



# Summary Guide

(District Plan Changes 72 and 73)

*Proposed changes to the residential area and suburban centre zones  
of Wellington's District Plan*

SEPTEMBER 2009

**Absolutely**

**POSITIVELY**

ME HEKE KI PŌNEKE  
WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

**Wellington**

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**Disclaimer:** This is a summary guide only and does not contain the details of all changes proposed to the District Plan. Copies of the proposed Plan Changes are available on request (see page 15).

# 1. Introduction

Wellington City Council has reviewed the planning rules that affect land zoned residential and suburban centre in the District Plan. These are the rules that determine where and how development can take place in most of Wellington’s urban area. The residential zone includes most of the city’s residential suburbs. The suburban centre zone includes town centres and local shops as well as traditional work areas where industrial activities occur.

This summary guide outlines the key issues and the changes we’re proposing. You can make a submission on the proposed District Plan Changes through the formal public consultation process under the Resource Management Act 1991 (see section 4.1). Copies of the Plan Changes are available from:

- Wellington City Council Service Centre, 101 Wakefield Street
- Wellington Central Library, 65 Victoria Street
- All suburban branch libraries
- [www.Wellington.govt.nz/plans/district/planchanges/changes](http://www.Wellington.govt.nz/plans/district/planchanges/changes)

Submissions on the proposed District Plan Changes close at 5pm Friday 27 November 2009.



RESIDENTIAL AREAS AND SUBURBAN CENTRES

# 2. Why is the Council doing this?

It is part of the Council’s 10-year rolling review of the District Plan – the city’s planning rulebook. The review has looked at whether the current policies and rules are working, what issues have emerged since the rules were drafted in the early 1990s, and the role different areas in the city should play in meeting population and economic growth over the next 10 or more years.

As a result of the review, the Council has prepared District Plan Change 72 (Residential Areas) and District Plan Change 73 (Centres and Business Areas).

The Council has carried out significant community consultation over the past three years on the key issues affecting the residential and commercial areas of the city. This included specific consultation on draft proposals from December 2008 to April 2009. The feedback received from the community has helped shape the proposed Plan Changes.



# 3. Issues and proposed changes

This section gives an overview of the main issues, and outlines the key changes proposed. Part 1 deals with residential areas and Part 2 deals with centres and business areas.

## PART 1 – RESIDENTIAL AREAS

### Introduction

Our residential suburbs are where most Wellingtonians live. In the past five years, Wellington’s population has increased by nearly 16,000 people and is showing no signs of slowing down. We are getting older too, with fewer people living in each home. All of these factors are pushing up demand for infill housing, townhouses and apartments.

While the city needs greater housing choice, poorly designed infill housing can affect suburban character and the qualities that make an area attractive to live in, such as access to sunlight, trees, safety, privacy. There is also concern that infill development and intensification are being allowed in areas that have limited access to public transport and other infrastructure.

The Council has made progress in responding to these issues. In May 2007, we improved the rules in the District Plan through Plan Change 56 to ensure that new multi-unit and infill developments fit better with the surrounding neighbourhood. We have also consulted on possible ‘areas of change’ – where medium-density housing will be actively encouraged and facilitated. This balanced strategy is essential to cater for growth.

The following proposals reflect these changes as well as setting out a range of new initiatives on issues like character and building quality.



## 3.1 Growth areas – ‘areas of change’

### Issues

In seeking to provide for growth and greater housing choice, the Council has spent the past three years researching, refining and consulting on possible areas for residential intensification. We call these ‘areas of change’.

The Council is proposing two ‘areas of change’ around Johnsonville and Kilbirnie town centres, but other areas of change may be considered in the future as part of the Council’s on-going review of infill housing.

Within these areas, the Council seeks the following results:

- medium-density housing
- high levels of amenity (ie sunlight, visual qualities, privacy, safety etc) for occupants of new housing
- high-quality development, both in terms of building design and street character
- variety in the form of housing (including variations in style, type, number of bedrooms, and scale of buildings)
- suitable levels of protection for existing neighbours.



MEDIUM DENSITY HOUSING



### Changes we propose

New 'areas of change' around Johnsonville and Kilbirnie town centres, identifying where medium-density housing will be encouraged (see maps below).

New provisions to promote high-quality medium-density housing:

- building heights to allow for three storeys (10 metres)
- 50% site coverage
- changes to open space requirements and requirements for boundary setbacks
- provision of suitable open space, either as shared or private space
- a minimum site dimension (a radius of 12m) for new housing in part of the Johnsonville area of change.

This will help to provide greater flexibility in how buildings are grouped and offering scope for different layouts. It will also reduce the number of driveways required, helping to ensure streets are not dominated by vehicle crossings and turning spaces.

A front yard requirement (generally 3 metres) to provide space for planting at the street edge.

New developments will be assessed against an improved residential design guide. This will allow the Council to consider the impact on the local streetscape and neighbouring properties but also the levels of amenity (sunlight, visual qualities, privacy and safety etc) provided for occupants.

## 3.2 Housing in other areas

### Issues

The District Plan focuses on maintaining a high-quality environment and reinforcing existing suburban character in the inner and outer residential areas.

It also provides for a limited degree of residential intensification, but in contrast to the areas of change, any new development in these areas must be of a type and scale that fits in with its surroundings and avoids impacts on neighbouring residential properties.

### Changes we propose

The conversion of houses built before July 2000 into two household units will be permitted in the inner residential areas without the need to provide off-street parking. This rule already applies in Newtown, Berhampore and Mt Cook. It provides increased flexibility to property owners and avoids some of the problems that off-street parking can bring to the character of the street.

New policy guidance on where limited townhouse and multi unit development may occur, including:

- when it may be suitable for infill housing or units to exceed 4.5 metres in height (or 6 metres on a sloping site)
- when it may be suitable to reduce or alter the open space requirements.

## 3.3 Urban design quality

### Issues

The quality of new buildings is largely controlled through the application of design guides. These are used by the Council's planners to assess resource consent applications.

The District Plan contains a variety of design guides that apply to different areas of the city:

- residential design guide (with appendices for Thorndon, Mt Victoria, Aro Valley, Newtown, Berhampore and Mt Cook)
- Thorndon character area design guide
- Mt Victoria North character area design guide
- Oriental Parade design guide.

### Changes we propose

Combining the existing design guides into a single document. Most of the content is contained within the main design guide, with smaller appendices for specific issues or areas. This removes repetition and will ensure all relevant guidelines can be considered in all locations.

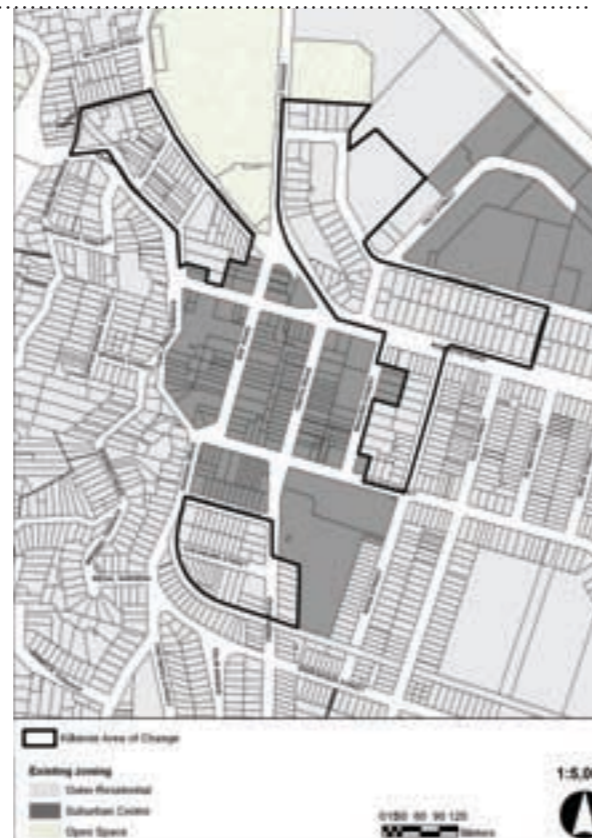
New guidelines for high-quality medium-density housing in areas of change.

A stronger focus on maintaining and enhancing amenity and character in the inner and outer residential areas.

New guidelines on when it may be suitable to vary the standards contained in the District Plan or to introduce a new building type in an established residential area.



JOHNSONVILLE AREA OF CHANGE



KILBIRNIE AREA OF CHANGE



DESIGN FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL HOUSING



INNOVATIVE DESIGN – ISLAND BAY

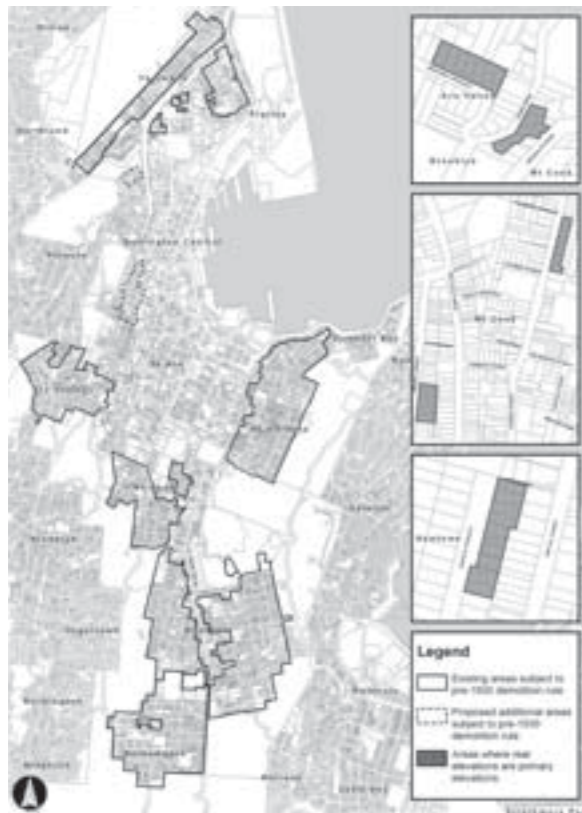
## 3.4 Protecting character – pre-1930 demolition rule

### Issues

Wellington's original inner suburbs, wedged between the CBD and the Town Belt, are increasingly recognised as an important feature of the city. Their high visibility and largely original stock of predominantly timber houses from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century help to define the city's unique character.

Existing District Plan controls focus on maintaining and enhancing the distinctive character of these suburbs as perceived from the street (ie townscape character).

A rule restricts the demolition of buildings built before 1930, but amendments over time have changed the rules that apply to different suburbs. The provisions that now apply to Newtown, Berhampore and Mt Cook are different to those applying to Thorndon and Mt Victoria.



EXISTING AND PROPOSED PRE-1930 DEMOLITION RULE

### Changes we propose

Pre-1930 demolition rules to be applied consistently across all areas.

The definition of 'demolition' to include the removal of architectural features on a building's primary frontage.

Two additional collections of buildings to be included where the primary elevation includes the rear elevation of the building. These areas are 27–39 Ohiro Road and 6–18 Maarama Crescent in Aro Valley.

A new rule that places a maximum height of 3 metres on new accessory buildings built between the street and an existing house.

Removal of the statement restricting the Council's ability to publicly notify an application for demolition in Thorndon and Mt Victoria.

Three additional areas where the pre-1930 demolition rule applies:

- 43–47 Patanga Crescent
- Easdale and Kinross Streets, including 82–102 Bolton Street
- buildings fronting The Terrace at its mid-northern sections, and areas to the east that adjoin.

## 3.5 Protecting coastal character

### Issues

In 2007, the Council commissioned a citywide character study to identify areas of the city that are sensitive to change. This study identified an important area along the city's harbour and coastal edges where the relationship between the existing houses, bush-covered slopes, the openness of the coast and the coastal road contribute significantly to the city's unique character.

The areas identified are all within the outer residential area and include parts of Owhiro Bay, Island Bay, Houghton Bay, Lyall Bay, Moa Point, Breaker Bay, Worsler Bay, Karaka Bay and Evans Bay. They have been collectively termed the 'residential coastal edge'.



THE RESIDENTIAL COASTAL EDGE



KARAKA BAY



HOUSING IN THE COASTAL EDGE

### Changes we propose

A new appendix in the design guide that provides additional guidance for unit and infill development within the residential coastal edge.

Buildings and structures generally limited to the area below the 13-metre contour (measured above mean sea level).

New policies to guide unit development and to ensure new buildings respect existing patterns of development.

A reduction in the width of vehicle accessways to protect the strongly-defined building edges.

New controls on fences at the street edge and on middle and upper slopes of the coastal escarpment.

New controls for accessory buildings on road reserve to avoid unsightly excavations, retaining walls and other structures.

## 3.6 Managing other activities

### Issues

Our residential areas accommodate a variety of other activities. These provide facilities, services and work opportunities for local residents.

### Changes we propose

New policy guidance for managing early childhood centres to ensure the effects on surrounding properties are considered.

New policy guidance for managing temporary activities, recognising that these activities are infrequent and of limited duration.



## PART 2 – SUBURBAN CENTRES

### Introduction

Wellington has a well-established network of centres, each with different roles and functions, reflecting their location, population catchment and historical development.

The city has a relatively even distribution of larger town centres supported by over 30 district and neighbourhood centres. There are also a diverse range of industrial areas, which are essential to the economy of the city.

Monitoring and research undertaken by the Council over the past three years has revealed that better management is needed to ensure these areas fulfil their environmental, economic, social and cultural roles within the city.

## 3.7 Managing growth and strengthening centres

### Issues

Much of the future growth of the city, both for living and working, will focus in and around our key centres.

The Centres Policy adopted by the Council in August 2008 provides guidance on how to best manage growth and change in our centres and business areas. It does so by describing the most suitable role and function of each centre and guides activities to appropriate locations to ensure they are managed in the most sustainable way.

Future growth also has to be aligned with the Council's policy for housing growth. In October 2008 the Council agreed to promote the intensification of jobs and housing in and around Johnsonville town centre, the central city, Adelaide Road and Kilbirnie town centre.

The proposed plan change reflects the intent of these recent Council policies.



KILBIRNIE SUB-REGIONAL CENTRE



KHANDALLAH DISTRICT CENTRE



ISLAND BAY DISTRICT CENTRE

### Changes we propose

The existing suburban centres zone will be split into two separate zones:

- Centres – which include our town centres and local neighbourhood shops and services
- Business areas – including business 1 areas made up of mixed-use activities including shops, service and employment activities; and business 2 areas which are predominantly industrial in nature.

The two new zones will help strengthen our town centres and enable them to continue to provide accessible local shops and services; as well as to protect our long-term supply of industrial land (see 3.8).

Most activities will be permitted, but there will be some controls on particular types of retail activity outside of centres (see 3.9).

Additional building height to enable redevelopment and intensification in some centres (Johnsonville and Adelaide Road) (see 3.12).

Better management of transport impacts of development (see 3.13).

## 3.8 Maintaining business and industrial land

### Issues

The District Plan has very few controls on the types of activities that can take place in the suburban centres zone.

While this approach has enabled such places to adapt to changing market conditions, it has also meant that residential and retail activities have crept into areas previously dominated by industrial uses. In the longer term, this will make it difficult for industrial activities and businesses to find land and premises within the city boundaries, as land values and rents rise.

In addition, industrial activities are affected by 'reverse sensitivity'. This arises when new neighbours complain about the effects, for example noise or smell, of existing activities in an area.



INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS, GRENADA NORTH

### Changes we propose

Rezoning traditional industrial areas as business 2 areas and discouraging some types of retail and residential activities.

Noise standards to be relaxed in business 2 areas to encourage industrial uses (except where they adjoin a residential zone).

Only apply urban design controls where large buildings are next to houses or visible from the state highway.

## 3.9 Managing retail

### Issues

Changes in the retail market have led to 'big-box' retail and retail parks opening up outside established centres. Unmanaged, these retail developments have the potential to undermine the viability of existing centres. Large retail developments can also generate large amounts of traffic.



SUPERMARKET IN MIRAMAR TOWN CENTRE

### Changes we propose

New policies to control large retail developments outside of centres to protect the viability and vitality of the existing centres.

New definitions relating to retail activities to be introduced.

Resource consent required for very large retail developments and larger supermarkets outside of centres to assess their impacts.

Extremely large retail developments within centres will also require resource consent to assess their impacts.

## 3.10 Urban design quality

### Issues

Poor-quality buildings and public spaces are evident in a number of our centres. In some cases this has resulted from low-quality buildings, too much signage, and streets and spaces dominated by vehicles.



KARORI LIBRARY

### Changes we propose

A new building design guide for development in both centres and business areas to improve the quality of development.

Design assessment for all new buildings in centres.

Design assessment for new buildings in business 1 areas that are over 500m<sup>2</sup>.

Design assessment for large buildings over 4000m<sup>2</sup> in business 2 areas where they are next to a state highway or a residential area.

## 3.11 Active street edges

### Issues

Encouraging activity at ground-floor street level is a key component of successful centres because this is where public and private spaces meet.

Active edges can typically include the entrances to buildings, display windows, architectural features, shelter from the weather or the sun, and activities that spill out from buildings into the streets, such as cafés.

The District Plan has some provisions for verandahs, display windows and vehicle access in some areas, however monitoring has found that these do not always achieve good results and should be strengthened.

### Changes we propose

New planning maps showing which street frontages in centres require special attention.

New provisions to ensure that:

- no residential activities are created at ground-floor level along these frontages
- no vacant space or parking areas are created at street level along main street fronts
- improved design guidance and rules to avoid expansive, blank walls.



ACTIVE STREET EDGE IN THORNDON

## 3.12 Building standards

### Issues

Centres, by their nature, have a wider mix of uses than other zones like residential areas.

While this mix of uses is necessary, the effects of mixed-use activities on neighbouring properties needs careful management. Our monitoring identified several issues that require better management, including noise, temporary activities, building height, wind, signs and zone interfaces with residential areas.



KHANDALLAH DISTRICT CENTRE

### Changes we propose

New acoustic insulation requirements for new residential development in centres and business 1 areas.

New provisions for temporary activities to recognise that these activities are infrequent in nature and of limited duration.

Building height limits to be lowered from 12m to 9m in neighbourhood centres.

Building heights to be increased in areas identified for urban intensification:

- Johnsonville centre 12m to 18m
- Mt Cook centre (Adelaide Road) 12m to 18m.

New policies for buildings that exceed permitted building heights (12–18m) to manage the wind effects.

Amended provisions for signs to reduce the size and number that can be displayed.

## 3.13 Traffic and parking

### Issues

There are currently few controls on parking in our centres.

Monitoring has identified that:

- many of the older, smaller centres such as Thorndon and Kelburn rely heavily on kerbside parking, and have limited capacity for additional parking, servicing and loading
- centres that provide centralised parking such as Johnsonville, Ngaio and Marsden Village (or that have an abundance of kerbside parking such as Khandallah) seem to perform better than those without such parking available
- some centres, such as Brooklyn and Northland, have higher pressure in the evenings due to the nature of the activities in those centres
- some centres such as Johnsonville and employment areas such as Miramar North, are facing increased pressure from commuter and employment parking, resulting in less availability of kerbside parking and overspill of parking to surrounding residential streets
- the layout and ad-hoc nature of parking has resulted in poor results for some centres such as Kilbirnie.

Dealing with these issues is complex and related to a wide range of factors. These include how we enforce on-street parking time limits, the extent of residential and coupon parking zones, and rules in the District Plan.

### Changes we propose

Resource consents required for any activity with more than 70 carparks (reduced from 120).

In business 1 areas, any new building over 500m<sup>2</sup> will be assessed for the adequacy of on-site carparking.

Servicing/loading standards to be removed for smaller neighbourhood centres in recognition that the standards cannot be practically provided in most situations.



PARKING IN KILBIRNIE



## 3.14 Changes to zone boundaries

### Issues

There are numerous examples throughout Wellington of commercial services, industrial workshops and retail activities on land zoned for residential purposes. Some of these activities, particularly those on the edge of centres, are proposed to be commercially rezoned to better reflect the current land uses and to encourage their retention.

Likewise, there are some examples of residential properties that have a commercial zoning. It is proposed to rezone these properties to residential to reflect their residential nature and relationship with the surroundings.

### Changes we propose

The following clusters of commercial buildings to be rezoned from residential area to centres (neighbourhood centre):

- Broadway, Strathmore
- corner of Constable and Owen streets, Newtown
- Crofton Road, Ngaio
- Darlington Road, Miramar
- Mersey Street, Island Bay
- Newlands Road
- corner of Onepu Road and Wha Street, Lyall Bay
- Roseneath shops
- Shorland Park shops, Island Bay
- Standen Street shops, Karori
- Tringham Street, Karori
- corner of Rintoul and Luxford streets, Berhampore.

The following residential buildings to be rezoned from suburban centre to residential area:

- Palm Grove apartments, Berhampore
- 37, 39 Waitoa Road, Hataitai
- 2–20 South Karori Road and 1–5B Allington Road, Karori
- 35 Ganges Rd, Khandallah
- 8–16 Tahi Street and 1–32 Macalister Street, Miramar (residential units)
- 6 Brussels Street and 3 Byron Street, Miramar (residential units)
- 118–154 Burma Road (Malvina Major retirement village)
- rear of 300–302 Tinakori Road.

In addition, it is proposed to rezone some properties around the Karori town centre from residential to centres to enable future expansion of the town centre.

Further detail of the proposed rezonings, including maps, are available on the Council's website or by contacting the City Planning team at Wellington City Council on 499 4444.

## 4. Further information

### 4.1 Where can you get more information and make a submission?

You can obtain more information about the proposed District Plan Changes and how to make a submission from:

- Wellington City Council Service Centre, 101 Wakefield Street
- Wellington Central Library, 65 Victoria Street
- All suburban branch libraries
- Our website: [www.Wellington.govt.nz/plans/district/planchanges/changes](http://www.Wellington.govt.nz/plans/district/planchanges/changes)

Anyone may make a submission on these proposals by sending a written submission to the Council using one of the options outlined below:

- **Post to:** City Planning Team, Wellington City Council, PO Box 2199, Wellington
- **Deliver to:** Ground floor reception, Council offices, 101 Wakefield Street
- **Email to:** [district.plan@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:district.plan@wcc.govt.nz)

The submission must be on form 5 of the Resource Management (Forms, Fees and Procedure) Regulations 2003, or similar, and must state whether or not you wish to present your views at a Council hearing. Copies of this form are available from the above locations or will be mailed to you upon request.

**Submissions on proposed District Plan Changes 72 and 73 close at 5pm Friday 27 November 2009.**

If you would like to speak to someone about the proposed Plan Changes, contact one of the following people in the City Planning team:

#### PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN CHANGE 72 (RESIDENTIAL AREAS)

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#### PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN CHANGE 73 (CENTRES AND BUSINESS AREAS)

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### 4.2 What happens next?

We will summarise the submissions received on the proposed Plan Changes, which will go on our website at [www.Wellington.govt.nz](http://www.Wellington.govt.nz). Further submissions will then be advertised, with a Council hearing to be held in early 2010.

If you need any further information, call the City Planning Helpline on 04 499 4444 or email [district.plan@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:district.plan@wcc.govt.nz)



