly with poor design quality and materials and loss of amenity.

Externally, interviews were undertaken with real estate agents, surveyors, planning consultants, architects and developers. These interviews highlighted the difficulties of client driven financial

objectives and also the extra work involved in complying with the multi unit and subdivision design guides.

### Desk top study – 10 study areas

Ten study areas across the Out Residential suburbs of Wellington were identified. Each study area contained between 2 and 4 blocks. The selection included both sloping and flat areas, areas in the north, south, east and west of the city and contained examples of older infill (pre 1990) and newer infill (post 1990). The areas were deliberately different in profile, with officers using aerial photos and data, as well as census and quotable value statistics to analyse infill trends. Suburbs reviewed in the study include:

Tawa	Lyall Bay
Island Bay	Brooklyn
Johnsonville	Miramar
Hataitai	Karori
Ngaio	Miramar South

Officers were able to gather a snap shot of the different suburbs profiles, specifically being able to establish the age and amount of infill that has occurred in the areas and also draw conclusions on how terrain can influence the type of infill that has occurred. The key findings from this case study were that:

- Poorly designed infill can create a number of adverse effects. In Wellington these can be categorised into four main areas: over development of a site, decreased residential amenity for adjoining neighbours, possible adverse effects on the streetscape and other environmental effects.
- Residential infill has been occurring all over the city for a number of decades; so this is not a recent phenomenon. Infill of some suburbs began in the 1960s and 1970s and has continued ever since.
- The key difference between infill of the 1960s and 1970s and that of today is usually the scale of development built. A typical infill development of the 60s and 70s was the construction of a single storey dwelling with reasonable space between it and the original dwelling. Today, with section sizes becoming smaller, a typical infill development will be two stories and built out as far as possible without breaching the District Plan standards. Sometimes, two 2-storey units will be built where previously only one single storey dwelling was contemplated.

### Focus groups

The research company Taylor Nelson Sofres (TNS) were contracted in September/October 2006 to help gauge residents' perceptions of infill housing. Specifically the aims of the research objectives were to:

- Identify residents' understanding and experience of infill
- Explore residents' perception of the desirability or otherwise of infill
- Understand residents' perceptions of the role of the Council and the District Plan in relation to infill
- Identify 'ideal' infill and ways in which Council can guide new development

Six focus groups from each of the study areas mentioned above were conducted containing both ratepayer and non-ratepayer Wellington residents. The total sample provided a gender mix and a range in ages from 18 to 70 years. The key findings from the TNS research are noted below:

- Residents can recall examples of residential infill in their own suburbs and across Wellington generally.
- Their perceptions of infill is dominated by recent infill – dating from the 1990s – which is often perceived to be unattractive and constructed of poor quality materials.
- Poor quality residential infill is perceived to be built by developers motivated by profit and who have no long-term attachment to the suburb.
- Residential infill driven by individuals who have a vested interest in their neighbourhood is viewed in a much more favourable light (eg. new dwelling for family member).
- Residents were very easily able to identify the negatives associated with residential infill, and after some prompting, could also identify the benefits of infill development.
- Residents generally supported the approach of allowing infill in order to prevent urban sprawl. Residents could also see that infill allowed for greater diversity of housing types to provide for the elderly, smaller households, or as affordable homes.
- Residents do not clearly understand the Council's position on infill development. They assume the Council supports infill because it occurs. Some were more cynical, saying that it is supported by the Council to improve the rates take.
- Few participants have a good understanding of the role of the District Plan in relation to residential infill. There was some awareness of land use controls such as sunlight access and site coverage. There was however widespread agreement that such rules do not go far enough in protecting the amenity of adjoining neighbours.

#### November 2006 Residents Satisfaction Survey

As the focus groups comprised a total of 34 people, it was considered important to ensure a city wide view was represented. To address this, a series of five questions on infill housing were added to the November 2006 Residents Satisfaction Survey – being a representative sample of all residents. The results of the study showed that:

- 47% of respondents thought the Council has the right balance between residential infill and Greenfield subdivision at the edge of the city. 29% wanted more encouragement for greater development at the edge of the city, whereas 14% wanted more encouragement for infill.
- The question was asked whether residents' were satisfied with the degree to which infill housing is controlled now or if they would like to see more or fewer planning controls over infill development. 43% were satisfied with the current planning controls, while 37% wanted more controls. 7% wanted fewer controls.
- Issues regarding retention of streetscape character, and its relationship to the percentage of a site covered by buildings were broached. 77% thought the current control of 35% site coverage was 'about right', while 17% felt that more should be allowed when asked whether residents' thought landowners should be allowed to cover more of a site with buildings.

- Views on a long-term strategic approach to managing infill in the city showed that 25% of respondents favoured the approach of discouraging changes in residential areas and encouraging higher density housing around local and neighbourhood centres. A much greater proportion (61%) preferred the approach of planned, but more compact and more efficient housing types in *all areas*. There were a wide variety of reasons for why people preferred one approach to managing infill over the other.

Overall, the research was able to confirm the extent and scope of the issues and concerns that were raised by the focus group residents.

#### 4.3 Scope of the Plan Change

All throughout the research phase a number of issues have consistently been revealed as contributing to poor residential infill outcomes. Not all of the issues are matters that come within the scope of the District Plan. As a result there are some issues raised by concerned residents not able to be addressed by this Plan Change. Similarly, there are some District Plan issues that aren't proposed to be addressed in this initial plan change as they may well change in a subsequent plan change once the strategic direction for infill housing has been determined.

Table 1 summarises those issues that are not covered by this plan change, but which have been raised by various people during the research phase. Figure 1 identifies the key issues that will be addressed by this Plan Change (along with the specific provisions added or amended).

Table 1: Issues <u>not</u> within the scope of this initial infill housing plan change
<b>Issues to be deferred to the next plan change on residential issues.</b>
<p><b>Height and Site Coverage:</b>            Generic building height and site coverage provisions across the Outer Residential Area not set at a level to reflect particular suburbs characteristics (eg. single storey houses dominant in Miramar; Tawa typically about 25% site coverage).  <i>The future plan change to deal with a 'targeted approach to infill and intensification' may need to amend height limits and site coverage to reflect the outcomes sought in those areas of change/no change. Any proposal to amend the generic building heights and site coverage provisions now would pre-empt the targeting policy work and would likely require further change at that point.</i></p> <p><b>Parking:</b>            Polar opinions exist on the way parking is managed in the Plan. Some would prefer the Council required 2 parking spaces per unit (as this would better meet car ownership rates and get more parked cars off the street). Others, looking ahead to a time where fewer cars are used, want the Council to stop requiring car parks as these (along with manoeuvring spaces) are the one feature of a development that consistently inhibits excellent design outcomes. No change is proposed in the mean time (except for a requirement for visitor car parking in multi-unit developments).</p>
<b>Issues not able to be addressed by changes to the District Plan</b>

**Use of materials:**

Infill housing perceived to be of 'cheap quality materials'.

*The Building Act/Code restricts the Council's ability to require certain building materials be used in favour of others provided a certain material is an 'approved solution' under the Code.*

**Architecture:**

Effect of different housing styles (i.e. architecture) on streetscape character.

*Architecture is a subjective matter, difficult to exercise control over. The diversity of housing styles is marked feature of the Outer Residential Area.*

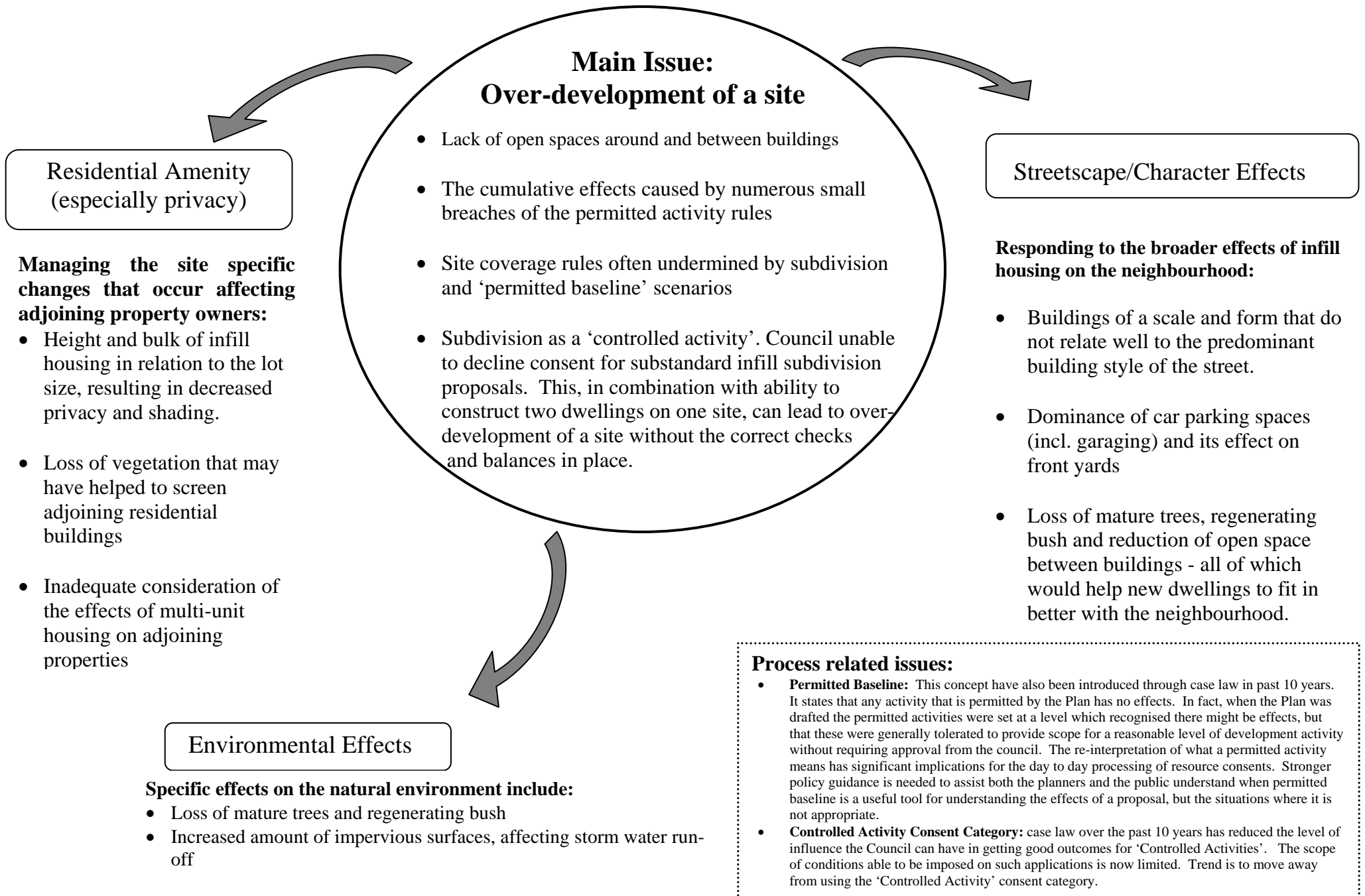
**Effect on value:**

Infill housing not of same 'value' as surrounding dwellings. Concern that house values decrease as a result.

*No clear process for Council to require that new infill homes be of a certain value. Private mechanisms may be a possible tool (ie. private covenants on titles such as those used in Greenfield subdivisions) but this would need to be driven by the current landowner.*



Figure 1: Planning related issues associated with poorly designed infill housing



#### 4.4 Consultation and Briefing Sessions

In addition to the focus group research with residents and the statutory consultation required by the RMA, a wide variety of people were interviewed during the research phase to ensure the Council canvassed a wide variety of perspectives on the infill housing issues. These people included:

- Council planners – strategic, policy and resource consent planners, compliance officers
- External 'consultant' planners
- Council building consents officers
- Council infrastructure officers (transport, parking, water and sewage)
- Council urban designers
- Council landscape architect
- External 'consultant' surveyors
- External 'consultant' architects and designers
- Real estate agent
- Wellington Civic Trust
- Tawa Community Board

A workshop was held in January 2007 with the Council's Planning Group to test ideas for a plan change to deal to the infill housing issues. That workshop was followed soon afterwards with a day long Councillor Workshop (February 2007). The Councillor workshop involved discussions of the issues in the morning, followed by the bus tour of some Wellington suburbs affected by infill housing. The aim was to highlight not only the poor examples of infill housing, but also what can be done to help new housing fit in better to the surrounding neighbourhood.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of April 2007 a briefing session was held with local Residents' Associations and other interested residents who have contacted the Council about their particular infill housing concerns. Issues surrounding the current approach and concerns with infill were discussed together with the concept of developing a more refined approach for the location of infill development, including areas of intensification were touched on.

More extensive consultation with the public generally will occur as the Plan Change is notified. A longer submissions period for the plan change will allow individuals and interest groups plenty of time to consider the plan change and have their queries addressed by Council Planning staff before lodging a submission.

#### **Key documents**

- Wellington City Council (2006) *The social and environmental effects of residential infill development in New Zealand*, Urban Development Strategy Working Paper 6.
- Wellington City Council (2006) *Qualitative research report: Residential infill in Wellington: The resident's view*, Prepared by TNS Research.
- Wellington City Council (2006) November Residents Satisfaction Survey
- Wellington City Council (2006) Urban Development Strategy
- Wellington City Council (2006) Long Term Council Community Plan 2006/07 – 2015/16
- Wellington City Council (2004) Wellington – our sense of place: building a future on what we treasure

### ***Key discussions/briefings***

- Interviews with senior members of Resource Consents Team, Planning and Urban Design Directorate February - March 2006 regarding planning issues with infill housing.
- Interview with senior members of Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement Team, Planning and Urban Design Directorate April 2006 regarding planning issues with infill housing.
- Interview with senior Landscape Architect, Planning and Urban Design Directorate 27 July 2006 regarding landscaping issues with infill housing.
- Interview with Urban Design Consultant, Planning and Urban Design Directorate 7 September 2006 regarding urban design issues, particularly with multi-unit development.
- Interview with Manager Infrastructure Planning, Infrastructure Directorate 13 July 2006 regarding infrastructure capacity and infill housing.
- Interview with Drainage Engineer and Building Inspectors, Building Consents and Licensing Services Directorate 13 – 18 July 2006 regarding building issues with infill housing.
- Interview with Manager of Arboriculture, Recreation and Events Directorate 17 July 2006 regarding the effect of infill housing on established trees and vegetation in the city.
- Interview with Manager of City Housing, Community Services Directorate 18 July 2006 regarding Councils role in housing.
- Interview with Chief Transportation Engineer, Infrastructure Directorate 19 July 2006 regarding transportation and its relationship with infill housing.
- Interview with private Surveyor regarding development pressures and infill housing 22 September 2006.
- Interview with Real Estate Agent (past president of MREINZ) 25 September 2006 regarding market for infill housing.
- Interview with Planning Consultant 26 September 2006 regarding planning issues with infill housing.
- Interview with Architects of an architectural group/association 18 October 2006 regarding planning and design issues with infill housing.
- Interview with private Architect/Designer and Developer 4 December 2006 regarding planning and developer issues with infill housing.
- Interview with Registered Valuer December 2006 regarding infill housing values.
- Workshop for WCC Planning and Urban Design Directorate – Jan 2007.
- Workshop for Councillors, including bus trip showing infill housing (February 2007).
- Briefing of Residents Associations (April 2007).

### ***Consultation, in accordance with the First Schedule of the RMA 1991***

- Ministry for the Environment
- Greater Wellington Regional Council
- Wellington Tenth Trust
- Te Runanga O Toa Rangatira Inc

## 5. Options

### **Objectives**

Section 32 requires the Council to be satisfied that the objectives in the District Plan are the most appropriate means of achieving the purpose of the RMA. Proposed District Plan Change 56 does not change any of the objectives in the District Plan, so this evaluation is not relevant in this case.

### **Policies, rules and other methods**

Section 32 requires the Council consider whether the policies, rules and other methods used in the district plan are the most appropriate method of achieving the plan's objective. In terms of managing the effects of activities in Residential Areas, the District Plan has adopted a rule based regime, based on provisions of a limited range of activities. This approach has been thoroughly considered though the plan preparation, submission and hearing process when the District Plan was originally notified. It is therefore not proposed to reconsider the merits of this approach in this report.

The table below considers the cost and benefits of the three core options considered during the preparation of proposed District Plan Change 56.

### **An introductory comment about housing affordability**

Housing affordability is an issue of particular concern at present, and so it is inevitable that elements of this plan change might be perceived to make housing even more unaffordable.

Housing affordability is influenced by many factors:

- who is building the housing
- land supply (i.e. Greenfield's, Brownfield's and infill subdivision in existing suburbs)
- planning controls
- the availability of bank credit
- housing preference
- residential investment market.

With so many different drivers, it is difficult to say with certainty how the infill housing review (and specifically plan change 56) will influence housing affordability. This Plan Change has been drafted with the issue of housing affordability in mind. With a burgeoning elderly population and an increase in the number of 1-2 people households, it is clear that a market does exist for smaller homes requiring less maintenance. The approach adopted in this plan change ensures that those opportunities are still available.

The discussion document on a targeted approach to infill housing outlines that affordable housing could be achieved in areas where greater intensification is provided for. This would offset the high land values in such areas to ensure affordable housing is provided as part of these new intensive development areas. Allowing more units on a given area of land will help to drive down the value of the individual units (provided this is supported by other regulation to enforce it).

**Table 2: The Efficiency, Effectiveness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Plan Change**

Option	Key Features	Advantages	Costs and Risks
<p><b>Option 1 – Do nothing, Status Quo</b>  <i>Retain the current District Plan provisions in relation to building bulk and location of residential activities, including the management of multi-unit developments and the subdivision process.</i></p> <p>This option is <b>not recommended.</b></p> <p><b>Option 1 continued...</b></p>	<p>Retain the existing provisions relating to building height, site coverage, sun light access etc.</p> <p>Multi-unit developments resulting in three or more units on a site (or two or more units in identified character areas) require consent. Applications are considered against the Multi-Unit Design Guide.</p> <p>Retain the subdivision of up to five lots as a 'controlled activity'. Applications must be granted and the Council has limited scope to impose conditions in order to improve the quality of the subdivision.</p>	<p>No cost in terms of time and resources required to process a plan change and similarly, no costs for potential submitters who would otherwise become involved in the plan change process.</p> <p>Current rules are established. No requirement for district plan practitioners to become familiar with new provisions.</p> <p>Would not constrain developments already in the planning phase.</p> <p>No impact on properties that have been purchased with a view to potential re-development.</p>	<p>The current District Plan provisions are helping to facilitate low quality developments that are no longer acceptable to residents due to the adverse effects that can be caused by poorly design residential infill (i.e. Infill housing that does not respect predominant housing patterns of the surrounding area).</p> <p>The community will continue to express concerns regarding infill housing, and if no action is taken, it may lead to a loss of engagement with the Council and the planning process generally.</p> <p>As most easily developed sites have already been developed, most infill housing now takes place on smaller sections, or areas of marginal land. This generally results in buildings being out of scale with the small site they are built on and also out of scale with surrounding dwellings. Future developments are also likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of green space and ground level open space on site.</li> <li>• Poor quality design of infill dwellings in the way it relates to the existing house on site and any adjoining dwellings</li> <li>• Subdivision of land into very small lots and/or oddly shaped lots to fulfil the permitted activity standards.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Option 2 – Revised regulation based on current approach to residential development</b></p>	<p><b>Over development of a site</b></p>		
	<p>Ground Floor Open Space</p>	<p>Introduce a ground level open space requirement per dwelling</p>	<p>At present the requirement to provide <b>ground floor open space</b> is only applied for multi-unit</p> <p>The proposed new requirement to provide <b>ground level open space</b> (based on the number of units)</p>

**Table 2: The Efficiency, Effectiveness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Plan Change**

Option	Key Features	Advantages	Costs and Risks
<p><b>provisions.</b></p> <p>This is the <b>recommended option.</b></p> <p><i>Revise current District Plan provisions to provide additional focus on the key adverse effects of residential infill (double storied second dwellings, open space for each dwelling) and the subdivision process which currently enables developments of a lower quality than is desirable.</i></p> <p><i>This option is split into a discussion of the options four key elements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Overdevelopment of a site</i></li> <li>o <i>Residential amenity</i></li> <li>o <i>Streetscape and residential character</i></li> <li>o <i>Environmental effects</i></li> </ul>		<p>developments (as outlined in the multi-unit design guide), ie. it is not a rule. The effect of the guideline has been watered down over time, such that the ground level open space is often substituted by an elevated deck to make room for buildings and vehicle manoeuvring space. The result is a lack of open and green space, and a perception that the buildings dominate the site. The intention of the new rule is to require an amount of open space to be provided on site in order to provide spaciousness needed for a quality residential development. The rule recognises that a minimum open space requirement is needed for all dwellings, not just intensive multi-unit developments. Having some outdoor space attached to every unit is a fundamental part of the 'building blocks' for a quality, liveable residential development.</p> <p>The key benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that a setting for the new dwelling is provided on site</li> <li>• Integration of the new development into the neighbourhood</li> <li>• Softening the visual impact of new buildings</li> <li>• Providing space for substantial trees to be planted</li> <li>• Creation of some on-site, private outdoor amenity for residents.</li> </ul> <p>The rule will work in combination with site coverage and the car parking requirement to manage the density of development on a site. Failure to provide the full amount of open space sends a signal that the site may be overdeveloped. Having a dimension requirement as part of the rule ensures that the open space required will achieve its main purpose of breaking up buildings from each other and creating a setting for dwellings. Long narrow strips of land around the exterior of a building do not contribute to a sense of openness and space between buildings,</p>	<p>may reduce the number of household units that can be developed on any given site. For developers who have purchased a property based on the current rules, it is possible that the new rules will affect the economics of developing that site. i.e. profit margins may be squeezed if fewer units are possible.</p>

**Table 2: The Efficiency, Effectiveness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Plan Change**

Option	Key Features	Advantages	Costs and Risks
Option 2 continued...		<p>which is why site coverage alone is not the most effective planning tool.</p> <p>The rule is an improvement on the 'useable open space' requirement in the previous District Scheme. This is because the main aim of the rule is spaciousness between buildings, rather than the land having to be 'useable', which would involve subjective assessments about how one person may find a piece of land useable, but others would not. This will ensure that steep sites are still able to comply with the rule. The main requirement is that the land be contiguous to the dwelling.</p>	
	<p>Subdivision</p> <p>Require subdivision of up to 5 lots to be a Discretionary (Restricted) Activity.</p>	<p><b>Subdivision</b> as a Discretionary Activity will allow the Council an ability to negotiate more strongly with landowners to obtain good subdivision outcomes, and ultimately to decline poorly designed and substandard subdivision applications. Council will be able to ensure good subdivision design to reduce adverse amenity and streetscape effects. There is increasing acknowledgement in case law that subdivision directly influences future land uses so it is appropriate that Council exercises a greater degree of control over infill subdivision to ensure future infill housing is of a suitable quality.</p> <p>The effectiveness of the 'Controlled Activity' consent category has been significantly undermined in the past 10 years since the Plan was first drafted. It no longer provides any ability for Council to achieve good outcomes through consent conditions as the scope of consent conditions has been narrowed. There is clear evidence from reviews of subdivision consent applications that some developers deliberately use the 'Controlled Activity' subdivision process to avoid the stricter multi-unit assessment process (and associated assessment against the multi-unit design guide).</p>	<p>The proposed elevation of <b>subdivision</b> from a Controlled Activity to a Discretionary (Restricted) Activity will be perceived as reducing certainty for developers that a subdivision will be approved. This in turn may affect holding costs for developers if proposed subdivisions plans need to be re-worked to meet the plan's requirements.</p> <p>Proposals for subdivisions in established residential suburbs that involve 2 storey units will require a greater level of information to be provided to ensure that the Council can assess the effects of the subdivision. It may require surveyors to seek additional expertise from other experts (incl. architects or designers).</p> <p>There are social implications with this in that it may reduce the supply of development sites within established residential suburbs, leading to higher land values and reducing affordability of infill housing.</p>

**Table 2: The Efficiency, Effectiveness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Plan Change**

Option	Key Features	Advantages	Costs and Risks	
<p><b>Option 2 continued...</b></p>		<p>The rule will 'capture' those developments which currently use subdivision as a loophole to avoiding a stricter land use assessment process. But, at the other end of the subdivision scale (Greenfield subdivision), the new rule will not trigger larger scale subdivisions as those are already treated as 'Discretionary Unrestricted' in the current planning rules.</p> <p>Removing subdivision from the Controlled Activity category status follows a trend already established with other recent plan changes where Controlled Activity category has been removed in favour of a 'discretionary' approach.</p>		
	<p><b>Site Coverage</b></p>			
	<p>Site coverage assessments: can be affected by land tenure options. Changes proposed to definitions of 'site area' and 'access lot' to ensure site coverage calculations become 'tenure neutral'.</p>	<p>Amending how <b>site coverage</b> is calculated to make it 'tenure neutral' will help to reduce over development of a site as perceived by the community. Stronger policy guidance and rule guidance will help to ensure site coverage is not reduced as part of the subdivision process and will prevent the cumulative effects from a number site coverage breaches in a certain area.</p>	<p>Amending the way <b>site coverage</b> is calculated to make it tenure neutral may actually result in freehold subdivision being the 'favoured' tenure. Freehold subdivision of land will open up a range of 'permitted activities' that can be developed on the site which the Council has little control over the final design and layout.</p> <p>Debate may arise in attempting to define the extent of the driveway/access way for the purpose of calculating site coverage. This may lead to delays in processing resource consent applications.</p> <p>It may result in fewer units on a given site, affecting the development economics of a proposal.</p>	
	<p><b>Amenity and Privacy of adjoining neighbours</b></p>			
<p><b>Height Restriction</b></p>				
<p>New policies that recognise the effects of infill housing</p> <p>Revise building height for the</p>	<p>The rule that sets a <b>height restriction</b> for the second unit on a site represents a 'middle ground' approach in that it still allows for infill housing to occur as of right, but the rule narrows in on the key infill housing issues</p>	<p>The <b>restriction of the height of the second unit</b> on a site may lead to very small, potentially substandard housing being created. There are currently no standards in place, either in</p>		



**Table 2: The Efficiency, Effectiveness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Plan Change**

Option	Key Features	Advantages	Costs and Risks
<p><b>Option 2 continued...</b></p>	<p>'second unit' on a site so that it only provides for a single storey dwelling rather than two or three stories.</p> <p>Introduce an assessment criterion to guide assessment of cumulative effects of development</p>	<p>(being the height and scale of additional dwellings on a site in relation to neighbouring sites). It sets the permitted activities standards at a level where the Council can be certain that the effects are negligible.</p> <p>It will act to reduce the effects typically associated with infill housing, such as overlooking, reduced privacy, a sense of 'enclosure' or being 'surrounded by buildings'. This is particularly important for Outer Residential Areas where lot sizes are traditionally larger with more open space around and between buildings.</p> <p>It retains opportunities for smaller households (e.g. elderly, single parent households, young couples) to find dwellings that will suit their particular needs, and retains opportunities for affordable housing.</p> <p>Making it clear (in the policies) that all units of a multi-unit developments are able to go up to the 8m height limit in Outer Residential Areas creates an incentive for developers to go through the 'stricter multi-unit development assessment process. This involves the landowner completing a comprehensive design process for the development and be assessed against the design guides. Such a process is much more likely to result in a cohesively designed development that responds to the concerns of adjoining neighbours and to the wider environment.</p>	<p>legislation or the District Plan that controls a minimum dwelling size. This could result in houses of a very small scale in Outer Residential Areas which may equally be out of character in the same way that large dwellings can be.</p> <p>Depending on the size of the space available for a second unit, the height restriction may make development of that additional unit uneconomical, ultimately reducing the supply of infill housing. Until such time as the Council identifies areas for intensified development (through the targeting residential growth project), this may affect the greater goal of the Council being to intensify within existing residential areas.</p>
	<p>Residential Design Guide</p> <p>Revised multiunit design guide to improve consideration of how a development must also relate to adjoining sites, also renamed as the Residential Design Guide to reflect its purpose to guide all types of residential housing on a site.</p>	<p>The renamed <b>Residential Design Guide</b> signals a shift by the Council in how that guide will be applied. A review of the guide showed that many of the issues associated with multi-unit developments applied equally to infill housing, especially where the infill housing was two or more storeys high. The revised design guide acknowledges these issues. The guide previously had an 'inward looking focus' ensuring the</p>	<p>The amendments which require over height infill developments to be assessed as Discretionary Activities against the revised <b>Residential Design Guide</b> may increase upfront costs for the developer. These costs would come from the need for design input into the application, or if delays are incurred later on in the consent process due to an inadequate design or lack of information</p>

**Table 2: The Efficiency, Effectiveness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Plan Change**

Option	Key Features	Advantages	Costs and Risks
<p><b>Option 2 continued...</b></p>		<p>amenity of residents within the development units was protected. But in many cases, it did consider the impact that a large multi-unit dwelling might have on adjoining neighbours (irrespective of whether the basic bulk and location rules of the Plan have been met). The design guide (and policies) have been amended to provide guidance on these impacts, ensuring better outcomes for adjoining neighbours of such developments.</p> <p>Infill developments, particularly those featuring dwellings of two or more stories, can create as much effect on adjoining neighbours as multi-unit developments, so it is appropriate that such developments are assessed against a design guide which covers issues of intensive residential design. It ensures that all development types that have the potential to create adverse amenity effects will be assessed against the same set of guidelines, thereby not favouring one development approach over another.</p>	<p>to assess the proposal properly.</p>
	<p><u>Landscaping</u>                      Landscaping plan required due to its role in mitigating the effects of new development.</p>	<p>Landscaping plans are currently identified in the plan as an 'information requirement' of any site development proposal. Enforcement of this requirement is required. There should be no additional expense associated with the requirement to produce a landscaping plan as such plans are currently required, its just that they were typically supplied at the end of the consent process (as a condition of consent). The assessment criteria now explicitly recognise the role that site landscaping plays to reduce the effects of a development and it is appropriate that the consent planner assesses this as a critical part of the effects assessment of the development proposal, not as a 'tact on' at the end of the approval process, or as a condition of consent.</p>	

**Table 2: The Efficiency, Effectiveness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Plan Change**

Option	Key Features	Advantages	Costs and Risks
<p><b>Option 2 continued...</b></p>	<p><b>Streetscape/Residential Character</b>                      Introduce new policies to address effects of infill housing on streetscape and residential character (open space, hard surfacing, retention existing mature trees and bush)</p> <p>Introduce a ground level open space requirement per dwelling</p> <p>Require landscaping plan as adequate consideration of landscaping from beginning of concept design will allow development to 'fit in' better with surrounding neighbourhood.</p>	<p>The policies acknowledge that poorly designed infill housing can create a range of adverse effects on the streetscape and residential character. The policies seek explicit recognition of these issues in development proposals, which if adopted by a developer, will help new development to fit into the existing streetscape and reduce the effects on wider residential character.</p> <p>A stronger policy approach in the plan means that as well as a developer having to get written approvals from affected neighbours, they must also demonstrate how the proposal fits with the objectives and policies of the Plan as the Council is also required to have regard to the policies in making a decision on a resource consent application.</p>	<p>With stronger, more direct policies in place, applicants for resource consent will be expected to demonstrate how a particular development has given regard to those matters, potentially increasing the scope of information covered in a resource consent application. In the past, such issues were often disregarded if 'affected party' approvals had been provided.</p>
	<p><b>Parking and Garaging</b>                      Guidelines to manage the dominance of garaging and vehicle crossings (include reduction of vehicle crossing to 3.7m instead of 'up to 6m').</p>	<p>The dominance of parking spaces, garaging and associated double width vehicle crossings often associated with infill developments can result in significant adverse effects on the streetscape of a neighbourhood. Design guidance that seeks to reduce the effect of vehicles parking in front yards will help to improve the quality of the streetscape, allowing front yards and the dwelling to be the focal point of a street, rather than parked cars or large driveways. A rule reducing the permitted width of vehicle crossings in the Inner Residential Area to a single access crossing will help to improve streetscape, but also to respond to particular concerns about the loss of valuable on-street car parking spaces in these areas.</p>	<p>Adverse effects control on vehicle crossings will reduce the scope of existing rights under the current plan to create a 6m wide crossing. Ultimately this may restrict options for the size and scale of on-site garage buildings which may not suit the needs of the landowner (particularly if a double garage was desired).</p>
	<p>Ground level open space (covered above).</p>		
	<p>Landscaping Plan (covered above)</p>		
	<p><b>Environmental Effects</b></p>		
<p>Introduce two policies regarding</p>	<p>Policies will send a message that these are matters</p>	<p>There are no explicit rules setting minimum</p>	

**Table 2: The Efficiency, Effectiveness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Plan Change**

Option	Key Features	Advantages	Costs and Risks	
	<p>the retention of large trees and areas of regenerating bush; and the minimisation of hard surfaces during a site redevelopment.</p> <p>The policies are supported by guidance in the design guides, but not specific rules.</p>	<p>that must be considered by applicants as part of the resource consent process.</p>	<p>requirements for these two issues, which may limit the effectiveness of the policies.</p>	
<p><b>Option 3 – Revised regulation that departs from current planning regime to introduce other, more stringent regulatory tools.</b></p> <p><i>Restructure the residential rules to require a resource consent for all new residential infill developments.</i></p> <p><i>Amend subdivision regime to re-introduce concept of a minimum lot size.</i></p> <p>This option is <b>not recommended.</b></p>	<p><b>Over Development of a site</b></p> <p>Require minimum lot size standards to be reached to remain a ‘Controlled Activity Subdivision’ (e.g. 400m<sup>2</sup> for Outer Residential lots).</p> <p>Introduce new assessment criteria to the Discretionary (Unrestricted) Activity subdivision rule that allows consideration of sites that are under the minimum lot size requirement.</p> <p><i>Following options same as offered in option 3 above:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Amend site coverage calculations to be tenure neutral</i></li> <li>• <i>Provision of ground level open space on site for every unit and associated open space policy</i></li> </ul>	<p>A return to the <b>minimum lot size</b> requirement would provide everyone with certainty about the appropriate size of lots able to be created in the City. This would also provide greater certainty around the scope of effects generated by an infill subdivision application.</p> <p>A minimum lot size would become the main density control in the Plan (reducing reliance on the site coverage provision). It would ensure flexibility for how sites are developed in the future, and the Council would have confidence that a dwelling could easily be constructed on the lot which also respects the surrounding residential character.</p>	<p>The <b>minimum lot size</b> provision was removed in the 1994 plan due to difficulties in Wellington (largely because of topography) in meeting the threshold. Numerous consents were sought for lots that were marginally under the required size and these were typically approved. The current plan provisions have allowed a situation to arise where very small lots can be created (ie. around 200m<sup>2</sup>), but provided that there are appropriate controls in place to manage the effects of those very small sites (as proposed in option 3), then these controls should be enough to manage the worst effects of small lots.</p> <p>A return to the minimum lot size would result in one of two things: a stifling of residential infill development opportunities and with it the inability to maintain a compact urban city; or large numbers of subdivision consents (processed as Unrestricted Discretionary Activities) which would have the potential to be publicly notified.</p>	
	<p><b>Amenity and Privacy of adjoining neighbours</b></p> <p>Number of dwellings per site</p>			

**Table 2: The Efficiency, Effectiveness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Plan Change**

Option	Key Features	Advantages	Costs and Risks
	<p>Reduce number of dwellings able to be built on a site from two to one as a permitted activity. Any subsequent dwelling would require resource consent, with consideration of proposed dwelling against the newly revised 'Residential Design Guide'.</p> <p>Consequential change to residential rule structure for 'multi-unit developments' as two or more units would now be classed as a MUD.</p> <p><i>Following options same as offered in option 3 above:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Provision of ground level open space on site for every unit and associated open space policy</i></li> <li><i>Revised multiunit design guide also renamed to be the Residential Design Guide.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Allowing only <b>one dwelling per site</b> as of right is the most direct, if strong, approach to managing the effects associated with infill housing. A resource consent would be required for any additional dwelling on a site allowing the Council to consider the effects on a case-by-case basis and imposing conditions that will allow the effects to be managed appropriately.</p> <p>It would also assist in assessing many applications, especially those for subdivision, because the 'permitted baseline' would be simplified to one dwelling per site. This would prevent many 'permitted baseline scenarios' from being used to undermine the intent of the Plan (e.g. The calculation of site coverage on a lot proposed to be subdivided, where one lot breaches the 35% site coverage due to the position of the boundary line, but the two lots together do achieve 35%).</p>	<p>A reduction in the <b>number of dwellings permitted</b> per site will impose greater costs and time delays on residential developers. There will be no certainty that a consent will be approved and as a result, it may affect people's willingness to invest in existing residential suburbs for the purposes of redevelopment.</p> <p>It may prevent infill development from occurring altogether, thus threatening the wider goal of the Plan to maintain a compact city. This is because greater reliance will come on Greenfield locations to provide for new growth. As Greenfield development would be the only remaining part of the city where a 'permitted residential development' could occur on a large scale, it may be seen as encouraging such development.</p> <p>By limiting new residential growth to either Greenfield areas or central city apartments, this may affect the housing choice available and further reduce housing affordability. An average Greenfield residential dwelling is marketed for at least \$450K. Some homes are targeted at a higher market and average \$650K. The cost of central city apartments do vary depending on quality, size and aspect but on average a 3 bedroom CBD apartment could sell for anywhere between \$700k and above.</p>
	<p><b>Privacy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce a permitted activity standard relating to on-site privacy and privacy with adjoining neighbours</li> </ul>	<p>A <b>privacy provision</b> would ensure basic standards are met for all dwellings irrespective of how many other dwellings are built on the site. i.e. any new dwelling would be required to be designed in such way as to meet the privacy standards. This would increase the basic level of amenity for all new</p>	<p>Many plans throughout NZ contain minimum standards for <b>privacy</b> between dwellings (both on a site and between dwellings generally). In Wellington these issues are largely addressed in the multi-unit design guide, but until now that design guide has only applied to multi-unit</p>

**Table 2: The Efficiency, Effectiveness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Plan Change**

Option	Key Features	Advantages	Costs and Risks
Option 3 continued...		<p>dwellings in Wellington, but also help to avoid a reduction of privacy and amenity for existing homeowners.</p>	<p>developments. With proposed changes to infill housing, the renamed 'Residential Design Guide' will apply to multi-unit developments, subdivision applications that create very small lots as well as infill housing where the height standard is breached. This means concerns about privacy are targeted to the situation where it is needed the most, rather than a broad brush approach for every dwelling, which may not be necessary.</p>
	<p><b>Streetscape</b> Building Height</p>		
Option 3 continued...	<p>Introduce an 'absolute building height' provision (which restricts the overall height of a building (i.e. after earthworks completed)</p> <p><i>All remaining options under this heading are the same as offered in option 3:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce two policies to provide direction on issues provision of hard surfacing and the specific effects that a number of dwellings located on one site can have on streetscape.</li> <li>• Guidelines to manage the dominance of garaging and vehicle crossings</li> </ul>	<p>Concerns regarding the height of buildings being out of scale with surrounding buildings could be addressed in part with an 'absolute building height' provision. The current height rule relates to height above ground level. Applications for residential development may often also involve earthworks to lower or flatten a building site which then gives them additional building height to use 'as of right'. There are examples of dwellings between 9-10m high in the Outer Residential Area as a result of using this additional 'earth worked space'. This height easily allows for a three storey dwelling which further exacerbates concerns about overlooking and loss of privacy for adjoining dwellings, but also concerns that the dwellings are out of scale with the height of adjacent residential dwellings – affecting the streetscape. A control over the absolute height of a building would limit scope of additional building height able to be gained through earthworks or other means and consequently contain the effects associated with over height buildings.</p> <p>Unsympathetic earthworks can create visual adverse effects on the streetscape. By limiting the scope of any 'building height gains' to be made as a result of earthworks, this may also limit the extent of earthworks carried out to only what is needed for a flat</p>	<p>The absolute building height will impose additional restrictions on development opportunities for landowners. This may become particularly important for sloping sites, where earthworks are needed to create a suitable building platform.</p> <p>Building heights have not been addressed in this plan change because it is likely to be a key feature of any future plan change that seeks to implement a targeted approach to managing residential growth. In changing building heights now, it may pre-empt such work on a future plan change.</p>

**Table 2: The Efficiency, Effectiveness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Plan Change**

Option	Key Features	Advantages	Costs and Risks
	<p data-bbox="501 424 880 592">Introduce a minimum % of site area to be of permeable surfaces and a maximum % of site area to be of impervious surfaces, in combination with a hard surfacing policy.</p> <p data-bbox="501 619 880 671"><i>Following option same as offered in option 3 above:</i></p> <ul data-bbox="501 676 880 759" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce a policy on the retention of large trees and areas of regenerating bush.</li> </ul>	<p data-bbox="898 339 1487 392">building platform.</p> <p data-bbox="898 424 1487 730">A rule would almost certainly act to reduce the proportion of a site covered in hard surfacing. This is desirable from both an amenity perspective and a storm water management perspective (reducing the amount of run-off). Sites that are extensively covered by hard landscaped materials, reducing the amount of 'green space' around a building can contribute to the building not fitting in well to the streetscape. Green areas and trees help to mitigate the effects of new dwellings, in particular by helping to reduce the bulk of a building in proportion to the space around it.</p> <p data-bbox="898 759 1487 895">While some benefit to the storm water system will occur as a result of greater soil permeability, this is considered to be of minimal impact in Wellington due to its particular soil structure, limiting the benefits derived from a rule based approach to hard surfacing.</p>	<p data-bbox="1505 424 2047 592">The main cost associated with this type of rule is the ongoing monitoring and enforcement of it. Any new rule of this type would need to be supported by increased monitoring capabilities within Council to keep track of changes made by individuals to site permeability.</p> <p data-bbox="1505 619 2047 786">As the rule of limited value from a storm water perspective, its value is largely associated with enhanced streetscape amenity. Consequently, the benefits of the rule do not outweigh the costs associated with its administration and enforcement.</p>

Two other issues are proposed to be included in this Plan Change. Neither are specifically infill related issues, but both changes are needed to the Residential Area rules so including them in this plan change is an efficient way of obtaining public feedback on them.

The first issue on 'existing use rights' first arose as part of the discussions on Plan Change 39 (Character controls in Newtown, Berhampore and Mt Cook) where it became apparent that many 'so-called' complying additions to properties were triggering a resource consent due to non-compliances of the existing building on the site. With many older buildings, particularly those in character areas, not complying with the bulk and location provisions of the Plan this is a widespread issue. Because of the non-compliance created by the existing building, undertaking 'complying' additions and alterations to these buildings will require an assessment to consider the combined effect of the proposed work and the areas of non-compliance. A proposed new permitted activity rule is included in the Plan to outline the scope of activities that may be carried out on an existing 'non-complying' building.

The second issue, regarding the need for all sites to provide legal access, comes as a result of recent examples in the city where informal site access arrangements have fallen over, causing significant issues for both the landowner concerned, but also opens up potential problems for traffic congestion in the vicinity of the affected site. The Plan does not specify that site access must be formalised by a legal instrument. It is proposed to clarify an existing site access provision (section 5.1.1.3.2) to state that the site access provided must be formalised by a legal right of way instrument where the access is not able to be provided directly from a public road.

<b>Table 3: Additional Residential Rule Amendments – ‘existing use rights’ and ‘sites to have <i>legal</i> access’</b>			
Option	Key Features	Advantages	Costs and Risks
<b>Option 1:</b> Status Quo	<b><i>Introduction on an ‘Existing Use Rights’ Rule</i></b>		
	Resource consent planners complete a s10 (RMA) assessment for every resource consent application and certificate of compliance that is processed to see whether existing use rights are maintained or lost by the proposed work.	The process remains as stated in the law.	Section 10 process of assessing existing use rights (particularly where they are lost) is not well understood by non-planners, architects and designers.  There is no certainty for architects and landowners that the nature of their proposed ‘permitted’ additions will be able to be built due to existing non-compliances with the Plan. Architects typically design work to comply with the current rules of the Plan, not being aware that an existing non-compliance of the building may trigger a resource consent.
<b>Option 2:</b> A new rule in the District Plan to clarify that certain activities have existing use rights	A new rule in the Plan outlines the scope of activities able to be completed as permitted activities even if there are some ‘existing non-compliances’ with the current planning rules. Essentially alterations outside the footprint of the existing house must be kept below 4.5m to retain existing use rights for other areas of non-compliance.	The permitted activity rule provides an alternate process for some activities to the s10 process where the nature of the permitted activities is limited to matters that are unlikely to cause adverse effects to neighbours.  In this way it will increase certainty to landowners and their architects that if the proposed additions fall within the scope of the rule then the council will not also do a s10 assessment.	With any generic rule there is a risk that a small number of developments will be permitted that do create adverse effects for neighbours.



**Table 3: Additional Residential Rule Amendments – ‘existing use rights’ and ‘sites to have *legal* access’**

Option	Key Features	Advantages	Costs and Risks
		Fewer costs and delays due to no resource consent being required.	
<b>Option 1:</b> Status Quo	<p><b><i>Require site access to be ‘legal’ access</i></b></p> <p>Legal access to a site is not required</p>	Saves costs for landowner in not having to register a formalised legal access instrument against a property land title, or in engaging surveyors to identify the extent of the access.	Relies on the goodwill of an adjoining landowner to maintain the access over their land to the property. Such goodwill cannot be assured if the land is sold on, with a new landowner being able to choose not to respect any prior agreements. If access arrangements do fall over, the landowner will have difficulty accessing their site potentially causing traffic difficulties for others near the site.
<b>Option 2:</b> Require site access to be legal	Site access must be legalised by way of a right of way instrument where access is not provided direct from a public road.	Guarantees access to the site protected by a notation on the title of the adjoining property which is more difficult to remove than other forms of private agreements.	Costs will be incurred for the services of a surveyor and in registering the instrument against a land title.

## 6.0 Conclusion

The infilling of Wellington's existing suburbs over the past 50 years has helped significantly to retain a compact city and to provide a wide variety of accommodation choices for Wellington residents. Changes to some planning rules in the mid-1990s coincided with increased development pressures for residential properties (including investor-driven development) have resulted in the adverse effects of poorly designed infill housing being too great for surrounding neighbours and the streetscape character generally. As the Council continues to support the overarching goal of a sustainable and compact city, further infill will occur. However, the key to managing such infill in a successful manner relies heavily on ensuring better quality fit of new housing into existing neighbourhoods.

This report has considered three options to respond to this resource management issue, ranging from retention of the status quo (Option 1) to adopting a revised set of planning standards that improve most aspects of infill housing (Option 2), to a more stringent approach that would require a substantial change to the current residential rules (Option 3).

Option 1 (retention of the existing provisions) is not recommended on the grounds that research (and increasing concerns from residents) has indicated that the current District Plan provisions are not able to ensure that new residential developments will maintain and enhance the residential character of the Residential Areas. Accordingly option 1 is not favoured.

Option 2 works within the parameters of the existing District Plan structure; a structure that has been tested and confirmed through the plan preparation and appeal processes. It allows infill development to continue but represents a refinement of the existing District Plan provisions to respond to the concerns of residents. As such the provisions and approach will be familiar with existing plan practitioners. Some of the proposed provisions have already been tested in Plan Change 39, which introduced new character based controls for the suburbs of Newtown, Mt Cook and Berhampore.

Option 2 is consistent with the District Plan's objectives relating to the sustainable management of the Residential Areas by continuing to provide for infill development in existing urban areas, but responds to the concerns of residents by adding further controls to improve quality. The proposed plan change is likely to result in a reduction in community frustration regarding the effects of infill development across the Residential Areas. The proposed amendments could negatively impact on owners of properties purchased for redevelopment, particularly where a certain price was paid for the property on the basis that a certain number of units would be built on site. The amendments to the on-site development potential could require revision of development proposals still in the pre-application planning phase. There is a risk that the plan change does not go far enough and may not result in immediate improvements to the residential environment. Conversely the risk exists that landowners may view the plan change as Council stopping all forms of infill without providing areas where growth can occur.

Option 3 would significantly 'raise the bar' for all new infill housing developments, providing a different kind of certainty about the scope of development able to be achieved on a site. It will almost certainly result in a reduction of frustration being experienced in the community as a result of poor quality infill housing. And yet, it represents a significant departure from the District Plan's current approach to managing development in residential areas. In doing so it may act to 'halt' all infill housing developments in existing suburbs, undermining the greater goal of the Plan which is to intensify the existing urban environment.

This report recommends that Option 2 be adopted because it is focused on and will address the key issues caused by poorly designed infill housing on residential amenity values, streetscape and residential character. These effects include overdevelopment of a site, uncharacteristic

building bulk, lack of green space on site and overall design quality. Accordingly Option 2 is recommended.

On balance it is considered that Option 2 best meets the requirements of section 32 of the Resource Management Act as it represents the most appropriate means of achieving the residential objectives of the District Plan.