Wellington City Council

Design Guide Rural

Contents

Introduction

Intent

The intent of the Rural Design Guide is to facilitate new residential developments and other buildings that are well-designed and contribute to a well-functioning rural environment.

The design outcomes and guidance points contained within this Design Guide set out how development can fulfil this intent.

Background

All new development in Wellington should contribute to a future of our city that honours our partnerships with mana whenua, and that is compact, inclusive and connected, greener, resilient, vibrant and prosperous. To achieve this, all new development in Wellington should respond to the natural environment, shape a well-functioning site, and deliver high-quality buildings.

Application of this Guide

This Rural Design Guide applies to residential developments and other buildings that require resource consent in the Rural Zone of the District Plan. ~~The Design Guides are a statutory part of the Wellington City District Plan.~~ The Council will use the Design Guides to assess resource consent applications for development.

Any new development should seek to respond to and enhance the existing natural, cultural and rural landscape. Most of Wellington's rural landscapes have been subject to varying degrees of human modification. Rural settings commonly offer a mix of managed and cultivated landscapes and wild natural areas.

Relevance

~~Only design guidelines that are relevant to the specific site, setting and/or development type should be applied. This design guide aims to support innovation and flexibility in approaches, while ensuring quality outcomes within Wellington's rural land.~~

Prioritisation

~~A rating system of one to three has been designed to indicate the relative priority of each guideline against the overarching principles
of each guide. However, the priority of each guideline should be confirmed with Council in pre-application discussions, as they are indicative only.~~

~~The ratings are described below:~~

- ~~Guidelines rated with three dots are considered essential and must be applied to all proposed development.~~
- ~~Guidelines rated with two dots will apply to most proposals; if a proposal does not meet a design guide rated 2, the applicant may be required to justify or revise the design.~~
- ~~Guidelines rated with one dot can support a proposal to meet the outcomes of the Design Guide. However, they may not apply to all developments.~~

~~The rating system is represented visually, using a corresponding number of dots to the number rating before each design guide text.~~

~~Coordination~~ Relationship with other ~~design~~ gGuides

~~Where development is proposed in a Heritage Area or involves a heritage building identified in Heritage Schedules of the District Plan, the Heritage Design Guide will also apply. As such, an applicant may find that multiple design guides should be used to inform and subsequently assess a development application. The design outcomes and overarching design principles are used consistently across all design guides to streamline consideration where more than one design guide applies.~~

The District Plan includes several other Design Guides that may also apply to new development. The applicability of these other Design Guides will depend on the activity being proposed, and whether the provisions of the District Plan provide for those Design Guides to apply to the activity.

The importance of existing context

As per the design outcomes and specific guidelines, every new residential development should consider and respond appropriately to its existing context. Applicants should consider and demonstrate how their development aligns with the area's context, community's aspiration for the future and any relevant Council documents.

~~Additional considerations~~

~~Alongside specific guidelines, best practice notes and alternative approaches are sometimes included *(italicised)*. These are intended to prompt consideration of design approaches or solutions that may be helpful in a given situation. Unlike the guidelines, these notes are non-statutory; their consideration is recommended to help achieve best practice design approaches and encourage quality built outcomes.~~

Structure of this Guide

This Design Guide is structured in three sections:
• Responding to the natural environment
• Well-functioning sites
• High quality buildings

Each section is structured around a series of related **design outcomes** followed by a series of **guidance points** that support development to achieve those outcomes.

Design outcomes are the outcomes that would be demonstrated by a well-designed, well-functioning urban environment.

Guidance points provide guidance on how development can be designed to achieve the design outcomes.

There are directive guidance points including terms such as "design", "provide", "locate", "Configure", "Create", "minimize" which are fundamental to achieving the design outcomes where it is expected that the matter is integrated into the design.

In addition, there are consideration guidance points including the word "consider" and "where possible". It is expected that an applicant will consider the matter and integrate this within the design where appropriate, and if not, supported by a rational reason for not doing so.

Advice notes provide advice and additional information to the guidance points.

Other requirements

This Design Guide does not address the range of other requirements that may apply to development, including those set out in the objectives, policies, rules and standards of the District Plan, other relevant RMA planning documents and regulations, relevant Council bylaws, or requirements under other Acts (such as the Building Act 2004).

How to use this Guide

Applicants should demonstrate how the proposal fulfils the intent of this Design Guide. The preparation of a **Design Statement** provides applicants with the opportunity to do this.

The Design Guides are intended to be applied in a manner that recognises the unique nature of individual proposals. Applicants need only apply those **design outcomes** and **guidance points** that are relevant to the proposal.

The Design Guides are also intended to promote design innovation. The Design Statement provides applicants with the opportunity to explain how a **design outcome** may have been addressed using an alternative approaches to those set out in the relevant **guidance points**.

Preparing a Design Statement

To assist with the efficient assessment of a proposal, applicants should include a **Design Statement** as part of their resource consent application. A Design Statement should include:

- A description of the site and its context
- A description of the proposal
- Description of which **design outcomes** and **guidance points** within the Design Guide are relevant to the proposal
- Explanation of how the proposal addresses each of the relevant **design outcomes** and **guidance points**
- Where relevant, explanation of any alternative approaches used to address a **design outcome**.

The Design Statement can include written and/or visual material, and should include a level of information that corresponds with the scale and significance of the proposal.

Outcomes

Responding to the natural environment

Land

- Environmental sustainability and resilience outcomes are enhanced by any new development.

- The natural environment is protected through new development that fits with the topography, landscape, waterways and ecosystems of its location and site.

- The unique qualities of the whenua are recognised and enhanced to promote a sense of place.

Water

- The mauri (including the health and quality) of waiora (water) is maintained or enhanced by any new development.

People

- Wellbeing, resilience and the enrichment of future generations are the key drivers of any new development.

Well-functioning sites

Movement and Access

- The development allows for safe and convenient cycle and pedestrian movement and access.

- Vehicle access and car parking do not dominate a person's experience of the streetscape or surrounding buildings.

- Improved walkability and permeability enhances the formal and informal pedestrian network.

- The development takes meaningful steps towards achieving carbon reduction.

The site

- The site layout reinforces its existing topography, landscape, micro-climate, neighbouring activities, and access to and within the site, including adjacent streets.

- Existing environmental infrastructure such as culverted streams are acknowledged or enhanced.

- Mana whenua sites of significance are acknowledged and celebrated.

Open spaces

- Open spaces are carefully designed and appropriately located to provide amenity and are accessible, safe and easily maintained.

Placing the building

- The buildings on the site are positioned to create building edges that support pedestrian activity and enhance the visual interest, legibility, safety and comfort of surrounding open spaces and adjoining sites.

High quality buildings

Sustainability
- The development process and built outcome takes meaningful steps towards achieving carbon reduction, waste reduction and energy efficiency.

Built form
- Buildings are well designed, safe and provide good amenity for inhabitants and utilise materials and details that will age well over time, irrespective of style.

Inclusivity
- Universal design is considered in all aspects of planning and development. Buildings are designed in such a way that all people, regardless of any disability, or stage in life, can access, use and enjoy them.

External Appearance
- The building's external appearance is composed coherently and, as a whole, is appropriate for its use and location.

The internal spaces
- Internal environments provide healthy, comfortable, convenient, functional and attractive places for their occupants.

Guidelines

Responding to the natural environment

Responding to whakapapa of place

The site's natural form, the history of its development, key environmental attributes and any significant cultural values associated with it play a significant role in successful design outcomes.

The landscape context contributes to a neighbourhood's unique sense of place and identity.

G1. ••• Prepare a contextual analysis that depicts how the development proposal positively contributes to the surrounding area. This should include an analysis of the following:

» Natural environment
» Cultural context
» Te Ao Māori
» Heritage context
» Movement
» Site analysis
» Opportunities and constraints

G2. ••• Identify and respond to the patterns and features within and surrounding the site. These can be defined by:

» Landform
» Local vegetation scale and type

G3. ••• Identify and respond to the natural and cultural landscape heritage within and surrounding the site, including but not limited to:

» Māori sites of significance and their traditional uses
» Identified view shafts to maunga and awa/moana of significance to mana whenua
» Native vegetation and planting
» Scheduled heritage places

G4. ••• Protect any features of geological interest such as terraces, escarpments, and rock outcrops.

Rating System	
•••	Guidelines rated with three dots are considered essential and must be applied to all proposed development.
••	Guidelines rated with two dots will apply to most proposals; if a proposal does not meet a design guide rated 2, the applicant may be required to justify or revise the design.
•	Guidelines rated with one dot can support a proposal to meet the outcomes of the Design Guide. However, they may not apply to all developments.

Vegetation and planting

G5. ▲▲▲ Use species and planting combinations characteristic of or indigenous to the local area.

G6. ▲▲▲ Retain significant trees and hedges when they are part of a defining pattern within the local landscape, such as a boundary shelter-belt.

G7. ▲▲▲ Encourage the natural regeneration of natives and plant natives.

G8. ▲▲ Maintain the continuity of existing patterns of native planting extending beyond the boundaries of the development site.

G9. ▲▲ Consider extending existing bush areas or groups of trees to provide a setting for new buildings and subdivisions to help to integrate new buildings into the landscape.

G10. ▲▲ Use planting around building sites to screen and soften structures and to create shelter and private space.

G11. ▲ Consider methods that eEnsure that planting adjacent to roads and access ways adds to the amenity value without creating safety hazards.

Ecology

G12. ▲▲▲ Retain and integrate mature trees and native vegetation that positively contributes to an area's visual amenity and ecological values.

G13. ▲▲ Landscaping should contribute to biodiversity and tree canopy area and minimise the loss of habitats ecosystems where possible. The use of the existing natural environment is an effective way of enhancing the ecosystem.

G14. ▲ Consider Llinking existing habitats and vegetation with additional planting.

G15. ▲ Consider opportunities to protect and enhance existing native bush and significant trees on-site.

Carbon reduction and energy efficiency

G16. ▲▲▲ Orient buildings to maximize solar access to improve energy efficiency.

G17. ▲ Consider cCreateing lots that have the potential to use renewable energy sources.

Designing with topography

A site-specific response to design that works with the land helps maintain visual amenity and an authentic sense of place.

G18. Minimize any earthworks disturbance to the natural ground form.

G19. Maintain general landform, minimize the need for large retaining structures and design any required earthworks and retaining walls as positive landscape features.

Consider piled footings on steep sites rather than slabs.

G20. Where retaining walls or large building support structures are necessary, visibility, formal composition and visual quality are important.

G21. Where buildings are located high above the ground level, tall retaining walls should be avoided. Preferred designs include landscaped slopes and low stepped retaining walls with landscaping.

G22. Locate buildings to minimize the visual impacts of any earthworks associated with access and building platforms.

G23. When changing the topography and landform of a site, mitigate the effects of stormwater runoff.

Designing with water

Designing to restore the mauri of our environment ensures our neighbourhoods are resilient for future generations and our city is a healthy place for nature as well as people.

Stormwater

G24. New development should improve the quality and reduce the quantity of stormwater runoff. This could be through:

» Minimizing impervious surfaces

» Capturing roof runoff in stormwater detention tanks for management

Water conservation

G25. Water conservation should be integrated into both landscape and building design.

This could be through:

» *Reducing demand on mains by recycling captured stormwater as greywater.*

» *Utilising plant and tree species that do not require regular irrigation.*

Water Ecology

G26. The quality and quantity of water associated with streams and natural wetlands should be unchanged by development.

G27. Streams, watercourses and natural wetlands should be maintained, and aquatic habitats and any associated native vegetation should be protected.

G28. Streams should not be piped and natural wetlands should not be disturbed.

Associated vegetation, including any new planting, may also enhance existing water features and habitats, add to the visual amenity of the neighbourhood, and assist with stormwater treatment and siltation management.

G29. Opportunities for regeneration of waterways and stream ecology should be pursued on sites where existing waterways exist either above or below ground.

Effective public-private interface

Locating the building

G30. ☘ Consider ~~Llocateing~~ buildings to constrain their visual impacts using one or more of the following methods:

» Keep buildings off prominent hills, spurs and ridges, especially where they are seen against the sky.

» Use existing vegetation to screen, shelter, and convey a sense of maturity.

» Locate buildings to use valleys and ridges to screen them from each other and the road.

» Group buildings together and maintain unobstructed openness on other parts of the site.

G31. ☘ When identifying house sites, consider their relationship with those on adjoining lots.

Privacy, screening and fencing

G32. ☘ Consider the location of planting where it can provide privacy screening to and from any additional buildings should further development occur in the future.

G33. ☘ Consider ~~Uusing~~ fences and other features at boundaries that are simple and extend characteristic rural patterns.

G34. ☘ Consider ~~Pp~~planning for enclosure and shelter to ensure privacy while maintaining long views out and the sense of rural open space.

Acoustic privacy

G35. ☘ Where acoustic privacy is likely to be of concern, consider:

» The use of topographical features, solid walls, ancillary buildings or a combination to provide acoustic screening. Such acoustic - barriers will be most effective close to the source or the receiver of noise.

» Locating and orientating outdoor spaces that is directly associated with dwellings' living areas and away from similar areas on adjoining sites.

» Creating acoustic enclosures around stationary mechanical equipment. In combination with the above measures, consider using intensive planting to screen the source of noise and create the impression of acoustic privacy.

Well-functioning sites

Shaping the lot

G36. ▲ Consider ~~Rr~~etaining the scale, pattern, and treatment of enclosure (created by trees, vegetation or building structures) or openness occurring within the surrounding rural landscape. Consider varying lot sizes to fit the existing scale and pattern of the enclosure.

Roads for new subdivisions

G37. ▲▲ Provide public roads through new subdivisions where important public amenities need to be linked.

Safety along roads

G38. ▲▲▲ Provide for safe walking, cycling and horse riding along the verges of any new roads that are created by providing unobstructed berms.

Accessways

G39. ▲▲▲ Ensure that new roads and access ways are consistent with the quality of the rural areas.

» Keep public roads and private accessways at a rural or farm scale.

» Discharge road runoff onto the open ground or into swales and, where possible, avoid kerb and channel, hardened surfaces, and pipes.

G40. ▲▲ Align roads and access ways to follow contours and respect landforms to avoid unnatural landscape patterns and to minimise earthworks and their visual impacts.

G41. ▲ Where possible, use shared access ways to reduce the negative visual effect of multiple driveways.

Waste collection

G42. ◢ Facilitate the efficient collection of waste and any potential negative impact of its collection on the rural landscape.

Services

G43. ◢ Where possible, place services underground.

High quality buildings

Architectural context

G44. ▬▬▬ Use visually recessive finishes and colours for buildings in prominent locations.

G45. ▬ ~~Where possible,~~ ~~M~~maintain the modest scale of rural buildings and ancillary structures.

Internal living spaces

Quality environments for residents ensure liveability, comfort and wellbeing.

G46. ▬▬▬ Orientate main living spaces and associated outdoor spaces to the sun and provide shelter from prevailing winds.

G47. ▬ Where possible, ensure ground level dwellings and all habitable rooms are designed for accessible and functional use.

   » Consider having the kitchen, a bathroom and a bedroom on the ground level.

   » Consider transition between rooms and the ability to turn and manoeuvre mobility devices.