
Project title: Improving management of residential infill development**Strategy area: Urban Development**

1. The Proposal

To improve the way infill development is managed in Wellington City. This proposal will comprise:

- a review of the specific District Plan provisions affecting the quality of infill development in outer residential areas; and
- confirmation or re-development of Council's current long term policy for location of infill development, including how we might target residential infill to produce a better fit with land use and transport infrastructure.

2. Strategic Fit

This initiative is a direct result of Priority 1 in the Urban Development Strategy to improve the way infill development in residential areas is managed. This priority is identified as a 'very high priority' and was ranked highest overall by councillors in the September workshops.

The management of residential development is part of Council core business and relates to all Council Outcomes set out in the Urban Development Strategy. More specifically, there is a very direct link between residential infill development and the city being:

Outcome 1: More Liveable – by ensuring the city has sufficient housing choice and improving the quality of housing development as it relates to infill housing

Outcome 3: More Compact – by ensuring Wellington builds on its compact urban form – in which infill plays a major role.

Outcome 8: More Sustainable – by ensuring residential growth is managed to support the efficient and sustainable use of resources.

3. Relationship to Existing Activities

This project relates primarily to the on-going review of the District Plan that sits under the current activity 'Facilitator – Urban Planning'. While there is existing funding for the on-going review of the District Plan, this project has wider implications for the longer term strategic vision for how we manage residential infill development. District Plan changes may form part of this proposal, but they are part of a more substantive project that will consider other implementation methods such as compliance, advocacy and education.

Changes to the way we manage residential infill development will need to be considered as part of Council's long term strategy for managing residential growth. For this reason, this proposal is linked to the 'growth spine' concept (and associated New Initiative) set out in the draft Urban Development Strategy.

4. Proposal Costs

The proposed funding package for this New Initiative is based on:

- An additional staff resource (½ fte) for the Policy Planning team. This is recommended to ensure this project does not delay existing high priority District Plan changes.
- Funding to provide specialist technical expertise on infill related matters such as capacity modelling and social effects of intensification.
- The sensitivity of the public to residential infill matters and the expected need for an additional resource to publicise and communicate concepts or proposed plan changes.

Note: While this proposal fits primarily within the Planning Policy Unit, existing staff resources within the Strategy team will be available to assist with research and the review of the strategic approach to infill development. A joint approach to this project will help to ensure continued integration between infill development policies and the ‘growth spine’ concept.

<i>Outline project costs per year</i>										
Project Component	Operating expenses \$000									
	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16
<i>Staff (Planning Policy - ½ fte)</i>	45	45	45							
<i>Consulting</i>	25	25	25							
<i>Publication & Communication</i>	25	25	25							
<i>Total</i>	95	95	95							

5. Project Outline

The proposal is made up of two related, but discrete parts. Depending on early findings of research, it may be possible to roll these into a single project.

Part 1 - Reviewing specific District Plan provisions for infill as part of outer residential review

Building on the district planning work already carried out in the inner residential areas of the city, changes to district plan rules will be considered to improve the quality and amenity of infill development in outer residential areas. The review will focus on:

- provisions for space around buildings (amenity and density)
- the multi-unit design guide
- the permitted baseline standards

It is important to note that Part 1 of this proposal is not about doing a complete overhaul of the residential rules (which cannot be done until part 2 of this proposal has been completed – see below) - this is about doing a focused review to address some of the key quality issues currently affecting infill development in outer residential areas.

Key Milestone

Reporting in August 2007 to SPC on drafting and research for the Proposed District Plan Change. Notification by December 2007.

Evaluation

This review is required to immediately address outstanding issues associated to amenity and character of residential infill development, particularly in the outer residential suburbs. These are now very high-profile issues politically and within the community. The chances of continued poor development (and associated public concern) are likely without this proposal.

Part 2 – Review of our strategic approach to managing infill development

Taking a longer term focus, the second part of the proposal will consider of the overall strategic approach to managing residential infill.

Based on robust research and analysis, this review will consider growth issues associated to residential infill development and either confirm or re-develop the existing ‘across the board’ policy on the location of infill. It will consider the residential rules more generally but will also consider other implementation methods such as compliance, advocacy and education. This work will also assess the benefits and costs of taking a more targeted approach to the location of residential infill development.

Areas for investigation will include:

- capacity for infill development and understanding supply of and demand for residential housing;
- understanding the positive and negative effects of residential infill;
- understanding social/community issues, sense of place issues and environmental quality issues; and
- the range and viability of different implementation methods.

Key Milestones

By August 2007 a decision to prepare a plan change will be made. Subject to a plan change being required, a Proposed District Plan Change for Part 2 will have been developed for notification by December 2007.

Evaluation

The current policy encourages infill to occur throughout residential areas. This policy has been in place for over 10 years without any review. Review of this policy is urgently required and timely given the level political and public concern over how we manage infill development. It is also required to confirm the role of infill development in the overall growth concept set out in the Urban Development Strategy.

6. Conclusion

Council has been aware for sometime now that we need to better manage residential infill development. This proposal recommends doing this by firstly reviewing specific provisions in the District Plan affecting the quality of infill, and secondly by assessing our overall strategic approach to the location of residential infill. Jointly, these two interrelated proposals will ensure that we address what has been identified as the highest priority in Council’s present business planning round. With this in mind, it is recommended that the proposals proceed.