



Global Research
Turning **Information** Into **Insight**

Wellington City Spatial Plan

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Prepared by Global Research Ltd
For

Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council
Me Heke Ki Pōneke

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Executive Summary

Background

- The Draft Spatial Plan – produced as a blueprint with the aim of ‘ensuring a compact, resilient, vibrant and prosperous, inclusive and connected, and greener Wellington’ – was made available to the public for feedback from 10th August until 5th October 2020.
- This report presents community feedback gathered from 2,897 respondents, via Wellington City Council's online survey, paper versions of the same, and from individuals and organisations who prepared submissions in their own formats.
 - > 2,049 surveys were completed
 - > 848 in their own formats
- In order to accommodate an anticipated 80,000 new residents over the next 30 years, the Draft Spatial Plan proposes changes specific to the following areas:
 - > Central City
 - > Inner Suburbs
 - > Outer Suburbs
 - > Opportunity Sites
 - > Natural & Open Space
- All comments and answers provided by the 2,897 respondents have been analysed and included. The proportions of the 2,049 survey respondents who agreed/disagreed with 22 agreement/disagreement or yes/no statements presented in survey questions have been analysed and presented as percentages. Every written comment (online/paper survey and email) received has been individually read and grouped with other similar comments in order to synthesise the content and weight of points made on particular topics. This analysis is presented in the body of this report.

Key findings

Below are the key findings uncovered through the analysis of respondent feedback:

Quality of life desired by Wellington residents

- The overarching message that came through in the feedback was that Wellingtonians want a vibrant, liveable city. Wellington has a unique character that is formed by its built and natural environment as well as its vibrant, diverse population. In many ways, respondents feel that Wellingtonians are afforded a good quality of life, and comments identified what they felt was the best way to plan for a future that would retain this quality.
- In the Draft Spatial Plan, respondents were presented with how the city and dwellings would be built, and they predominantly responded with how this would affect them in their own lives. Respondents liked the values and overall Vision of the Plan, but did not always agree that the proposed Plan was the right way to achieve them. The comments made by respondents attempted to connect the proposed changes with the values of the Plan, by discussing the outcomes they anticipated from the Plan as it stands, whether positive or negative.
- The overall sentiment from respondents was that a city is not just a collection of houses and buildings. The public realm is a vital part of what makes a city liveable, and therefore the public realm also needs to be considered in this Spatial Plan. The importance of access to public spaces, services and amenities was particularly highlighted during the COVID-19 restrictions, which helped to reveal the things that people truly appreciate in their city.

Proposed intensification and zoning changes

- Intensification was the most commonly discussed topic. There was a reasonably even split between those who were in favour of intensification, and those who opposed it. Those who were in favour of intensification wanted to ensure that Wellington is prepared for future growth and that positive outcomes are realised. These respondents wrote about the benefits that would result from intensification, which included more affordable housing, better proximity to amenities, higher quality housing, and a more compact city that would increase vibrancy.
- Those who opposed intensification objected based on the things that they felt would be lost. In particular, respondents feared losing the character of established suburbs, which some consider are an iconic aspect of Wellington. These comments tended to focus on whole areas or suburbs, particularly the inner suburbs, and noted the value of character homes for the wider community who enjoy them from the street, as well as those fortunate enough to live in them.
- Respondents preferred intensifying places that would be enhanced by the change, such as commercial and industrial sites, unused buildings, and car yards. This was seen as a way to avoid the loss of certain elements that respondents currently value about their city.
- There was a preference for intensification to be carried out in areas that were close to transport routes, or in existing commercial centres – to ensure that these places were well connected and well serviced.
- There was an overall preference for intensification in inner suburbs as opposed to outer suburbs, as people felt this would do more to enhance the vibrancy of the city.

Protection of Wellington's character

- Character was the main feature respondents were afraid of losing as a result of change. Many people believed that Wellington's character is what makes the city special, and felt the proposed changes in the Plan risk changing the character of the city forever.
- In particular, respondents wanted to see the city's iconic character homes protected in pockets across the city, especially in the inner suburbs, often placing value on the coherent character look they create as a collective rather than focusing on protecting individual houses.
- Respondents valued the fact that low-rise character housing allows access to sunlight and views, and do not create wind tunnels in the way that taller buildings do. Respondents wanted more case-by-case decisions on which areas could be developed, and how development can take place in particular places.
- Respondents also made the point that though buildings may have heritage value, this does not necessarily translate to value for the community at large. Cold, damp, and unhealthy homes should not be protected at the cost of creating more high quality, affordable housing for those currently living in sub-standard housing.
- Overall, there were two distinct opinions expressed on this topic. These two camps either placed strong value on heritage/character protection to retain Wellington's special identity, or prioritised quality, affordable homes to encourage diversity – both architectural and human – over character protection.

The need for adequate infrastructure

- Respondents were doubtful that existing infrastructure would be able to handle the projected growth, and therefore argued for infrastructure upgrades to be carried out prior to intensification.
- Most frequently mentioned were three waters infrastructure, and transport infrastructure. Both of these were seen to be struggling to cope with existing demand, leading to issues with water management, sewerage, traffic congestion, and parking problems.
- People also saw opportunities in leveraging existing infrastructure, and suggested intensifying around existing amenities and where transport routes are planned.
- There were different perspectives on what people value in a home. Some were protective of the character of their suburb. Others simply wanted an affordable, warm, dry, and healthy home.
- The prioritisation of affordable housing was a key aspiration, with increasing housing supply seen as a way to achieve this. There was skepticism that high-rise apartments would be affordable to most people. A desire was expressed for housing to consist of a broad range of typologies, and cater for a broad range of demographics and life-stages. There were also specific calls for more social housing.

The value of Wellington's natural environment

- Parks, green spaces, waterways, and biodiversity were mentioned by respondents who valued Wellington's natural environment. Respondents wanted the Plan to include provision of more green and open spaces for residents, particularly as the city densifies. Calls were also made for WCC to incorporate more wildlife and biodiversity protection and enhancement into the Plan.
- Respondents appreciated the provisions put in the plan around climate change and sustainability. Others wanted to see proactive measures included in the Plan to reduce Wellington's carbon footprint, as well as more robust planning for sea-level rise, earthquake hazards, and any other natural disasters.

Comments about the engagement approach

- Nealy 3,000 people contributed to this engagement, with over 20,000 ideas included within this report.
- People have clearly shown through the effort they have made to contribute that they are interested in influencing the future of their city.
- Respondents want as much high quality and up-to-date information as possible to base their opinions on. For example, the projected population growth figures were frequently questioned, especially given that the Plan was written before the COVID-19 pandemic.
- People want a simple, cohesive engagement interface that is accessible and easy to understand, and they do not want to be constrained by the format of the engagement process, or the questions asked.
- Some respondents want to be involved on a more granular basis, and be consulted specifically on what is best for their community, rather than the city as a whole.
- People wanted the Plan to be considered in the context of key regional plans, the strategies and plans of neighbouring city councils, as well as other existing processes and plans such as *Let's Get Wellington Moving*.
- Respondents want to see the Plan implemented in a staged approach to allow for reviews and changes should the city's situation changes over time.
- A Eurocentric view of heritage was challenged in a small number of comments, which noted that the council should work in partnership with Mana Whenua.

Summary of agreement and disagreement with what is proposed and written responses

Respondents were asked to share the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements throughout the survey. Results from these questions are summarised below:

Agreement with intensification proposals in different parts of the city:

- > Intensification of the Central City was **agreed with by 57%** of respondents and disagreed with by 32% of respondents
- > Intensification of the Inner Suburbs was **agreed with by 45%** of respondents and disagreed with by 46% of respondents
- > Intensification of the Outer Suburbs was **agreed with by 44%** of respondents and disagreed with by 41% of respondents
- > The approach to distribution of intensification City-Wide was **agreed with by 41%** of respondents and disagreed with by 50% of respondents

COMMENTS: If disagreed with the approach to distribution, where additional 80,000 people over the next 30 years could be located:

- > Redevelop commercial, industrial, and underused areas
- > Development of greenfield sights across Greater Wellington Region and in regional hubs/satellite cities
- > Inner-city/CBD development; Inner suburb development; Outer suburb development; Northern outer suburb development; Western outer suburb development; Eastern outer suburb development; Southern outer suburbs
- > Infill housing and subdivisions

Agreement with how WCC has balanced special character protection and the need for new housing in inner suburbs:

- > How WCC has balanced protecting special character and providing new housing in inner suburbs was **agreed with by 34%** of respondents and disagreed with by 49% of respondents

COMMENTS: What is special about the character of the inner suburbs:

- > Support for character protection
- > Natural features of character homes
- > Architectural details and aesthetics
- > 'Wellington's character'
- > Character being about community
- > Character from more than a European architectural perspective
- > Non-character rejection
- > Planning regulations
- > Topics discussed not directly describing character values

Amenities sought to enhance suburban centres and rapid transit stops:

The top four amenities respondents wanted in order to create vibrant suburban centres were:

- > Access to public transport (80%)
- > Proximity to parks and open space (65%)
- > Commercial activity (retail, café, local businesses) (60%)
- > Infrastructure (stormwater, water supply, wastewater) (57%)

COMMENTS: Other amenities respondents identified:

- > Built and natural environments
- > Development sequencing
- > Preservation of sense of place
- > Transport considerations
- > Community safety
- > Adequate facility provision
- > Inclusive design principles

The top four amenities respondents wanted to see around future mass rapid transit stops:

- > Community facilities (libraries, community spaces, social services, etc.) (66%)
- > Cafés and restaurants (64%)
- > Shops and businesses (57%)
- > Landscaped spaces/plantings (48%)

COMMENTS: Other amenities respondents identified:

- > Parking facilities
- > Nodal transport hubs
- > Clustered housing
- > Opposition to future mass rapid transit stops

Agreement Our City Tomorrow aligns with the five goals for Wellington to be compact, resilient, inclusive and connected, vibrant and prosperous, and greener:

- > Our City Tomorrow aligns with the five goals for Wellington to be compact, resilient, inclusive and connected, vibrant and prosperous, and greener **agreed with by 48%** of respondents and disagreed with by 34% of respondents

COMMENTS: Beneficial spaces/amenities/facilities in neighbourhoods during different COVID-19 levels:

- > A variety of natural spaces
- > Outdoor amenities
- > Local retail and hospitality
- > Transport or movement
- > Homes, specifically private outdoor and indoor space
- > Community spaces
- > Reliable infrastructure

COMMENTS: Amenities/facilities missing or in need of improvement during different COVID-19 levels:

- > Nothing was missing
- > Transport concerns
- > Community spaces, facilities, and services
- > Parks, open spaces, and green spaces
- > Retail and commercial outlets
- > City and suburb

Overall thoughts on the Plan:

COMMENTS: What was liked about the Draft Spatial Plan:

- > Increased housing density and intensification
- > Character protection
- > Increased housing affordability
- > Transport and connectivity
- > Infrastructure upgrades
- > Climate change and sustainability
- > Natural environment protection and expansion
- > People and community

COMMENTS: What respondents would change or improve:

- > Intensification approach
- > Character area changes
- > The Plan in context
- > Transport and connectivity
- > Plan implementation
- > Building height changes
- > Housing aspirations
- > Infrastructure's ability to cope with current demand
- > Public green and outdoor space
- > Hazards and resilience
- > Sustainability and the environment

COMMENTS: What else needs to be considered as we plan for the future – that is not provided for in Our City Tomorrow:

- > Transport
- > Housing and built area aesthetics
- > The Spatial Plan
- > Infrastructure
- > Development and design
- > Futureproofing, sustainability and climate change

- > People, population and communities
- > Green, public and open spaces
- > Ways of living

Agreement with inner suburb proposals:

- > The refined approach to the pre-1930 character areas offers a good balance between protecting special character and providing new housing in these areas, **agreed with by 33%** of respondents and disagreed with by 48% of respondents
- > The existing pre-1930 character demolition controls should be targeted to sub-areas within the inner suburbs that are substantially intact and consistent, **agreed with by 42%** of respondents and disagreed with by 36% of respondents
- > The pre-1930 character demolition controls should be removed in areas that are no longer substantially intact and consistent or where character has been compromised, **agreed with by 42%** of respondents and disagreed with by 39% of respondents
- > There should be continued emphasis on streetscape character in areas outside proposed sub-areas through the retention of a general character area, ensuring new development that respects local streetscape and is well-designed, **agreed with by 73%** of respondents and disagreed with by 12% of respondents
- > The refined approach to the pre-1930 character areas retains controls on demolition in the right locations and where streetscape character is substantially intact, **agreed with by 35%** of respondents and disagreed with by 36% of respondents
- > There is a good mix of housing types and heights that is suitable for the area given the city's projected population growth and the need for more housing choice, **agreed with by 39%** of respondents and disagreed with by 45% of respondents

Upper Stebbings Valley topics:

- > Developing the area between Churton Park and Tawa to create a new neighbourhood supports our goals of making Wellington a compact, resilient, vibrant and prosperous, inclusive and connected, and greener city, **agreed with by 62%** of respondents and disagreed with by 9% of respondents
- > Connecting a future community in Upper Stebbings and Glenside with Takapu train station and the shops and services in Tawa would support public transport usage and access to economic opportunities, **agreed with by 68%** of respondents and disagreed with by 5% of respondents

Lincolnshire Farm Structure Plan topic:

- > The Lincolnshire Farm Structure Plan should be reviewed to allow for a mix of housing types and to accommodate more dense housing options (such as – townhouses and low-rise apartments could be built in this area), **agreed with by 57%** of respondents and disagreed with by 5% of respondents

Appetite for community planning processes in Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula and Strathmore Park

Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula: Framework could cover matters such as how to maximise the benefits of living in, working in, and visiting the area, investment in social and affordable housing aligned with public transport and greenspace, and how to ensure better connections to the City particularly with the future mass rapid transit route, **supported (yes) by 55%** of respondents and opposed (no) by 6% of respondents (39% not sure).

COMMENTS: What the Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula framework should focus on or cover:

- > Housing
- > Transport and accessibility issues
- > Open spaces, public spaces, and green spaces
- > The diversity and culture of the people and community
- > Future-proofing the environment in the face of climate change and natural hazards
- > Māori and iwi input
- > Facilities, services, and amenities
- > Development
- > More public participation

Strathmore Park: This could be to develop a plan for regenerating this suburb, which could include developing new modern or upgraded state housing with better public transport connections to the rest of the City, along with a range of other initiatives that could benefit the wider area including the neighbourhood centre, **supported (yes) by 54%** of respondents and opposed (no) by 5% of respondents (40% not sure).

COMMENTS: What the Strathmore Park framework should focus on or cover:

- > Housing
- > Transport and accessibility issues
- > The involvement of the local community and tangata whenua
- > Open, public, and green spaces
- > Facilities, services, and amenities
- > Future-proofing the environment
- > Development
- > Value of public participation

Natural environment protection

- > WCC proposed approach to protecting the natural environment and investment in parks and open spaces, **agreed with by 69%** of respondents and disagreed with by 11% of respondents.

Assistance to landowners

- > Council should offer assistance to landowners to help them protect their Backyard Tāonga (the natural environment) on their private property, **supported (yes) by 64%** of respondents and opposed (no) by 15% of respondents (21% not sure).
- > Types of assistance would help landowners: Advice and guidance (44%), Weed and pest control (27%), Planting (17%), Financial assistance (11%), Provide Advice on protecting natural biodiversity and combatting pests (respondents suggested) (1%)

COMMENTS: What 'other' assistance would help landowners:

- > All of the above
- > Other suggestions
- > Concerns
- > Outside scope

Other comments

COMMENTS: Final comments from submitters:

- > Comments and criticisms about the consultation process
- > Proposed height increases
- > Housing
- > Development and building processes
- > Infrastructure
- > The Spatial Plan
- > Transport
- > Parks, green spaces, waterways, and biodiversity
- > Resilience and futureproofing

Project overview

Project background

[Our City Tomorrow - A Draft Spatial Plan for Wellington City](#) is a key part of the Council's Planning for Growth programme of work. Planning for Growth is a key Council 10-Year Plan initiative that focusses on bringing the things people value about Wellington into a wider conversation about how future growth of the city is planned for.

Central to the Planning for Growth work programme is the development of a Spatial Plan for Wellington City. The Draft Spatial Plan is a response to expected population growth of 50,000 – 80,000 more people in Wellington City over the next 30 years and will play an instrumental role in shaping how the city looks and feels in future.

Work on developing the plan commenced in 2017 when Council started a conversation with Wellingtonians about the future of the city. Building on this, in 2019 Council engaged with the community on four possible future growth scenarios for the city. This work and the community feedback received were then used to inform the development of the Draft Spatial Plan.

The Draft Spatial Plan was consulted on from 10 August 2020 through to early October 2020. This report presents community feedback gathered from 2,897 respondents, via the Council's online survey, paper versions of the same, and from individuals and organisations who prepared submissions in their own formats.

The final Spatial Plan will feed into the review of the current [District Plan](#) and will help inform a range of other policies and projects, including the Council's Long Term Plan and future investment made in the city.

Analysis

Quantitative analysis

The percentage of respondents who answered the agree/disagree and yes/no questions for each scenario was calculated, presented in charts, and interpreted. The results are presented in relevant sections throughout the report.

Qualitative analysis

Qualitative analysis of the thirteen free-text written responses was undertaken by Global Research analysts.

All comments were read and organised (coded) into themes and topics, assisted by NVivo software. The themes and topics were derived from the responses themselves, while being focused on answering the questions asked in the public engagement material. This iterative process meant that all responses were read and analysed, and that prevalent topics became apparent as the coding process was completed. The themes and topics were then synthesised into the discussions that were presented in relevant sections throughout this report.

Report structure

This report commences with an Executive Summary presenting a summary of the opinions expressed by the community, including statistical results and a summary of written responses.

The report replicates the order of the questions asked in the engagement material.

Throughout the report the total number of comments on particular themes has been stated in each heading, for example “5,356 comments”. The total number of comments made on particular topics are included in brackets next to topic titles. Within the discussion, the number of points made on particular sub-topics has been consistently represented by the amounts described below:

- > A very large number: 150+ comments
- > A large number: 100 – 149 comments
- > A sizeable number: 75 – 99 comments
- > A substantial number: 50 – 74 comments
- > A considerable number: 25 – 49 comments
- > A moderate number: 15 – 24 comments
- > Several comments: 8 – 14 comments
- > A small number: 4 – 7 comments
- > A few: 3 comments
- > A couple: 2 comments

The following descriptions were also used to describe the number of points made: one quarter, one third, half, two thirds, three quarters, and, all of the comments. Note that the amounts of comments made have been included to make it possible to understand the relative level of interest shown by respondents in particular topics, and shouldn't be interpreted that one topic is more important than another. Also note, the 'coding' of comments involves analysts making thousands of judgements on what topics individual points should be coded to; the amounts would change slightly if different interpretations were made. For this reason, the numbers should be considered as good indications of the weight of different opinions on topics, and not an absolute number. This is the nature of all qualitative analysis of this type.

Direct quotes from respondents are presented throughout the report to illustrate particular points made. Quotes are italicised and indented from the margin. Spelling mistakes and grammar are only corrected where meaning would otherwise be unclear.

Within the body of the report there is repetition of statements similar to this, “Note that 355 comments on this topic were generated from the ‘A City for People’ website where respondents selected that they *‘support focusing development along future mass rapid transit routes and agree that strong amenity value must be developed alongside.’*” These responses were generated from the City for People website. The over 350 respondents who submitted them selected from a list of statements that were automatically collated and presented as that respondents comment on the draft plan.

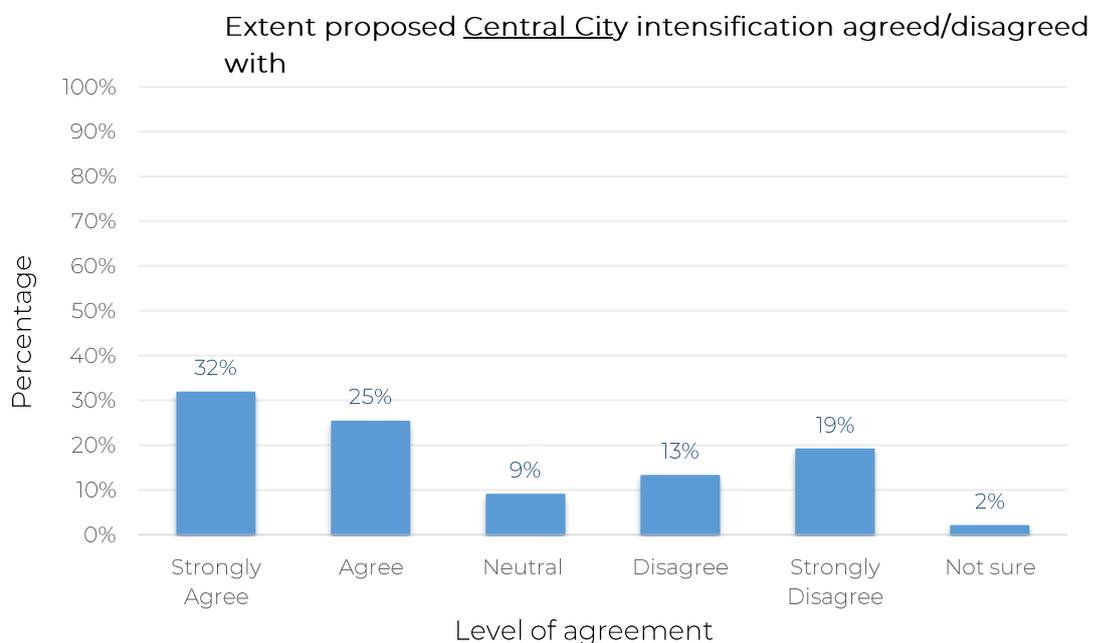
Responses to engagement questions

The sections that follow present the results for quantitative questions summarised in charts, and synthesised discussions of the written comments received in response to open-ended questions.

Agreement with intensification proposals

Extent to which respondents agreed/disagreed with central city intensification proposal

Respondents were asked: To what extent do you agree or disagree with what is proposed regarding intensification in the central city?



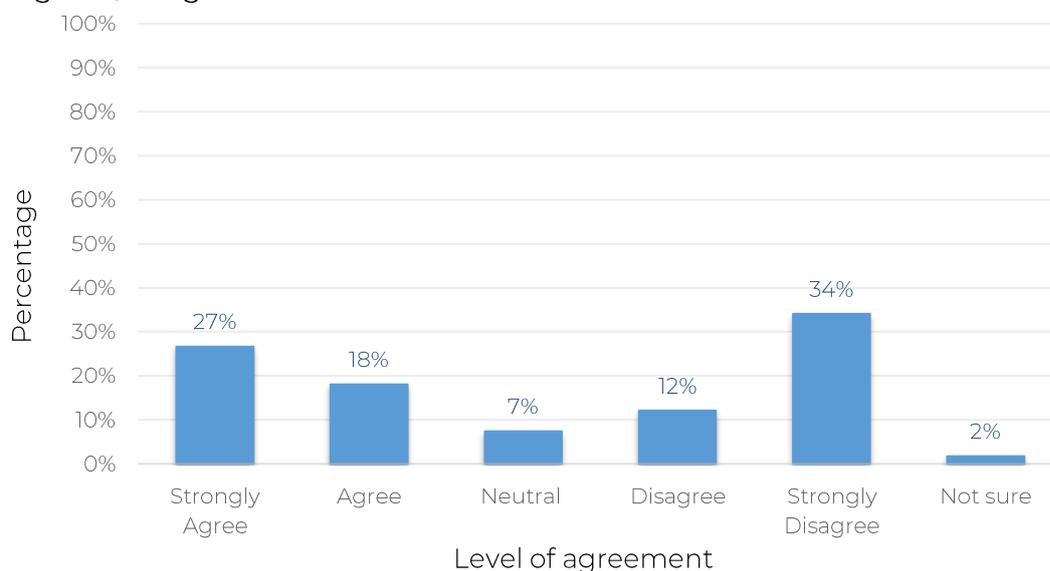
Key findings:

- > 2,046 respondents answered this question
- > A majority (57%) of respondents *agreed* with what is proposed for intensification in the central city – 32% *strongly agreed* and 25% *agreed*
- > Nearly one third (32%) of respondents *disagreed* – 19% *strongly disagreed* and 13% *disagreed*
- > Nine percent of respondents were *neutral* and 2% were *not sure*

Extent to which respondents agreed/disagreed with inner suburbs intensification proposal

Respondents were asked: To what extent do you agree or disagree with what is proposed regarding intensification in the inner suburbs?

Extent proposed Inner Suburbs intensification agreed/disagreed with



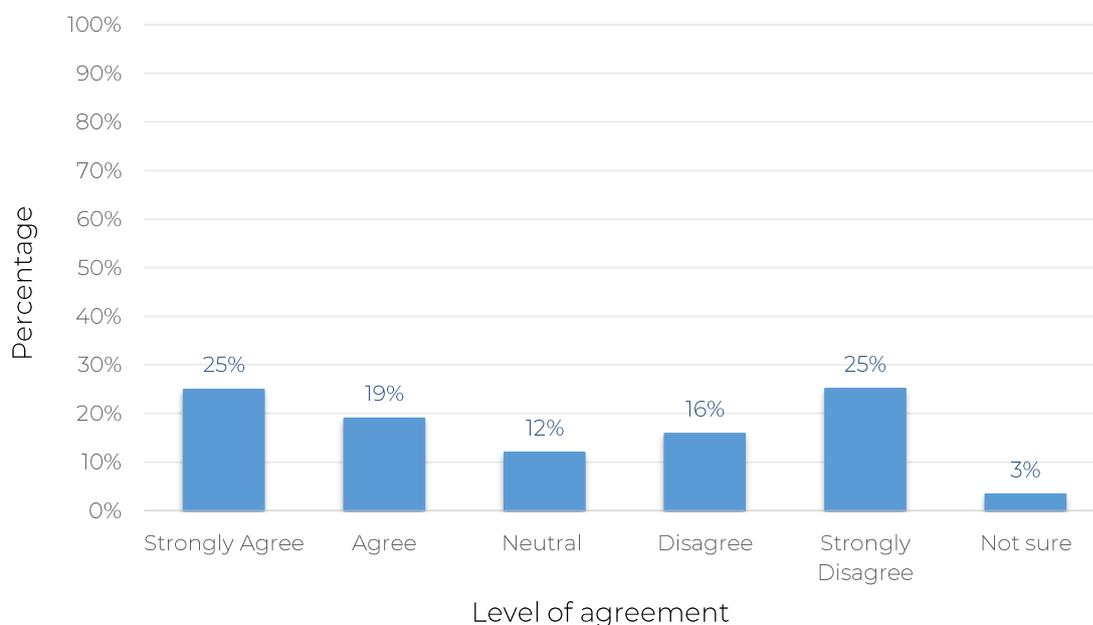
Key findings:

- > 2,045 respondents answered this question
- > Nearly half (46%) of respondents *disagreed* with what is proposed for intensification in the inner suburbs – 34% *strongly disagreed* and 12% *disagreed*
- > Nearly half (45%) of respondents *agreed* – 27% *strongly agreed* and 18% *agreed*
- > Seven percent of respondents were *neutral* and 2% were *not sure*

Extent to which respondents agreed/disagreed with outer suburbs intensification proposal

Respondents were asked: To what extent do you agree or disagree with what is proposed regarding intensification in the outer suburbs?

Extent proposed Outer Suburbs intensification agreed/disagreed with



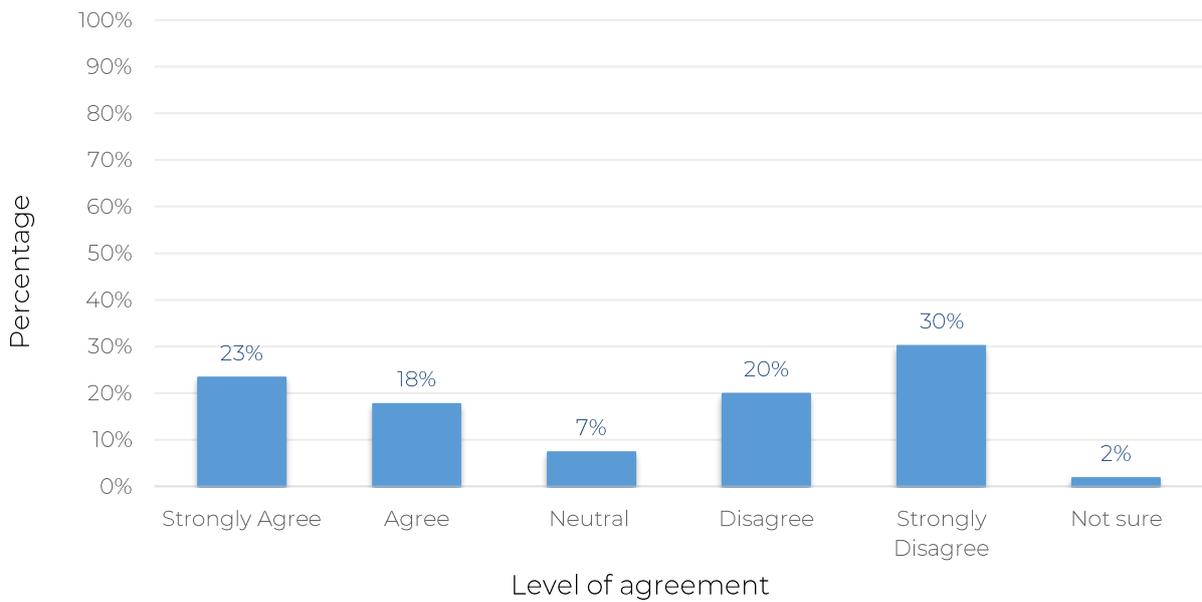
Key findings:

- > 2,047 respondents answered this question
- > Nearly half (44%) of respondents *agreed* with what is proposed for intensification in the outer suburbs – 25% *strongly agreed* and 19% *agreed*
- > Nearly half (41%) of respondents *disagreed* – 25% *strongly disagreed* and 16% *disagreed*
- > Twelve percent of respondents were *neutral* and 3% were *not sure*

Overall agreement/disagreement with approach to proposed distribution

Respondents were asked: We have taken a city-wide view with how we have proposed intensification across the central city, inner suburbs, and outer suburbs. Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with our approach to this distribution?

Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with city-wide intensification across the central city, inner suburbs and outer suburbs



Key findings:

- > 2,047 respondents answered this question
- > Half (50%) of respondents *disagreed* with what is proposed for intensification city-wide, across the central city, inner suburbs and outer suburbs – 30% *strongly disagreed* and 20% *disagreed*
- > Under half (41%) of respondents *agreed* – 23% *strongly agreed* and 18% *agreed*
- > Seven percent of respondents were *neutral* and 2% were *not sure*

Where else could 80,000 people be distributed 5,356 comments

Respondents were asked: If you disagree, where would you distribute the additional 80,000 people across the city over the next 30 years?

Summary: where else 80,000 people could be distributed

Note that this question asked respondents to state where they would locate an additional 80,000 people over the next 30 years, if they disagreed with what has been proposed. The comments then were less likely to include affirmation of what has been proposed by those who agreed with proposals, as well as respondents discussing where they opposed the distribution of an additional 80,000 residents, although these types of comments were still received.

- **Redeveloping commercial, industrial, and underused areas** was strongly supported, especially prior to the intensification and changing of character suburbs. A number of specific places and opportunities were identified, and many felt development would enhance the appearance and function of these areas.
- **Development of greenfield sites across Greater Wellington Region** and in regional hubs/satellite cities was also strongly supported. A large number of possible locations were suggested. Elaborations on this approach commonly included expanding existing outer suburbs and ensuring that appropriate levels of infrastructure are in place to facilitate development, particularly transport connections to the central city. Key benefits of this approach were identified to be the avoidance of destroying existing central Wellington character and the opportunity for more affordable, less-constrained residential living.
- **Inner-city/CBD development** was also a popular approach, with arguments advocating for this approach including that much of this area is already developed and so intensification impacts would be less noticeable than in suburban areas. It was also expressed that people who choose to live in these areas expect to experience a more compact style of living, and it was also observed that existing infrastructure could be utilised along with the repurposing of office buildings.
- **Inner suburb development** was supported by a large number of respondents who were in favour of development close to the central city often because of the efficiency of infrastructure development in these areas, and to address the under-supply of warm, dry homes. Opposition to the development of this area focused on loss of character and community, particularly from higher buildings; impacts on quality of life; and, increased strain on infrastructure, in particular transport. There was significant comment on particular suburbs: for Newtown, growth was supported, but not as it is outlined in the Plan; regarding Mt Victoria, there was opposition to development because of the effects on what is considered an “iconic” character area; concerning Berhampore, development was opposed because it is planned to “bear the brunt” of a disproportionate level of development; with Thorndon, further loss of character was feared; as regards Mt Cook, opposition to development was due to impacts on character; apropos Aro Valley, again there was opposition to impacts on character.
- **Outer suburb development** was mixed with some strongly advocating for this approach, and others opposed to this approach. Those advocating for development argued that it would reduce impacts on character in an already developed central city, and enhance the liveability of outer suburbs through the development of more and better facilities in these areas, and be more affordable. Some however cautioned against building too high and others outright opposed development in these areas because of the negative impact on communities, and amenities, through impacts such as shading and wind-tunnels caused by higher buildings.
- **Northern outer suburb development** in a planned and controlled manner was supported because of the space that is available for new development and the existing infrastructure that has the potential to be upgraded, with development around existing transport hubs favoured.

Upgrades of existing infrastructure such as learning institutions, green space, and transport networks would be required. Those who opposed this approach were concerned that the existing areas would be degraded with higher buildings, which could result in low-quality living opportunities.

- **Western outer suburb development** was supported in a variety of different locations, with respondents believing that there was flat land available in some areas for this development. There was a common caveat though that infrastructure be upgraded and transport connections put in place, prior to intensification. There was opposition to development of these areas, particularly in Kandallah and Ngaio, with the frequent argument being that tall buildings would ruin the ambience and amenity of these areas; transport connections and topography were other concerns.
- **Eastern outer suburb development** discussions included a few locations, with Kilbirnie the most discussed location. There was support for development in this area because of its large commercial hub and transport links, and less possible impacts on existing character. There was a proviso though that infrastructure be put in place that would result in quality growth. Concerns were mainly around the natural hazard risks in the area.
- **Southern outer suburbs** were less popular, and were identified for their proximity to the central city. However, the area's topography being able to accommodate significant development was questioned.
- **Infill housing and subdivisions** were supported by many respondents, with increasing density on existing sections rather than increasing the height of buildings preferred by these respondents. Repurposing of commercial buildings was also supported. Reducing the stringency of current planning rules was encouraged to facilitate these changes. There was a desire for this type of development to be done respectfully and for there to be an increase in shared open space.
- **Transport corridor development** was supported along existing transport routes, because of the opportunity to easily transport residents on public transport.
- **Quality of life** protection was a desire expressed in many comments; the impacts of high buildings and developments were key contributors to these concerns. Character and heritage loss also needing protection was a concern identified by a large group of respondents.
- **Other suggestions** were: to take a **phased or targeted approach** rather than a broad brush or blanket approach; **more equitable development** so no suburb is unduly impacted by the level of change it experiences; **building heights** and the negative impacts on surrounding areas were critiqued; **infrastructure and transport coping capacity** was questioned, with the belief that much of the network is already at capacity; **housing affordability** is an important societal issue that needs to be addressed; concerns were expressed about overly profit-driven **development**; **earthquake and natural hazard risks** were warned against, and there was a desire for them to be considered; and, **attention to sustainable design and reducing environmental pressures** was promoted.

NOTE: When answering this question, there was some inconsistency in how people described areas – for example, some used “suburbs,” and some described inner suburbs as inner city, etc. Analysts have done their best to be consistent and transparent in how each area has been classified and included in the discussion that follows.

There was strong and widespread support for the redevelopment of industrial, commercial, and underutilised areas around the central city and suburbs, which were often described as “areas in need of regeneration”. These comments frequently suggested developing these areas *before* changing suburban zoning (discussed in more detail below in the “Calls for a targeted or phased approach” section). A very large number of respondents identified specific areas: Adelaide Road, Cambridge and Kent Terraces, Riddiford Street, Taranaki Street, Abel Smith Street, Thorndon Quay and around the hospital – noting that several of these areas are ideal for intensification due to being main transport routes and within walkable distance of the CBD. Other sites that received specific mentions were the old Tip-Top site, empty lots and flats on Hanson Street, car yards, “wasted” port-side space, former Caltex and industrial sites on and nearby Riddiford Street and Donald Mclean Street; and earthquake-prone buildings.

Respondents frequently argued that these spaces were “ugly” and lacked character, and that car yards would become superfluous in a less car-focused future. These comments were generally very similar in nature, though with varying levels of detail. The following comments are examples of detailed suggestions:

I would focus first on building mid-density residential in the prime locations in the Wellington CBD/inner suburbs that are currently under-utilised for light industry (such as car yards and mechanics) and retail (i.e. one-storey big box stores). In particular, around Kent and Cambridge Terrace, Adelaide Road, Mt Cook etc. These commercial premises could be condensed to be higher density, moved further out (i.e. to Kaiwharawhara, Johnsonville), or apartments added on top of retail/cafes etc. Empty spaces (i.e. old factories, undeveloped locations due to "supermarket wars", council housing off Hopper St, parking lots) should be redeveloped as a priority. This would ensure residential is within walking distance of the CBD and green spaces, and reduce the pressures on transport routes.

I recommend that WCC rezones Kent Tce and Cambridge Tce so that the car dealers' vast footprints can be vacated and the sites used for high-rise flats to 8-10 storeys. This is an 'opportunity area' as mentioned in the final paragraph on page 9.

There was substantial support for intensification along Adelaide Road in particular, which people described as an “eyesore” and “one of the ugliest roads in Wellington with its vacant buildings and derelict properties” with “no character whatsoever.” It was noted that “if developed attractively with medium rise development [it] would house many thousands close to the city.”

While the majority of comments that advocated for intensification in these areas did not specify what kind of development they envisaged, a small number of respondents mentioned low or medium-rise buildings. More commonly, respondents expressed the notion that high-rise buildings would be appropriate in this area, such as the following comment:

No attempt to address extremely inappropriate current land use in potentially 'prime commercial/residential area' such as Kent and Cambridge Terrace and lower Adelaide Road. These areas clearly lend themselves to high density (type 5) housing development within existing transportation corridors and appear a logical initial focus that would meet the councils overriding Goals and Directions stated in the Spatial plan at minimal public infrastructure cost.

These suggestions for phasing intensification were often accompanied by calls for WCC to take a more active role in incentivising development in certain areas or to take action to prevent landbanking. The following comment demonstrates this sentiment with specific ideas for how it might be achieved:

I suggest you find specific locations for quality high rises and tell people invest in this community living building. For example you must be able to buy some sort of car yards - try using the Public Works Act if the need is so great. One in Taranaki St has been empty for years. Get it built yourself. They are just speculators. Tell them they have two years to build or they start paying a low use of land charge. You have to drive change.

Several respondents suggested that more active planning was necessary, describing the current approach as “laissez-faire” and expressing a concern that with the current approach residents would be left to “the mercy of developers”. A small number of comments provided specific suggestions for what targeted planning might include, suggesting pocket parks, planned stepping of height to protect sun and sight lines, walking lanes and pedestrian linkage, cycleways, public spaces such as playgrounds, plazas or market areas, and other amenities like cafés and shops.

Expansion across the Greater Wellington region

348 comments

There was widespread support for expanding across the Greater Wellington region rather than limiting growth to within the city boundaries. Comments expressed support for both greenfields expansion and intensification in other hubs in the region, particularly Lower and Upper Hutt (58 comments), Porirua (52 comments), and Kapiti (43 comments). Respondents advocated strongly for a regional approach, suggesting WCC coordinate their planning with Wellington Regional Council and collaborate with Wairarapa, Hutt, Porirua, and Kapiti Coast District Councils to accommodate the projected growth.

While a substantial number of comments were general in nature, simply calling for a more even spread across the region or merely stating “greenfield developments” or “new suburbs”, some respondents specified areas that they considered ideal. These included support for the proposed opportunity sites (Stebbing Valley, Glenside West, Lincolnshire Farm) as well as other suggestions: Transmission Gully, Wainuiomata, Plimmerton, Horokiwi, Hobsonville Point, rural land around Newlands, Grenada, Petone, Melling, Ohariu and Makara, Wainui coast, and the Wairarapa. A considerable number of comments specifically referenced the outer suburbs and advocated opening up land to expand these suburbs or create new subdivisions around them.

There was a clear call for expansion to be accompanied by purpose-built infrastructure, coupled with improved green transport connections to the central city. Respondents were concerned with both improved roads and the need for better public transport, particularly opportunities for light rail. There was also strong support for expansion to be focused along arterial routes or rail corridors. The following comment articulates this feeling:

I would impress upon Wellington City Council to [...] start talking to the other councils such as Hutt, Porirua and Kapiti. Wellington Region is blessed with the best arterial rail corridors in the country. Growth in this region of the country should be on the rail corridor

Greenfields expansion or intensifying regional hubs was praised as benefiting residents both in and out of the city. Respondents expressed a deeply held conviction that developing further afield was necessary to avoid “destroying” or “ruining” the character of Wellington’s inner suburbs, negatively affecting current residents, and increasing the load on the city’s infrastructure and traffic. The following comment, which was repeated by several different respondents, illustrates this sentiment:

Wellington’s geography means it is physically restrained from such levels of growth without damaging the amenity values and “liveability” that make Wellington such a desirable place to live. Wellington has traditionally been a seat for workers who commute from nearby satellite cities, and as Wellington reaches capacity, this formula is even more appropriate. We are surrounded by 6 satellite cities and other rural areas each far better capacity for population growth and services by fast, efficient, cheap and sustainable electric train connection to Wellington: Rather than degrading

Wellington's liveability, these satellite population centres can bear the population growth sustainably, while this level of growth will destroy the quality of life that Wellingtonians value.

Expansion was also hailed as providing a better lifestyle than intensification, with several comments claiming it allows the standalone houses and space that meet New Zealanders' housing aspirations, and that expansion is more likely to provide affordable housing. Living outside the city was praised as providing opportunities for hobbies and enabling a sense of community that dense inner-city living was considered to lack. Respondents suggested that intensifying hubs across the region could enable people to live outside Wellington while still working in the city, with several comments noting that by global standards this would still be a short commute, or that more people are now able to work flexibly. Others noted that expansion could be coupled with the creation of jobs across the region, citing central government's suggested creation of regional hubs, or that growth could revitalise areas like the Hutts and Porirua, as well as other small rural towns. Several respondents pointed out that greenfields developments would not exacerbate the risk from earthquakes, tsunamis, and pandemics in the way that intensification may. The following comments encapsulate frequently made arguments supporting expansion:

More housing outside the current city limits, combined with decent transport links in, would be the much better long-term solution as it deals with all of the issues: provision of the kinds of houses and sections that we know Kiwis want; dealing appropriately with earthquake and tsunami risk; protecting and enhancing the Wellington vibe and the character of its historical suburbs; and fixing the painfully bad public transport in and around the city.

Build satellite cities, e.g. Whitemans Valley, expand and improve Porirua and further up towards Kapiti with rapid transport systems connecting each city. These small cities can support industry and services e.g. tech, call centres with housing enabling people to walk to work and to socialise. So many opportunities for people to enjoy their hobbies, pass times e.g. surfing, hiking etc all from home.

A small number of comments expressed opposition to the idea of expansion, noting concerns about urban sprawl over valuable productive land, or that the proposed transport improvements may not eventuate.

Other cities and areas (14)

Several respondents suggested that growth should be absorbed in other cities such as Levin, Masterton, Palmerston North, Whanganui, and other regional or satellite cities. These comments were generally underpinned by a position that Wellington did not have the capacity or resilience to accommodate further growth, that light rail and better motorways could mean these areas would be a viable commute, and that incentivising growth in these centres could provide an economic boost to the regions.

Development of the inner city or CBD

309 comments

Support for inner-city intensification (239)

A very large number of respondents supported inner-city intensification. Many of these comments expressed general support without elaborating in detail. The respondents who did elaborate frequently commented that the inner city is already intense and built up, so more intensification would not change the character and could even contribute positively to a vibrant and lively inner-city feel. Respondents commonly suggested that the city lifestyle was well-suited to intensification as some people, particularly younger residents, want the busy and vibrant lifestyle offered by the inner city, while people generally choose the suburbs for a quieter lifestyle. The sentiment in these comments was that people who live in

the central city expect denser living, whereas people who live in the suburbs do not. Several comments also claimed that inner-city apartments could provide affordable housing options.

Respondents also noted the benefits of intensification in the central city, such as utilising already existing infrastructure and public transport rather than needing to develop new infrastructure. Living in the central city also enables active transport options like walking and cycling and can contribute to lowering carbon emissions.

There was strong support for repurposing office blocks into accommodation, taking the changes in working patterns after Covid-19 as an opportunity. Some respondents made other specific suggestions, with a small number supporting height limit increases. Others expressed hesitancy about height limits or quality of buildings or noted that green space and pedestrian links need to be preserved or created to increase liveability. The following comments demonstrate commonly raised points:

Consider the demolition of earthquake risk buildings in the CBD and construct quality apartment building with ground floor commercial and retail that meet or exceed current NBS. High density inner city living maximizes utilisation of infrastructure (water, sewage, roads, public transport and open spaces) and will create a real vibe of activity in the CBD.

With respect to the CBD and inner suburbs I agree overall with intensification in these areas but have major reservations about the minimum number of storeys/height outlined. If there is an increased demand in years to come for less tall buildings in our cities due to mental health considerations or maybe a shift in how our city operates then I believe developers should be able to respond to that.

Opposition to inner-city intensification (38)

A considerable number of respondents, though much fewer than those in support, opposed the idea of intensification in the inner city. Several of these comments did not state a reason and merely made statements like “don’t cram more people into the CBD.” Several respondents cited concerns that intensification would lead to a loss of “character” or “vibe” in the inner-city area. Comments depicted Wellington’s current inner city as “lively,” “unique,” and “a place where people want to live and play.” Respondents described fears that intensification and high-rise buildings would create an inner city that is “sterile,” “grimy,” “generic,” “soulless,” “a boring sunless wind tunnel” and that Cuba Street would become a “shaded, dark, inner city canyon.” Several respondents in this group argued for moving away from a focus on one central hub, noting that the shift towards working from home has meant that people are more inclined to live and stay in the suburbs, and that “vibrant” suburban hubs could provide an alternative to a central city hub. A few respondents pointed out that intensifying the inner city would have a negative impact on surrounding character suburbs.

Several respondents pointed out that Wellington is at high risk of earthquakes and other natural hazards, such as tsunami and sea level rise, and that intensification in the central city will exacerbate this vulnerability. One respondent also noted that there are insufficient open green spaces in the city to gather safely in an emergency. A small number of respondents raised concerns about central city infrastructure already being at capacity and unable to cope with growth, and the need for increased parking and public transport links. The following comments encapsulate the key points raised by respondents who opposed central city intensification:

I agree with much of this in principle but I believe COVID has shown us that our city needs to be less dependent on its CBD ... as more people work from home in a "greener" approach to work we need more vibrant "villages". Newtown, Brooklyn, Kelburn, Karori, Island Bay, Miramar are all models of communities that sustain a mix of cafes, shops, entertainment (even cinemas, libraries, sports grounds, community halls etc). Intensifying the city feels like a 20 Century model for growth.

The "heart of the city" concept leaves us very vulnerable to heart attack, to earthquakes, pandemics etc. We are a small town and even with additional people our geography gives us an inner city but trends suggest the growth will be very much absorbed on the Kapiti Coast and the Wairarapa as each becomes more accessible especially because of more remote working.

High rise apartments will not only kill the character of the city, creating a very different future for residents than we all have been able to enjoy over the years (and therefore creating a city that is fundamentally different than the Wellington that we love today), they are the wrong solution to the housing problem that has been identified. More housing outside the current city limits, combined with decent transport links in, would be the much better long-term solution as it deals with all of the issues: provision of the kinds of houses and sections that we know Kiwis want; dealing appropriately with earthquake and tsunami risk; protecting and enhancing the Wellington vibe and the character of its historical suburbs; and fixing the painfully bad public transport in and around the city.

Te Aro (32)

A considerable number of respondents made comments specifically pertaining to Te Aro, the majority of which supported intensification. Respondents commonly stated that there are light industrial areas that are suitable for development, that Te Aro does not have high heritage value, and that it already has high-density housing. A smaller number of comments opposed the suggestion to introduce a blanket zone in the suburb allowing or stipulating ten-plus-storey buildings, arguing that Te Aro has a high proportion of residential properties and too many tall buildings would destroy the atmosphere and quality of life for residents.

Development of the outer suburbs

187 comments

Respondents who focused their response on the outer suburbs varied between expressing broad support or opposition, making specific suggestions for changes or focusing their answer on their own or nearby suburbs. Respondents frequently supported expansion in one outer suburb while opposing it in another, so comments pertaining to specific suburbs are discussed in individual sections below.

General support for intensification in the outer suburbs (101)

A considerable number of respondents expressed general support for intensification in the outer suburbs, without going into detail regarding specific locations or why they supported this approach. A small amount of people specifically stated that the plan could go further and that heights could be increased in the outer suburbs. A considerable number of comments mentioned transport, noting that intensification would need to be accompanied by improved transport links, both public and private, with several comments expressing a negative view of the current system's capacity, for example:

Mostly in the central city and outer suburbs, with focus on improving the farcical public transport system to provide better connectivity.

A moderate number of proponents for outer suburb intensification felt this should happen instead of or before inner-city intensification. Several of these comments noted that the inner city is already dense, and that infrastructure and traffic issues were already significant, and that it would be easier to improve or create new infrastructure in the outer suburbs. Several respondents were motivated by a desire to protect the character of the inner city, arguing that the outer suburbs were better suited to intensification as the "competition between character and opportunity is much less of an issue". The following comment exemplifies this desire:

I believe you should protect the heritage and character areas of the city and move any more intensive housing (such as 6+ stories) away from these areas - if this means the outer suburbs then yes.

Advocates for outer suburb intensification also argued that more growth in these areas could increase their liveability – by attracting amenities and retail hubs and creating vibrant hubs outside the central city. Respondents also noted that the outer suburbs were more able to provide the “traditional homes”, space, green areas, and lifestyle to suit “those people who want to have their own home and do not want to live in the city in an apartment building”, and that they were particularly suitable in light of the move to working from home. Several respondents felt that land in the outer suburbs was easier to access and would provide more affordable housing than intensification in the central city.

Qualified support or suggestions (44)

A considerable number of respondents expressed support for some intensification in the outer suburbs but expressed reservations or stipulated conditions. The majority of these were concerned with preventing high-rise buildings, noting that these would have negative impacts on surrounding residents. Several comments argued for buildings to be limited to one or two storeys, while slightly less respondents considered three storeys to be an appropriate maximum. A small number thought four-storey buildings were acceptable. Other comments expressed a general hesitancy about the proposed scale of intensification, calling for “some” or “incremental” developments. Other suggestions included limiting taller buildings to hubs and focusing on transport routes, allowing larger commercial footprints to support increased density, involving residents in planning and ensuring increased residential density was done well, and catering for accessibility needs for older residents when planning intensification around hubs.

Oppose outer suburbs intensification (42)

A considerable number of respondents rejected the proposed levels of outer suburb intensification. Several of these were general or did not go into detail, with comments like “leave the outer suburbs alone”. Some respondents expressed distress at the proposed changes, with emotive comments like the following:

I don't disagree that we need smaller houses, more terraced and intensity in the suburbs but turning the outer suburbs into apartment blocks seems awful. The outer suburbs are full of families, you seem to want to change that. Having a minimum of 6 stories is deeply concerning. It would destroy the suburbs as the family oriented areas that they currently are

A moderate number of respondents felt that intensification would dramatically alter the nature and character of the outer suburbs, diminishing the community feel and degrading the lifestyle of the current residents of outer suburbs. Respondents argued that people choose to live in the outer suburbs for the quiet lifestyle and space it provides, and that tall buildings would ruin this, blocking sun, and ruining “what our suburbs are all about”. These comments exemplify how people felt about intensification in the outer suburbs:

Outer suburbs need to be treated separately to the city plan. People live in the outer suburbs because they want to be away from the feeling of living in the city. They choose an outer suburb because they don't to live in the inner city amongst apartment blocks. [...] The heights proposed are too imposing and extreme for outer suburbs and will ruin the character of family neighbourhoods. No one wants to have a 6 storey building in front of their lovely character home, blocking the sun and looking down on their property. It will ruin what our suburbs are all about.

Most of the intensification should be closer to town. People bought houses in quiet leafy suburbs for a reason. If you want the night-life and the noise you can live in town no?

Respondents also noted that many suburbs already had problems with traffic congestion and infrastructure at capacity, and that there was no clear plan to upgrade this. Other issues raised included that the outer suburbs contain valuable wildlife and green spaces that should be preserved, and that outer suburb intensification would encourage car use and therefore increase carbon emissions.

Development of the northern outer suburbs

116 comments

A large number of comments made specific reference to the northern outer suburbs of Johnsonville, Tawa, Newlands, and Churton Park, both supporting intensification in these areas or critiquing the Plan. Respondents often grouped and listed these suburbs together without going into detail, though a sizeable number of people focused their response on Johnsonville and a substantial number discussed Tawa.

Support for intensification and suggested changes (88)

A sizeable number of comments expressed support for intensification in Johnsonville, particularly around the commercial centre and the mall. Johnsonville was generally considered appropriate due to its proximity to the railway and motorway, the fact that it is a non-heritage area, its available space and “room to plan properly” and upgrade infrastructure, and the possibility for growth to bring economic benefits. These benefits were also mentioned by the considerable number of respondents who supported intensification in Tawa and the other northern suburbs. However, these comments frequently contained caveats that intensification needs to be planned and controlled, focused tightly around the central hubs and railway; accompanied by improved work, study and recreational facilities, and parks and green space; and, transport networks and infrastructure would need to be upgraded, particularly the Johnsonville and Tawa railway lines, which were noted to be already at capacity. The following comments are representative of responses supporting intensification in the northern suburbs:

The more modern areas such as Johnsonville, Tawa, Churton Park, where there is less historical character - More room to plan properly not just shoehorn people in.

Support focus on Tawa and Johnsonville as key growth areas ensuring workplace, recreational and residential facilities are all developed together and encourage more self-contained “towns”

There is general agreement that further intensification of the Suburban Centre area will be good for business and residents by providing a greater variety of both housing and local commercial needs in the framework of an increasing population. But to be successful, such development really needs to occur in a coordinated fashion so that other public facilities and spaces may also be incorporated in the planning and shared development timeframe. And any intensified development also needs to be perceived as a quality development that attracts a diverse range of business/residents and does not become isolated or perceived as a ghetto or low slum area.

Opposition to intensification of Northern Suburbs (28)

A considerable number of respondents opposed intensification in the northern suburbs, with comments generally focusing on Johnsonville and Tawa. Those who opposed the proposed intensification in these areas generally argued that the distribution was unfair and that Johnsonville in particular would be unrecognisable; that high buildings would ruin the feel of the suburb and affect current residents; that there were already issues with traffic congestion, public transport capacity and a lack of amenities and activities; and, that cheap developments would not create affordable housing but would result in a “new slum”.

Development of the western outer suburbs

109 comments

A large amount of respondents focused on specific areas within the western outer suburbs of Khandallah, Karori, Kelburn, Ngaio, and Crofton Downs.

Support and suggested changes (75)

A considerable number of comments suggested increasing intensification in Karori, noting that there was available flat land to build on and existing bus links. A few comments suggested going further and increasing height limits in this area. A moderate number suggested further intensification in Kelburn, citing its proximity to the city and university and suggesting it should be more accurately described as an inner suburb. There was a strong sense that Karori and Kelburn had been unfairly and inexplicably left out of the Plan. Several comments supported intensification in Khandallah, Ngaio, and Crofton Downs, or suggested the western suburbs in general. However, several other respondents stipulated conditions, suggesting transport links and infrastructure need to be upgraded before any intensification, that high buildings should be constrained to small pockets in suburban centres, that development should be sympathetic and the character of the suburb be taken into account, or advocated for a maximum height of three storeys. The following comments illustrate these caveats:

Expand the outer suburbs, allowed intensification in existing suburbs but take rapid transport and suburb character into account. Khandallah is not a suitable suburb for 4,5,6 story buildings A perfect example of how it works well is the apartments at 40a-f Agra Cres, a perfect example of how it doesn't work is 12 Agra Cres! We have no rapid transport options, our current water systems (both waste and storm) don't cope as it is - you need to fix that before we add additional pressure.

Heights of six stories in suburbs is an absolute no, unless it's right in the village or on an arterial route near public transport, and will not cast long shadows over neighbouring properties and amenities. The council makes it expensive for people to subdivide, but done well this can be a large part of the solution, without the impact of "going up". The three new properties on the original single section at the car park end of Woodmancote road is a good example of this. The two storey townhouses at the end of the Khandallah village are a great example of "densification done well" in a suburban setting.

Opposition to intensification of Western suburbs (34)

The majority of comments that opposed intensification in specific areas were focused on Khandallah, often mentioning Ngaio at the same time. A small number of comments also opposed any changes in Kelburn and Karori. Respondents frequently raised concerns that tall buildings would ruin the ambience and amenities of suburbs and people would lose value on their homes. Transport issues, including current problems with congestion, lack of transport and easy access to Karori, and the low capacity of the Khandallah heritage railway line were mentioned. It was also noted that the topography of Khandallah and Ngaio mean they are not ideal for tall buildings. The following quote illustrates commonly raised points:

I agree with most areas, as areas like Karori and Kelburn are kept quite low in density. Allowing over 6 storeys in Khandallah is a contrast to what is allowed in other similar leafy established suburbs. Khandallah is a lovely suburb that will be ruined by this type of development. Even though it is on a train system this is quite limited. The traffic in and out of the suburb is already busy and cannot support this extra load proposed. Areas such as Johnsonville can as it is right on the motorway so roads are more accessible.

Development of the eastern outer suburbs

51 comments

Support and suggested changes (35)

A substantial number of comments discussed the eastern outer suburbs of Kilbirnie, Miramar, Hataitai, and Lyall Bay. Of these, a considerable number expressed support for intensification, particularly in

Kilbirnie and, to a lesser extent, Miramar peninsula. Kilbirnie was generally considered appropriate as it has a large commercial hub and transport links, areas of ex-industrial and commercial land, and less character or heritage housing. The Kilbirnie bus depot received a few mentions as an option for redevelopment. Respondents also suggested that land on the Miramar peninsula could be utilised to absorb growth, and a small number of comments supported intensification in Lyall Bay, pointing out that there was underused industrial land that could be appropriate for intensification. A small number of comments discussed the need for amenities to contribute to the creation of vibrant suburban hubs. Other stipulations for intensification in these areas included that transport links be improved before intensification, that height limits be lowered, and that development be controlled. These comments about Kilbirnie illustrate these concerns:

This suggested increase in level of housing density in Kilbirnie is a ridiculous re-zoning proposal and unfortunately highlights the inconsistencies in the current spatial plan. Reclassification of the Kilbirnie flats region to a maximum of 3-4 storeys would strike a logical balance between city and suburban development sizing while also protecting the aesthetic feel of a region of town popular because of its suburban aesthetic. This comment also touches on a larger question of what considerations the council will attach to these development zones to ensure appropriate build appearance, size and quality are maintained?

More important is what the Council can do to support development in inner city suburbs like Kilbirnie and Johnsonville, which have been SHAs for years and have seen very little new development. Work on significantly improving the public transport linkages and improving the parks and playgrounds might remove perceived roadblocks to living densely in locales that aren't considered desirable. For example, the Council demolished the Kilbirnie bowling club and has proceeded to leave it bare for years, and has left the inadequate playground unloved while upgrading play areas in wealthier suburbs like Seatoun.

Opposition to intensification of Eastern suburbs (16)

A smaller proportion of respondents argued against intensification in Kilbirnie, pointing out that it is vulnerable to flooding and liquefaction. A small number of comments opposed intensification in Hataitai and expressed a feeling that they had been left out of consultation. Other concerns raised about intensification in the eastern suburbs included general resilience to natural hazards, negative impacts on residents' lifestyles, changes to the feel and character of the suburbs, and infrastructure that is already at capacity.

Development of the southern outer suburbs

26 comments

Support and suggested changes (17)

A considerable number of respondents expressed support for intensification in the Southern suburbs of Brooklyn and Island Bay, with a couple mentioning Seatoun as an appropriate location as well. These comments generally promoted these areas due to their closeness to the central city, their "vibrant" community hubs, and the available space and large sections in Island Bay. Suggestions included that design be done well, that height limits be decreased, or that infill housing could accommodate growth without having negative impacts. One respondent specified:

More extensive coverage of type 2 areas and smaller type 3 areas. I believe 4 story dwellings are too high for outer suburbs. In Island Bay we have some good examples of 3 story infill development. This is a good model for 'all' outer suburbs.

Opposition to intensification of Southern Outer suburbs (9)

Several respondents opposed intensification. A small number of detailed submissions raised concerns about intensification in Brooklyn, arguing that its topography meant it was not ideal for tall buildings, which would block the sun for existing residents; that there was no plan to upgrade necessary amenities and outdoor spaces; and that the lack of clearly planned transport would create accessibility issues, particularly for older residents. These submissions called for more character protection rather than less. One respondent also felt that the consultation had been insufficient, calling it “lip service.” A small number of respondents argued against intensification in Island Bay, primarily based on concerns around infrastructure, transport and amenities – particularly schools and healthcare – being unable to support current residents’ needs, let alone further growth. The following comment sums up these concerns:

I am concerned about how established suburbs like Island Bay will cope with a significant increase in residents. Parking, buses to town and the school are already at capacity. Consideration needs to also be given to the design of new buildings to ensure they complement existing character of these suburbs.

Development of the inner suburbs

492 comments

General support (79)

A sizeable number of respondents agreed with inner suburb intensification. Of these, a considerable number expressed general support without going into detail as to why. Where respondents did offer reasons, they frequently stated that intensification near the central city was ideal, as this enabled people to walk or use other active transport and avoided increasing pressure on traffic and transport. A few comments noted that this meant less carbon emissions. A small number of respondents considered intensification in the inner suburbs as preferable to the quieter outer suburbs, and a small number felt that intensification in the inner suburbs was necessary to mitigate the high costs and shortages of warm, quality housing. The following comment articulates why the inner suburbs were considered ideal for intensification:

Preserve the character and amenity of suburbia and, instead, concentrate more growth in the central city and suitable parts of the inner suburbs, close to employment opportunities and recreational facilities. Providing the opportunity for people to live close to where they work and play, this reduces the number of car trips and congestion and promotes active lives (physically and socially) for those in these areas. It also promotes a general economic and social vibrancy in the city which will be critical for Wellington's long-term economic growth and recovery from the current challenges.

Some respondents expressed partial support or made specific recommendations. Several comments suggested lower height limits or medium-rise buildings in areas where character would not be affected or advocated for sympathetic development that took character and sunlight into account. A small number suggested that some areas away from low-rise residential houses were particularly suitable. A couple of comments advocated for less character protection, arguing that people and affordable housing should take precedence over heritage.

General opposition (55)

A substantial number of respondents expressed strong disagreement with the proposed levels of intensification in the inner suburbs. These comments were generally similar, with loss of character and heritage, impacts on quality of life for current residents, and increased strain on traffic and infrastructure all repeatedly described as pressing concerns for current residents. The inner suburbs were described as already dense or “crammed” with townhouses and apartments, and it was noted that infill and

development was already occurring. Concerns around quality of life focused on tall buildings (over two storeys) overshadowing homes and diminishing residents' sunshine, sight planes, privacy, and house value. Other concerns included unattractive new blocks ruining the streetscape and large-scale buildings destroying a sense of community. Several respondents noted that growth would put heavy pressure on existing infrastructure, reporting that narrow streets were already congested and had insufficient parking, and schools were at capacity. A few comments also made the point that intensification in the inner suburbs would exacerbate earthquake risk and felt inner suburb intensification would not align with the Plan's values of being greener, resilient, and inclusive. These comments encapsulate why respondents opposed inner suburb intensification:

This proposal will destroy the only real reason why people choose to live in Wellington and put up with the wind and earthquake risk - the amazingly unique heritage character of the inner suburbs and the feeling of open space and sunlight. If it goes ahead it will have tragic consequences on Wellington - shifting it back to become a city of a young transient workforce and students with families taking flight.

I do not want the character of our inner suburbs and Newtown/Berhampore ruined with ugly, multi-storey square box buildings cutting off sun and views. I understand that current and proposed multi-storey developments also come with minimal or no on-site car parking and these are already becoming a reality and just adding to parking woes. Intensive development need to take place on a case-by-case basis, not blanket rules for one whole suburb as the topography and sun-lines can vary within suburbs. The very thing that attracts many of us to Wellington is the character homes mainly villas and transitional villas and bungalows.

These feelings were accompanied by a sense that the proposed changes to the inner suburbs were not necessary, either because the growth figures were unreliable or because better transport would facilitate growth in outer areas. Respondents suggested that a phased approach could see intensification in other areas first, and some comments expressed a feeling that intensification may be more acceptable further down the track if it was necessary after other avenues (such as redeveloping industrial land or infill housing) had been explored first.

Introduction of individual inner suburbs discussions

Respondents commonly focused their comments on their own suburbs and offered specific suggestions; these have been discussed separately in the sections that follow.

Newtown (168)

A very large number of comments focused on or mentioned Newtown, with the majority of these expressing a sense that they welcomed growth but not as proposed in the Plan. A substantial number of comments supported more specific zoning – with tall buildings concentrated in the commercial centre behind the “beautiful” historic shopfronts, and along main roads like Adelaide, Riddiford, and Constable Street. There was widespread support for the alternate proposal put forth by the Newtown Residents' Association (provided by Red Design Architects). Respondents argued that this could accommodate more than the projected growth for Newtown without the negative impacts on character, sense of place, liveability, and community that they felt would occur with the Plan's proposed changes. A few respondents claimed that WCC engagement has been poor, and that the residents would support intensification if it was aligned with the community's aspirations, with one comment stating:

Newtown would have been the suburb that welcomed the Spatial Plan if WCC had listened and followed our community's well considered recommendation.

Several comments opposed any growth, citing concerns about inadequate infrastructure, impacts on liveability and character, and a lack of transport options. A moderate number of respondents noted that the changes to Newtown (and Berhampore) were excessive and unfair.

Mt Victoria (63)

The majority of these comments opposed the suggested changes to Mt Victoria, with a substantial number of respondents extolling its importance as a heritage area and describing it as an “iconic” part of Wellington that should be preserved. Respondents also felt that current residents’ quality of life would be affected, particularly sun and views, that infill housing and developments were already occurring to accommodate more residents, that it was already dense, and that land prices meant new housing would not be affordable anyway. A few comments accepted some development occurring if it was “minimal,” or supported “sympathetic Type 3 buildings.” A few comments supported or suggested even more changes, noting that Mt Victoria was very close to the central city but would be less changed than other suburbs.

Berhampore (52)

Almost all respondents opposed the proposed changes for Berhampore, with several comments arguing that it was unfairly “bearing the brunt” of intensification (along with Newtown), and pointing out that “pretty much the whole of Berhampore is the light blue colour.” A small number of comments questioned its designation as an “inner” suburb, noting that it was not within a 10 minute walk from a transit hub or close to the CBD, and therefore did not fit the NPS-UD criteria for intensification. Several comments were concerned with loss of character, and several respondents were worried about impacts to liveability and loss of sun and light. A small number of comments accepted some intensification, arguing for lower height limits of two-to-three storeys, or “minimal” intensification. Other suggestions included changing the golf course to a public park or residential housing, or noted that infrastructure, transport, parking, and amenities would need improvement. A small number of comments expressed support for intensification in Berhampore.

Thorndon (40)

The majority of comments regarding Thorndon expressed reservations about the proposed changes, fearing a loss of the suburb’s character and heritage. These comments argued that already much of the suburb’s heritage had been lost due to development and what remained should be protected. Respondents also noted that Thorndon already has issues with infrastructure, parking, and traffic on narrow roads which would be exacerbated by growth. Respondents expressed support for some development, noting that sympathetic infill housing could be appropriate, or advocating for vacant sites to be reused.

A small number of comments specified that Thorndon Quay would be appropriate for intensification with mixed-use residential and commercial zoning. A small number of comments supported intensification, arguing that this would be in keeping with the current tall buildings in the area and its closeness to the CBD.

Mt Cook (23)

The majority of comments specifically mentioning Mt Cook opposed the Plan’s changes, generally expressing a fervent desire to preserve the character of the suburb. A few comments mentioned concerns about tall buildings, particularly eight- or six-storey buildings, affecting light and ruining the streetscape, and noted that Mt Cook was already dense and “struggling with capacity issues”. A couple of comments suggested minimal development or focusing it on run-down areas “ripe for redevelopment”, and a couple of comments expressed general support for intensification in Mt Cook.

Aro Valley (12)

The majority of these respondents raised concerns about changes in Aro Valley affecting the character of the area, either strongly opposing changes or suggesting it should be limited while character protection

remained. The current peaceful nature of the suburb was noted, as were the narrow streets and already limited parking. One comment expressed support for intensification in Aro Valley.

Development along transport routes and hubs

150 comments

The suggestion to locate additional housing along transport routes was supported by a very large number of respondents. However, there was a distinction in how the additional housing would link to transport. The consensus was to locate residential developments near existing transport routes that provide private and public transport. The current transport corridors were favoured locations for new housing developments by a considerable number of respondents, enabling people to utilise the existing services as well as being more responsive to existing residences. One respondent stated:

Rather than allowing high rise developments to be pepper potted around the areas, it would be better to plan for them to be in more concentrated areas to make it easier to provide transport and other infrastructure and to reduce the negative impact such structures would inevitably have on existing residential dwellings.

A considerable number identified Cambridge Terrace, Adelaide Road, Kent Terrace, and Taranaki Street as being ideal locations, especially as they were identified as suitable building sites near existing public transport. Moving residents with public transport was a focus in a considerable number of comments, with two-thirds specifically in favour of the existing railway network while light rail also received a few mentions. A few respondents commented that active transport would supplement the before mentioned transport services; however, footpath and cycleways need special consideration.

Concerns were raised about the alignment of additional housing to the rapid transit zone with a small number stating that this would “completely change the nature of those areas”.

Focus intensification in suburban hubs and centres

44 comments

Suggestions to build the additional housing in suburban hubs and centres were expressed by a considerable number of respondents. The underlying sentiment was that suburbs would offer residents better quality living environments, as long as they are linked to the city centre via mass transport links. One comment said:

We believe; - intensification of outer lying suburban centres is the answer. There is more access to land, more availability of public amenity (schools etc) and will facilitate urban regeneration in areas where land is cheaper. - a series of outer-suburban hubs, centred around fit for purpose public transport solutions is required. - this will remove pressure on downtown facilities (for example parking, congestion, water and waste water systems).

Respondents supported building type 4 developments around commercial activity in suburban centres that are already connected to the mass transit network. A few of those were in favour of housing type 5 buildings in suburban centres while support was also voiced for 15-minute centres in a small number of comments.

Allow more infill and subdivision

219 comments

When considering the distribution of the additional 80,000 people, the topic of infill and subdivision was raised in a very large number of comments. Generally, the respondents who commented on this topic argued against an increase in height and instead advocated for increased density via lower infill buildings, often described as “infill done well.” In particular, locating type 4 and 5 developments amongst one- or two-storey homes in a haphazard approach was rejected. Furthermore, repurposing disused commercial buildings in the CBD and inner suburbs was a reoccurring theme supported by many respondents; as was the adding of minor dwellings or secondary dwellings on larger residential sections. The following comment is representative of the tone and approach to accommodating future population growth:

Any substantial increases in density, should be distributed as follows: Firstly, continued multi-level residential development in the Te Aro area and areas which have already been zoned for higher rise development throughout the Central City area, including the South End of The Terrace. Secondly, multi-level residential development along existing main transport routes, particularly along routes such as Cambridge and Kent Terrace and Adelaide Road through to Newtown, and long Thorndon Quay and the Hutt Road areas. Thirdly, continued infill residential development in other Central areas, including Mt Victoria, under the existing District Scheme conditions.

A preference for using current planning rules to increase heights in areas already zoned for taller buildings was favoured over the changes suggested by WCC. Specifically, infill was supported in a sizeable number of responses, backed by several respondents who claimed more flexible rules for subdividing property would further free up space and densify the city. A small number of respondents supported this explicitly and questioned the bias or rigidity of current subdivision rules that have prevented residents from building extra housing on their property. Concerns about infill were raised in several comments, mostly focusing on the need for respectful and considered planning and design around existing housing. The need for increasing shared green spaces was also raised in a few comments.

Calls for a phased or targeted approach

139 comments

A large number of respondents expressed concern with what they considered to be the Plan's "blanket", "broad-brush", or "scattergun" approach, in which wide areas would be rezoned to allow greater height limits. Many of these respondents argued that the Plan lacked a detailed understanding of particular areas and their suitability for intensification, or suggested that Wellington's topography had not been taken into account in the zoning and that many of the increased height limits were not suitable in hilly areas. Many respondents accepted that the proposed increased height limits might be acceptable in some places but felt that closer analysis of locations and more specific or "micro" zoning was required to avoid "pepper-potting" or "random" tall buildings. Some of these comments were general in nature, for example:

While I understand that Wellington needs to grow, and needs to make adequate provision for growth, I do not believe that the approach proposed is the right one for our city. The imposition of a blanket height rule does not sit well over most of the areas in question, and existing homeowners in inner-city suburbs have reacted badly to those proposals. The approach needs more finesse and more recognition that a blanket rule will not suffice.

Other comments offered specific suggestions regarding suburbs or proposed heights. Respondents commonly considered buildings higher than two storeys to be unacceptable in close proximity to one-or-two-storey residences. Several people stated that types 4a and 4b housing were too widely proposed, particularly in character suburbs such as Newtown, Mt Cook, Berhampore, and Mt Victoria. Respondents generally expressed support for "clusters" of higher buildings or "corridors" of high-rises along flat transport routes. A few respondents suggested that instead of widespread type 4 housing a combination of focused type 3 and type 5 housing could be used to enable growth.

Many of the respondents who critiqued the "broad" approach advocated for a "phased" or "staged" strategy where development would occur in targeted priority areas *before* zoning changes were made to suburbs, particularly character suburbs. General suggestions for these areas included along existing transport corridors, suburban centres, main commercial streets, and in the central city. Frequently named areas included Adelaide Road, Kent and Cambridge Terraces, Riddiford Street, and Taranaki Street. These comments were often founded on concerns about the uncertainty of population growth and a sense that the current Plan unnecessarily risks current residents' lifestyles or the destruction of character areas with its broad approach. They also raised the point that targeted development could be integrated with

necessary infrastructure and transport upgrades. The following comments sum up frequently made arguments:

There should be community solutions to new housing and a blanket rule of up to six stories is not the answer and will result in losing Wellington's character, heritage, liveability, sense of community and connectedness without necessarily providing affordable housing. The co-housing projects already under way in Wellington are a good example of community solutions. Address housing needs through community housing projects. Allow development where it is already appropriate along existing corridors and around transport hubs.

To compromise the character of one of Wellington's most iconic suburbs when there are still such unknowns regarding the future is a big gamble – and once these special elements are gone they are extremely hard to recover. At the very least, a staged approach might be prudent, starting with areas that are already industrial or semi-industrial (e.g. Adelaide Rd), and the central city, where the impact is less. Then, as the future becomes clearer, we can consider more drastic and costly options that impact our unique neighbourhoods such as Mt Victoria.

These suggestions for phasing intensification were often accompanied by calls for WCC to assume a more active role in incentivising development in certain areas and preventing landbanking. The following comment demonstrates this sentiment with specific ideas for how it might be achieved:

I suggest you find specific locations for quality high rises and tell people to invest in this community living building. For example you must be able to buy some sort of car yards - try using the Public Works Act if the need is so great. One in Taranaki St has been empty for years. Get it built yourself. They are just speculators. Tell them they have two years to build or they start paying a low use of land charge. You have to drive change.

Several respondents suggested that more active planning was necessary, describing the current approach as “laissez-faire” and expressing a concern that with the current approach residents would be left to “the mercy of developers”. A small number of comments provided specific suggestions for what targeted planning might include, suggesting pocket parks, planned stepping of height to protect sun and sight lines, walking lanes and pedestrian linkage, cycleways, public spaces such as playgrounds, plazas or market areas, and other amenities like cafés and shops.

More even spread of distribution

148 comments

A large number of comments called for a more “even,” “fair” and “sensible” spread of distribution across the city and surrounding region. Many of these comments were general in nature, simply saying they “would distribute people across all suburbs” or “would spread it evenly across the suburbs”. Respondents commonly suggested coupling this wider spread of intensification with lower height limits across the board. Others offered more specific suggestions. Several comments advocated for maintaining what they felt was the “longstanding” approach of housing one third of projected population growth in the central city, one third in the suburbs (including infill housing), and one third in greenfields developments. Other suggested focusing intensification on the central city area and then spreading it more evenly across the suburbs.

Comments were often specific to respondents’ own suburbs, expressing a sense that intensification was unfairly focused on their suburb while other areas had been left unaffected. Berhampore, Newtown, and Johnsonville were frequently named as areas that were “bearing the brunt” of the planned intensification, while these respondents felt that suburbs like Mt. Victoria would be left “largely unchanged.” (It is worth noting that Mt Victoria residents felt their suburb would be heavily impacted, as has been discussed above). Several respondents named suburbs that they felt were inexplicably left out of the planned

intensification such as Seatoun, Wadestown, Wilton, Karori, Kelburn, and Island Bay. A particularly detailed submission argued that Oriental Bay's Type 1 zoning was not in keeping with the Plan's vision for equity and that increased intensification should be allowed in certain areas.

Several comments criticised the designations of "inner" and "outer" suburbs, suggesting that some of these were walkable distance to the city centre and should therefore have been designated inner, with a consequent increase in intensification. A considerable number of respondents felt strongly that these designations and the spread of intensification were biased on socio-economic grounds, with suburbs "perceived as more 'working class' bearing the brunt". The following comments illustrate this sentiment:

It appears the proposed distribution is very elitist. Looks like no changes in most of Mt Vic which is walking distance to town. Areas such as Kelburn, Brooklyn and HAITAITAI are deemed 'outer suburbs', yet closer to Central city and walking distance than some inner suburbs proposed such as Berhampore. Buses fill up from Island Bay at peak times before reaching Berhampore/Newtown and also has prime big pieces of land with one house on them, yet lesser development proposed. Distribution should be more rational.

There are areas of Kelburn that are less than a kilometre from Lambton Quay, that are zoned only four stories, which areas much further than that from Johnsonville Train Station are zoned 4b (six stories plus). That is poorly considered, and means inequitable impact of densification on less wealthy areas (including Newtown and Berhampore) to the benefit of residents of wealthier areas, particularly Kelburn and Mt Victoria (I grant Thorndon a short pass only because it's right on the faultline). If Kelburn and Mt Victoria took a higher, fairer and more appropriate share of densification - as they should, given their close proximity to the centre of town - then it would allow greater nuance and staggering of heights within Newtown, to better protect sunlight access for existing residents while still allowing for necessary growth.

I think that the additional 80,000 should be spread throughout all suburbs. I agree that the CBD and inner-city suburbs should be allowed to increase height limits but it seems that the only targeted outer suburbs are ones that have people from poorer demographics i.e. Johnsonville and Kilbirnie. Karori for example has a train station and bus links but isn't considered in this plan? Why not?

Suggestions regarding building height

238 comments

A large amount of comments rejected the proposed height changes and advocated for lower height limits. While a considerable amount of respondents made general comments about wanting lower heights, a similar number stipulated that six storeys and above were unacceptable. This was often expressed in strong language using words like "nuts" or "terrible". Several respondents specified that four-storey buildings were still too high, and a moderate number of respondents stated that they considered three storeys an appropriate height limit. A small number felt that two storeys should be the maximum in the suburbs. The most frequently cited reasons for these objections were the impacts on residents whose homes would be overshadowed, the look of the suburb and the impacts on character, and the loss of sunlight.

A considerable number of comments argued that fine-tuning was needed, and that while high buildings might be appropriate in some areas these were much more limited than what was proposed in the Plan. Appropriate areas were generally considered to be those where buildings would not impact on current residents, in non-character areas, with other high buildings, or in the central city. A considerable number called for more care to be given to Wellington's topography, arguing that this has been given insufficient attention in the Plan. While more respondents advocated for building on flat land, citing issues with

transport and gradient, a small number of comments argued that tall buildings could be nestled against hills without impacting sunlight for other residents. Several respondents stated that they did not support mixing building typologies or “random” tall buildings, with a couple of comments suggesting that similar height lines were necessary. A small number of comments supported height changes or suggested that more areas could be zoned higher.

Transport and infrastructure discussions

440 comments

Infrastructure and amenities are already at capacity (228)

When asked where respondents would put an additional 80,000 people, a very large number of comments argued that general infrastructure networks and amenities are already running at capacity. While just under a third of these comments were made on infrastructure in general, concerns about the current state of the three waters infrastructure was cited by a substantial number of respondents. The need for more amenities to cater for the increasing population was a topic in a sizeable number of comments, with a considerable number citing schools and a moderate number citing health services as being already near or at capacity. One respondent summed this up:

Currently the infrastructure to support this council plan is not in place in the inner suburbs: sewerage, aging pipes, water supply, parking, green spaces, schools (where are the schools? Existing schools are at capacity).

There was concern about the current state of general infrastructure and its inability to cope with the increase of a further 80,000 residents in the city. The consensus in a considerable number of these comments was on fixing these issues, alongside the need for planning prior to the development of new residential housing. Finally, a focus on waste management and roading/transport highlighted their current inadequacy, with several respondents commenting on each. A small number of comments focused on waste minimisation and composting.

Public and active transport supporting increase in population (212)

The development of public and private transport to service the current and WCC’s projected population growth of 80,000 residents was commented on by a very large number of respondents. The need for improved, reliable, and affordable public CBD transport, and around Wellington, was argued by a large number of respondents with one respondent commenting:

The requirement for coherent and integrated housing plans to be serviced by logical, cost effective and attainable transportation services is critical if any hope of reaching the city's zero carbon goal by 2050 is to be realised.

In a similar vein, a moderate number of respondents specifically identified the need for public transport connectivity between the city and outlying suburbs and other centres. They suggested that new housing without carparking spaces would produce an increased reliance and pressure on the public transport system to move the future residents around the city, expressed in this way by one respondent:

If you are going to allow new housing to not have carparks you need to greatly improve the public transport first.

A general theme to connect pockets of intensification with the city through the public transport network was present in a large number of comments; this included the suggestion of satellite suburbs by several respondents. While the benefits of a train network as a means of mass transport was discussed in a moderate number of comments, just under half voiced their support for light rail to connect outer suburbs and outlying satellite cities with the city centre. However, several respondents commented that public transport is not the answer for everything or everyone, particularly the elderly, people with mobility

issues or caregivers/parents taking their children to after school activities etc. The inadequacy of public transport for residents who work outside of normal business hours (e.g. nurses, hospitality) was raised in a small number of comments, highlighting the serious need for car parking near these workplaces.

The impact an additional 80,000 residents in Wellington would have on the roading network was an issue for a large amount of respondents. The scarcity of car parks in residential streets was addressed in almost half of these comments, while several respondents argued the necessity and reality of continuing usage and reliance on private cars as a means of transport around the city.

The predicted increase in population by WCC was envisaged to worsen the existing traffic problems in Wellington and was commented on by a considerable number of respondents, with one stating:

My concern is the impact of congestion from the outer suburbs. Not enough evidence of transport planning is found in the draft plan. Congestion in the AM and PM commute periods from Newlands has already worsened over the last 5 years. Public Transport reliability is not adequate/practical for professionals. Rail options don't exist.

However, comments in support of less car parking and fewer cars were also made by several respondents, as well as commuting being raised in a small number of comments.

Support for active transport was voiced in a considerable number of comments with a fairly even representation between walking and cycling, while a small number of respondents raised some opposition to active transport.

Values and concerns

1,387 comments

Many respondents' suggestions were motivated by specific concerns or demonstrated particular values. These themes were repeated in respondents' comments throughout the survey, and are discussed in more detail elsewhere in the report. Brief summaries of these topics follow.

Impacts on residents and quality of life (548)

A very large number of respondents felt that the proposed intensification would have significant detrimental impacts on Wellington residents' quality of life. These ranged from general comments about "liveability", "human-scale", and "suburban environments", which people felt would be diminished, to more specific concerns. Prominent among these was the fear that tall buildings would block sunlight from one- and two-storey homes, with a large amount of respondents concerned about the consequent impacts on warmth, mental and physical health, and residents' gardens. Privacy and view shafts were also deemed to be at risk, and several comments noted that wind tunnels would increase. A considerable number of respondents were worried about the aesthetic effects of uncontrolled new buildings, expressing a fear that they would be "ugly boxes" that were not sympathetic to the rest of the area. A considerable number of comments expressed a fear that their sense of connection to their community would be lost with the advent of tall apartment buildings. This comment summed up many respondents' general feelings:

Quality of suburban life, including the ongoing mental health of Wellingtonians appears to have had little consideration in the current planning

A substantial number of respondents extolled the value of green space and trees for wellbeing, which they felt was left out of the Plan. And a considerable number claimed that apartment buildings would not meet people's, particularly families', need for space and backyards, or even balconies, such as the following comment:

Will there be balconies to sit in the sun, grow food, just get outside. I note that very few of the new builds in the city or the suburbs have balconies or decks. Where is the connection to nature? Recent studies during covid showed that people need nature and it is an important part of our

mental wellbeing. Having a small deck or balcony means getting outside into the sun or growing a few veges or just sitting. Sun, sun, sun – it's all about sun.

Several comments also noted that the Plan had not sufficiently taken accessibility for older or disabled residents into account. A small number of comments raised fears about crime or other social issues, saying they did not want high-rise "slums" or "ghettos" in their suburb.

Character and heritage (270)

The threat of future type 4 and 5 buildings in current character and heritage areas was a significant reason provided to support the retention and protection of these inner suburban areas. These respondents felt that their scale and history were seen to contribute significantly to the city's streetscape and attractiveness and should be protected rather than overshadowed and devalued by larger scale multi-storey developments. A very large number of comments supported this narrative, and the development of greenfield sites were suggested as an alternative location. One respondent commented:

There are a number of historic pockets around Wellington (e.g. Aro Valley, Newtown, Thornton), which ironically, are many of those areas featured in the WCC ads. These areas provide Wellington much of its character. While I agree with certain areas of, for example, Te Aro undergo further development (as is already happening), care needs to be taken to ensure that such changes do not abruptly alter the landscape or feel of these historic areas.

Another respondent suggested a more considered and phased approach in the comment below, which is representative of several more respondents' views:

Focusing on inner city growth primarily, with inner city suburbs, makes sense, but you do not need to demolish character homes and neglect character rules for these areas to do so. There is a balance here, and ignoring it for now is not necessary. We still have time to figure out a balance, and it is far smarter to play it safe and protect the places and buildings that make Wellington special before we finalize it, instead of absentmindedly destroying the very character that makes our city what it is.

Generally, a loss of character or identity was also feared for outer suburbs through the invasion of type 4 and 5 buildings, as this comment demonstrates:

Having the likes of 6 storey buildings in the outer suburbs (Tawa/Johnsonville etc.) will destroy the character and feel of suburban living, these large buildings are also a visual pollution.

However, the relaxation of heritage protection was supported by a moderate number of respondents to advance future residential development and growth in the inner suburbs of Wellington.

Changes after Covid-19 (159)

Lifestyle changes wrought by the Covid-19 pandemic were mentioned by a very large number of respondents who felt these had not been reflected in the Plan. Comments frequently mentioned the move towards working from home, suggesting that this made suburban living more appealing and underscored the importance of having a spacious home, as well as providing the opportunity for office blocks to be repurposed into accommodation. Respondents also noted that dense living and mass transit exacerbated the risk of pandemics and infection spread.

Affordability and housing (153)

The topic of housing was raised by a very large number of respondents, with a third commenting on the capital's housing crises and another third commenting on housing design. The former group mainly

stated the need for more quality yet affordable housing, and several referenced the demand for tertiary student and young adult accommodation. Housing affordability became a topic in several comments, with a specific focus on the building cost of multilevel buildings leading to unaffordable purchase or rent demands, and the need for more social housing was also raised by a few respondents. The design of new housing received a sizeable number of comments, with the loss of sunlight and privacy being cited as concerns by several respondents, leading to a preference for terraced housing over the type 3 and 4 developments suggested by WCC. Over half of those agreed with the need to increase housing stock, while a quarter expressed the need for quality and healthy residences. The following points were made:

Housing should be sustainable, liveable, good quality, and affordable and fee-simple ownership options included, and avoid poorly constructed mega-blocks like Soho Apartments that obstruct views and sun. All should have green spaces, such as a "living roof", courtyards or balconies to help the wellbeing of our people and our planet.

The lack of affordable housing is one of the biggest social issues facing New Zealand today. I do strongly support more affordable, ecologically considerate development. I do support development within the areas mentioned, just not in the way it has been proposed. What is proposed is piece meal high rises that will result in an ugly characterless city without achieving the outcome of affordable liveable housing.

Several respondents expressed a preference for infill over the suggestion to construct taller apartment buildings, and a slight trend for intensification in inner-city suburbs was noted. The loss of value current homeowners would face as a result of taller buildings being constructed around them, resulting in shading, dampness, and altered atmosphere, was voiced in several comments. A link to people's wellbeing was made in a small number of comments, articulating the need for healthy, warm, and dry homes, with half specifically stating the need to upgrade character homes.

Anti-developer sentiment (96)

A sizeable number of respondents conveyed a distrust of "greedy" or "profit-driven" developers, and stated that it was "naïve" to believe they would create sympathetic developments that maintained suburban character and community fabric. Several comments suggested that landbanking and speculating would continue, or that economic incentives would result in developers building expensive properties, which would not result in the Plan's objective of more affordable housing. Suggestions for mitigating this included identifying "good" developers or the council requiring tight design controls or compulsory community input. The following comment sums up many of these arguments:

Recent history over the last four decades of developer insensitivity shows that this almost never happens and vile architectural atrocities result that resemble collections of shoe boxes get built to make a cheap dollar. They visually ruin an older area and are totally insensitive to everything. History shows assurances here are meaningless and can be taken with a big grain of salt and indicates the city's flavour and look will be served poorly by the Council and developers if care is not taken. Local residents and their associations must have design input into all new developments if you are serious about this.

Risk and Vulnerability (88)

Wellington's high earthquake risk was raised by a substantial number of respondents, who pointed out that increasing density in the city and suburbs would exacerbate this risk. A small number of respondents advocated for strengthening buildings or replacing earthquake-prone buildings, but the majority expressed a feeling that Wellington's "seismic limitations" meant it was not and would never be suitable for intensification. Respondents described fears that fatalities would increase, that there would be no

open spaces for residents to shelter in the central city and that the amount of people needing emergency support would be unmanageable. It was also noted that continually rising insurance costs would act as a barrier to affordable housing. Respondents also pointed out that sea level rise would affect several suggested areas for intensification; they argued for both more research on risk and a focus on locations that were more resilient.

Environment and Sustainability (55)

Increased attention to sustainable design and the environmental pressures of intensification was highlighted as a priority by a substantial number of respondents. Comments frequently raised concerns with the lack of green and wildlife corridors in the Plan, the waste and carbon emissions created from demolishing old buildings and creating new ones, the environmental pressures created by more residents, and the effects of increased noise and pollution on wildlife and domestic animals. Comments called for “green” public transport options and suggested water-sensitive design (including the retention of golf courses/green space to soak up water). Respondents generally felt that these issues had been given insufficient attention or “lip service”, and that biodiversity, trees, and green space should be planned with “as much detail for this as there is for buildings”.

Rates and cost (13)

Respondents queried the cost of new or upgraded infrastructure to support intensification, suggesting that the Plan did not address what this cost would be or who would cover it. A small number of comments mentioned that rates were already extremely high and suggested developers should cover the cost of new infrastructure. Respondents also noted that greenfields expansion would be cheaper than within the city, and that potential costs from earthquakes or hazards should be included in the Plan.

Mana Whenua involvement (5)

Including Mana Whenua in the planning processes and their outcomes for future residential developments, or a co-design with iwi/hapū, were favoured by a small number of respondents. It was felt that this would ensure more successful outcomes including the appropriate treatment of wahi tapu and sites of cultural significance.

Other

173 comments

There were some remaining points made in a very large number of comments; they focused on, in order of frequency: other WCC actions; employment and work; against limits, or WCC involvement; rejection of projected growth, alternative housing; Significant Natural Areas (SNA) comments, and other.

Other WCC actions were the topic in a considerable number of comments and over half expressed an opposition to landbanking, with a number of submissions making exactly the same point. Instead, it was suggested that WCC should take the initiative to encourage or instruct developers to either develop or sell derelict sites:

I would prefer the council to find ways of incentivising owners of banked land in and around the city, and unused or derelict commercial land and properties, to release that land - or develop it themselves - before commencing a programme of densification in the central and inner city suburbs. [...] In the event that banked land solution would still not provide sufficient housing, a less extreme system of densification could be planned.

A suggestion provided in a small number of comments was the implementation of a national policy to drive this forward. A similar vein was reflected by a further small number of respondents who encouraged a regional approach to future growth allocations and distributions, while a final few suggested that rate increases on identified land may discourage landbanking. The current WCC Urban Development Strategy was found preferable to the Plan’s proposal regarding population distribution growth in a small number of comments. The handling of development and demolition of buildings was discussed in a few

comments and support was voiced for more character protection and financial incentives to enable their renovation, while it was suggested that new developments should require notified consents.

Employment and work arrangements were identified to be changing, not only triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic but also as part of the Government's decentralisation. This is discussed in the following statement:

With COVID there has been a dramatic shift in the way people work, with people and organisations now expecting that working from home is just as productive as an office. This has seen a large number of people continuing to work from home and looking to move out of the city. Their needs to be more research on the modelling of additional people to the city in light of COVID. As the commercial demand for office space declines (organisations are relocating or downsizing or doing things differently), those towers can be repurposed for residential apartments.

Views consistent with this sentiment were represented in a considerable number of comments, with two thirds supporting the work from home trend, which was argued to lead to fewer people living in the central city. In turn, a small number of respondents suggested that empty commercial buildings should be repurposed to accommodate some of the additional population WCC is projecting. Close proximity between home and work was deemed to be preferable in a small number of comments.

Criticisms of WCC were voiced in a moderate number of comments with broad topics. The main points included the rejection of proposed building heights, contained in a small number of comments while an equal number were in favour of height minimums, especially in the central city.

Alternative housing options were mentioned in several comments, with the accommodation of tiny homes suggested in a small number of comments. The remaining respondents expressed a range of alternative housing solutions including floating homes and cooperative / iwi-built projects that are more community focused.

Comments on SNAs made up a small number of comments and were divided in their view, either in support of more protection or freeing up more land for development. Remaining points mentioned in a considerable number of comments were grouped under other topics were generally and frequently not directly focused on the Draft Spatial Plan or the questions asked.

Concerns with process

385 comments

A very large number of respondents expressed disagreement or queried the reliability of the 80,000 population growth figure that the Draft Spatial Plan is based on, arguing that many of the proposed changes in the Plan are therefore unnecessary. These comments generally expressed that this figure is at the upper level of the population growth estimate, which people thought was "unrealistic", "exaggerated", or "incorrect". A number of people cited other projected figures from a range of sources or argued that a medium or "most likely" estimate should have been used instead. Other respondents noted that it was not clear what information this number had been based on or that the information was outdated, and requested more information about the assumptions underlying the Draft Spatial Plan. Others suggested using different population growth scenarios to plan possible options:

I think you need to justify the projection of 80,000 additional people. That appears to be the very top end of possibilities and probably quite unlikely, and is being used to justify the planned densification. A more honest approach would have been scenarios -what do we need if the population grows by 20,000, 50,000 etc.

Respondents also noted that the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic are likely to affect these numbers, citing changes to migration patterns as well as changes to working habits that mean people are more likely to live outside the city. Others stated that central government is planning to create regional hubs

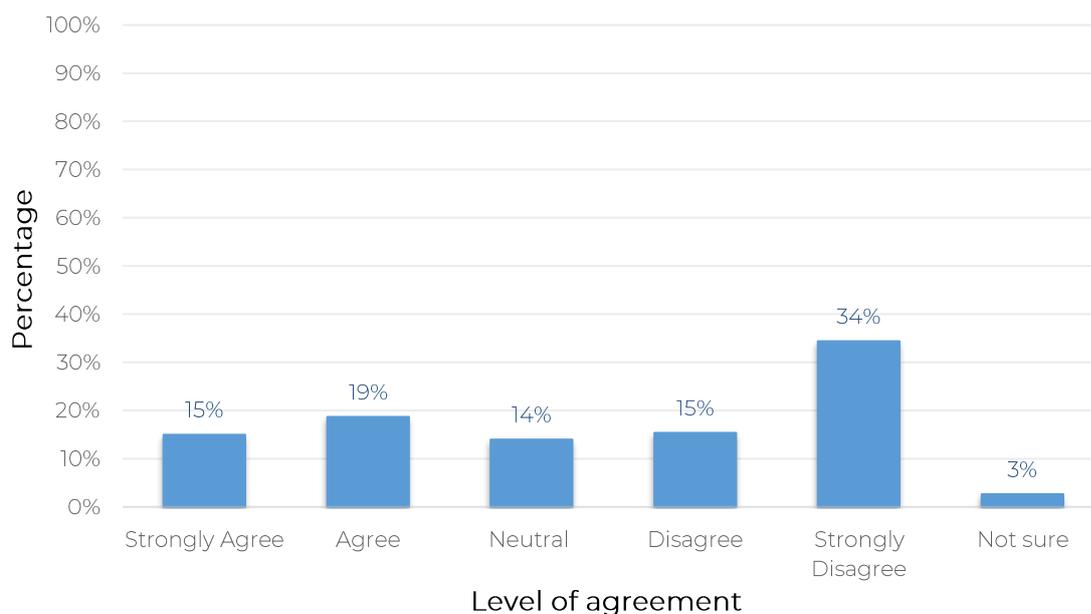
that will decrease Wellington's growth. Many of these comments called for the Draft Spatial Plan process to be paused until new population figures that accounted for post-Covid changes could be used:

Previous patterns of employment, family formation, migration, overseas student arrivals, and location of workplaces (home or office) among others are in a state of flux. The assumptions as to population growth and land utilisation on which the Spatial Plan is predicated will always be guesses but are now even more likely to turn out to be inaccurate because individuals may make quite different life decisions and future governments may change national policy settings particularly in relation to international student intakes and immigration post-Covid.

Extent to which respondents agree/disagree with WCC's balance of heritage protection and need for new housing in inner suburbs

Respondents were asked: To what extent do you agree or disagree with how we have balanced protecting special character and providing new housing in the inner suburbs?

Extent respondents agreed/disagreed with how WCC has balanced protecting special character and providing new housing in the inner suburbs



Key findings:

- > 2,040 respondents answered this question
- > Half (44%) of respondents *disagreed* with how WCC has balanced protecting special character and providing new housing in the inner suburbs – 34% *strongly disagreed* and 15% *disagreed*
- > Over one third (34%) of respondents *agreed* – 15% *strongly agreed* and 19% *agreed*
- > Fourteen percent of respondents were *neutral* and 3% were *not sure*

What is special about the character of the inner suburbs

2,934 comments

Respondents were asked: We want to make sure we keep what is special about the character of the inner suburbs as we provide new houses in these areas. What about character in these suburbs is important to you?

Summary: what is special about the character of the inner suburbs

- **Support for the protection** of character in inner suburbs was discussed from multiple perspectives. Coherent streetscapes were particularly special, created by the repetition of similar features, such as: established trees, small gardens, and homes of a similar scale and style often close to streets. The benefits that the community and pedestrians experience from interactions with these neighbourhood features was also considered valued.
- **Natural features of character areas** were the most highly valued individual character component, including many references to green spaces and leafy streets. Specific special aspects were the green spaces within individual residences, particularly front and back gardens – cherished for the environmental, physical, social, and mental benefits that they provide residents.
- **Architectural details and aesthetics** of character homes were admired for their individual design and for the coherent character look they create as a collective. Specific features that were identified were: ornate detailing (particularly around windows, doors and eaves), pitched and gable roofs; verandas; and, stained glass or sash windows. The low-rise nature of homes and the human-scale benefits that this offers, such as unobstructed sunlight and views, was also valued. For some, building materials were special features, in particular native timber.
- **'Wellington's character'** was an aspect to be cherished by some. It was common for respondents to state that Wellington's identity is characterised by its iconic character homes, which as a collective, create images valued by locals and tourists.
- **Character being about community** and belonging – that the people who live in neighbourhoods create the basis of character, rather than the buildings – with the point being that a place becomes less diverse and character reduces if only similar people live in the same area.
- **Character from more than a European architectural perspective** was sought by a smaller number of respondents, who felt that what is considered character should be broadened to include Te Ao Māori. This was often voiced as a criticism of the Plan, with a partnership approach encouraged.
- **Threats to character** were commonly discussed, with respondents describing what they did *not* want to see in character areas. Elements that people feared would degrade character included tall buildings that would obstruct sunlight and views; and some modern architecture, specifically grey, concrete-block buildings.
- **Planning regulations** to enable the delivery of desirable outcomes was discussed from multiple perspectives, including: urban design requirements to deliver quality aesthetic building outcomes; comments in opposition and support of allowing density and intensification; consenting requirements based on regulated standards.
- **Topics discussed not directly describing character values were:** a balance sought between heritage and quality affordable homes; a mix of old and new residential homes to encourage character and diversity (both architectural and human); modern interpretation of character encouraged; support for heritage protection zones; there was opposition from some towards blanket heritage protection, with some believing that character and heritage should come second to providing healthy affordable homes; equity/fairness in terms of the areas that are

and are not impacted by change was important to some – specific places identified were Berhampore and Newtown.

- A group submission was received from residents of Thorndon, that expressed their concern for the character of their suburb. This submission is summarised at the end of this section.

Support protection of character

1,467 comments

The most frequently made comments in response to this question supported protecting Wellington's character areas. Over 700 comments discussed residential building features that made Wellington's character homes so special to residents. Additionally, a very large number of comments were made supporting the protection of character areas more generally, made by respondents who valued these aspects of Wellington's built environment. Moreover, above 200 comments were made by respondents who felt that Wellington's character areas are part of what gives the city its identity.

Residential building characteristics that respondents valued (744)

Respondents commented on the characteristics that they value in Wellington's inner suburbs' character homes.

Natural features of character homes were the most frequently appreciated elements, mentioned by a very large number of respondents. A substantial number of these comments made reference to "green space", "green" or "leafy" streets, or other general comments approving of the natural environment in these areas. These comments generally did not elaborate to a great extent as to why these features were valued.

A sizeable number of respondents liked that many of the older homes in the area have front and/or back gardens, which were seen as beneficial for mental health; were visually pleasing, added to the overall aesthetic and feel of the area; and helped to sustain native birdlife and biodiversity. Several respondents also noted that gardens provide a great place for children and pets to play – and suggested that those living in apartment blocks would really be missing out on the benefits of having a garden. A comment that sums up this fondness of gardens and green spaces was:

The pre-1930 suburbs have houses with gardens. Many gardens are well tended. Old trees are also a feature in these neighbourhoods. These features add to restful character of some areas.

A moderate number of respondents also noted that the low-rise nature of these homes means that residents have access to green or natural views, whether that is their own garden, street trees, or views over the city. Access to sunlight was also frequently mentioned alongside views, and on its own as a valued natural feature. The following quote represents the overall sentiment from this group of respondents:

Wellington's heritage houses and their gardens are of a comfortable, 'human' scale that fits well with our hilly landscape and allows residents to have sunlight and views of the green belt and sea.

Architectural details and aesthetics were admired by a very large number of respondents, who discussed the features they love most. A substantial number of respondents made general comments about the elements they liked, such as "the beauty of the old housing", "the architecture", "the design", or "architectural features". Several comments referred to the "coherent" look of character areas, noting that the uniform look of the homes and streets in some areas was pleasing:

The size, scale and uniformity of the houses - similar size and style of houses, often with similar timber fences and often located near the street.

Meanwhile, several respondents noted that they appreciated the variety of architectural styles in these areas. One such comment reads:

What I most like about the character of these suburbs is their visual variety and "fine grained" nature, ie. the narrow road frontages of most houses and buildings. Additionally, it is the wide variety of building ages and types (villas, bungalows, art deco and modernist apartments). These two factors provide for density while adding visual appeal to these suburbs, while keeping away from a "monotonous" visual landscape.

Several other respondents made more specific comments, emphasising particular features that they appreciated about Wellington's character homes. These included: ornate detailing (particularly around windows, doors, and eaves), pitched and gable roofs; verandas; and stained glass or sash windows. Below is one comment that exemplifies this:

The pre-1930s houses are special and bring out the character of our city with large bay windows, double-hung windows, gables, and verandas.

A moderate number of respondents noted that they liked the colourful nature of the painted weatherboard character homes.

Low-rise, low-density housing and associated benefits were also discussed by a very large number of respondents. Around half of these comments were general in nature, simply stating that respondents liked low-rise, low-density or "human -scale" buildings. Other comments offered more detail about *why* these factors were valued, including: easy, unobstructed access to sunlight and views; fears that building higher would cast shadows on existing properties; and, that low-rise living was more conducive to community engagement and a sense of community than apartment living. Several comments noted that the shade likely from taller buildings being built in the inner suburbs could create problems with cold, damp or unhealthy homes if sunlight was obstructed, or commented simply that it would reduce the quality of life for residents or impact the look and feel of the suburb.

A substantial number of respondents mentioned sunlight and/or views – often, these were discussed concurrently. As mentioned above, a significant portion of these comments were general in nature, some simply stating "views and sunlight". However, others, such as the example below, seemed to indicate fear amongst respondents that these things could be lost if the Draft Spatial Plan is implemented:

Sun & views, whether of the sea or hills or trees. (Taller buildings could have a dramatic impact on these).

One respondent noted that even if density and building heights need to be increased, measures should be taken to protect the viewshafts of important Wellington icons. An example given was the National War Memorial Carillion, which they argued should have a protective boundary placed around it, within which buildings must be kept to a certain height to allow the structure to be visible.

Streetscapes were another valued feature of Wellington's character areas, drawing comment from a sizeable number of respondents. More than half of these comments noted the value of the cohesive, tidy and uniform streetscapes, complete with picket fences, small gardens, trees, and houses of a similar scale and style, often close to the street. One example of the comments made by this group of respondents read:

Maintaining a consistent streetscape. The inner city, particularly Mt Victoria has a more unified appearance which previous restrictions have applied therefore ensuring that the character of Mt Victoria is respected and appreciated locally and internationally. It attracts visitors local and

international who appreciate the period feel and any thing which will upset the streetscape from its historic roots appearance would be a big loss.

Iconic street frontages seen in some character areas in Wellington's inner suburbs were commented on by a considerable number of respondents. Generally, these respondents liked that character homes were often set close to the road with front gardens and low fences that project a more welcoming feeling than higher fences. Several respondents also noted that the streetscapes described above make the inner suburbs walkable and enjoyable for the community. The following comment sums up the overall sentiment of respondents who commented about the value of streetscapes:

A natural and interesting streetscape and a good interaction between pedestrians and their environment is vital for a healthy city.

Building materials used in pre-1930s Wellington homes were discussed by a sizeable number of respondents, all of whom admired the look and/or function of these materials. Almost all of these comments also discussed other features that respondents valued as well as the building materials used. The following is an example of such a comment:

I value the diversity of style, workers' cottages mixed in with more affluent properties, timber houses with gardens and connection to the street and each other. A sense of community and neighbourhood. A sense of history (which doesn't have to mean 'historic' or 'heritage'). The diversity of cultures, ages and incomes that make Newtown the vibrant community it is today.

"Wooden houses" and weatherboard cladding were the most frequently mentioned, with respondents commending both the aesthetic value of these building materials, as well as their resilience. Several comments noted that these homes were often built using native timber, such as Kauri, and that this should be valued. A small number of comments suggested that Wellington should return to building new homes using natural or local materials, and a similar number noted the skill and craftsmanship involved in creating the city's old homes.

Value heritage and character generally (495)

A very large number of respondents commented about the value of protecting Wellington's character areas more generally. Over half of these comments made general statements about the importance of protecting character homes. Comments ranged from very broad statements such as "preserve character houses", to more detailed comments about *why* character protection was important to respondents. The reasons given included: that respondents had grown up in or around character homes; that these buildings give "soul" or character to the inner suburbs that could not be matched by modern buildings; that they represent Wellington's history; and that they are aesthetically pleasing.

Amongst these comments were also more specific calls for protection of character areas.

A moderate number of respondents mentioned the community aspect of character areas, noting that pleasant streetscapes with low-rise housing, front gardens and low fences were conducive to an open community feel. Respondents argued that this community feel would be destroyed if character protections were removed and multi-storey developments were erected in character areas.

Several comments made the point that once these character buildings are gone, it is impossible to get them back, some of them expressing concern that future generations will look back at this period and regret the largescale demolition of character homes. One respondent wrote:

Reconsider this as there is no going back once the wrecking ball of growth is given the green light.

Several other comments questioned the plan's focus on 'progress', with a small number of comments suggesting that this view of progress is short-sighted. Meanwhile, several other respondents noted that while progress was necessary, a better balance could be struck between providing more homes and retaining character areas.

Other comments were received from concerned residents who worried about the impact the plan may have on the value of their properties, noting that with character demolition controls being loosened, there is now a risk of neighbouring properties being bought and replaced with multi-storey developments which would devalue their assets. One such respondent wrote:

I estimate \$500,000 would be wiped off my property value with the proposed plan changes if townhouses or midrise are allowed to be built next door. I am in the higher percentile of Wellington ratepayers, if not New Zealand, paying nearly \$10,000 a year in rates and wish to have a say in things that will affect my asset value and that of the street.

A small number of comments noted that though they personally value character, Wellington cannot expect to preserve all of its character buildings, as progress is necessary. These comments suggested protecting only the best, entire streetscapes, and well-maintained character homes, but opposed blanket protection.

Character and heritage are what makes Wellington special (228)

Another extensive group of comments were received from respondents who urged WCC to protect Wellington's character, as this is what makes Wellington, Wellington. Character areas, in particular the rows of character homes on Wellington's hilly inner suburbs were frequently described as "iconic" and "uniquely Wellington". In fact, over a quarter of comments in this group mentioned the word "iconic" in relation to Wellington's character areas and buildings.

A substantial number of comments noted that Wellington's identity is defined by its character homes and streets, or that these areas are what gives Wellington its "charm". Several respondents pointed out that images of these areas, such as Mount Victoria, are frequently used to promote Wellington City, or that when people think of Wellington, images of these character streets come to mind. One such comment was:

Loss of heritage and character is also a consideration - look at the photos the council itself chooses to use as the "poster child" for Wellington - how would that shot of MT Victoria look dotted with 6 story boxes.

A considerable number of comments mentioned the role of Wellington's iconic character areas in drawing tourists, both domestic and international, to the city. A small number of these comments noted that Wellington is unique in New Zealand for its well-preserved Victorian and Edwardian homes, which should be seen as a valuable tourism asset and protected accordingly.

Overall, comments from this group of respondents felt that Wellington is a city defined by its character areas, and that to lose these treasured buildings would be to lose part of the city's identity.

Oppose modern development

260 comments

Height Criticism (184)

These comments were opposing modern development related to concerns over height. There were two main specific elements of height that respondents opposed: a sizeable number of respondents were concerned with higher buildings limiting sunlight and views, and creating wind tunnels. This was one comment discussing sunlight:

Sunlight and privacy are basic human rights, do not impact sunlight into homes for residents by creating new developments.

A considerable number of respondents commented on how six to eight-storey buildings destroy the character of many streets and suburbs.

Several respondents criticised the negative aesthetic effect and also the impacts on people's mental health. A similar number felt that there is greater earthquake safety in low-rise housing.

Criticism of Modern design (76)

A very large number of respondents referred to modern apartment blocks as destroying the character of the inner suburbs and streetscapes. Concrete blocks, grey in colour, ugly and soulless ghettos were words used to describe new build six-storey plus apartment buildings. Specific examples given were: Melksham Towers, 61 Norway St, Horner Street/Princess Terrace.

Balance sought between heritage and quality, affordable homes

296 comments

Mix of old and new (121)

A large number of respondents were in favour of a mix of old and new residential homes, to encourage visual character and diversity and bring new life into areas. To achieve this, several respondents proposed design and building standards guidelines, such as:

This existing plan allows tasteful quality design but more should be done to provide an assurance that quality progressive design (aesthetic and construction) is better enforced in these areas.

Variety. Good Design. Interest in terms of architecture, modernist apartment blocks add as much character to the city as 1930's villas for example. Don't let developers build cheaply.

Support for modern interpretation of character (112)

A large number of respondents stated that while there was a need to enable additional people to live in the inner suburbs and CBD, it is important that new development is at a scale and height that is sympathetic to the existing homes and streetscapes and does not block light. This was one of those comments that discussed how change could be successfully affected:

Wellington has a distinctive architecture, made up of a combination of Victorian, Art Deco and Postmodern styles. Change is inevitable, but new builds can retain the character of a neighbourhood, by implementing design features associated with the architectural style present in that area.

I am not opposed to development and in many areas the character can be enhanced by well-designed and well-built sympathetic housing, but height is not the only measure of how this can best be achieved. Intensifying housing in the inner city will require some bespoke approaches and will require monitoring quality and the demands it will place on the whole environment and existing services and infrastructure.

Support for heritage protection zones (63)

Respondents suggested that some character streets should be preserved or that smaller areas within a suburb, where character or appearance is consistent, should be consolidated and retained rather than one-off character housing dotted amongst newer builds.

The character houses in Newtown are unique and different to Thorndon or Mt Vic. All these different areas need to preserve their uniqueness to add to the character of Wellington as a whole.

Around half of these respondents focused on preserving character in specific locations such as Berhampore, Holloway Road, Kelburn, and Khandallah where unique pockets of high-value character are present. These areas were singled out for preservation with one comment noting that “a more surgical approach is needed to find a balance.”

Value in non-building features

674 comments

Other non-heritage aspects of character (373)

Character was described by some as neighbourhoods having a village feel and as being the lifestyle preference of residents. They expressed the need for places offering connection and interaction, including local small business, cafés, and community spaces both buildings and open green space. Respondents noted the importance of safe cycleways and walkable streets and a considerable number commented about the need to find solutions for the increased cars and current over-dense parking on inner suburban streets. Unique local features and places of significance were noted as worth preserving – maintaining sunlight and visual appeal as well as accessibility.

People create character (301)

A very large number of respondents made reference to character the sense of community and belonging that the people who live in neighbourhoods create as the basis of character, rather than buildings. These respondents want to maintain a range of housing and diversity of homeowners to include students, families, artists, migrants, professionals, and the elderly – attributing these groups to creating vibrancy and a sense of community. Several stated that gentrification of inner suburbs would destroy character.

In its current state young professionals and students are being priced and pushed out of these areas which will only serve to sterilise the inner city and suburbs as only the wealthy will be able to afford to live here.

Opposition to blanket protection

475 comments

Heritage a secondary consideration to providing healthy accessible homes. (433)

Protection of pre-1930s housing is a lower priority than providing warm, dry, safe, and affordable housing; this was a key point made by these respondents. They acknowledged that some case-by-case protection could be considered for areas or buildings of significance but wished to remove large blanket heritage status areas.

A large number of these respondents identified the need to provide access to housing for an increasing and diverse population –through intensifications and new buildings – with an emphasis on healthy, earthquake-safe homes and a preference for lower building heights and medium density in the inner suburbs. This was one of those comments:

Nothing is more important than building quality affordable homes for existing and future residents.

Preference of modern design or suggested Wellington grow into a modern city (42)

A moderate number of respondents were opposed to broad blanket protection of heritage. Some felt that a property-by-property approach was better, while others held this opinion:

A more nuanced approach to designating character areas is needed.

Several respondents stated a preference for modern architectural design over character housing, and suggested that Wellington needs to be free to evolve to meet the needs of today's residents rather than being a museum to past occupants.

character can easily be created with new modern, smart, elegant, bold, and good design. As long as appropriate guidelines are in place there shouldn't be impediments to new build.

Comments about specific inner suburbs

314 comments

As the question was specific to the inner suburbs, most responses commented on areas of Mt Victoria, Newtown, Thorndon, Mt Cook, and Aro Valley that were significant in character or wanting specific restrictions in retaining their special character.

Planning considerations

256 comments

Urban design and Planning (99)

A sizeable number of respondents supported the need for strong aesthetic character design guidelines on development. This comment describes what some of these respondents consider is required:

The real issue is the retention of an urban character that is considered worthy. It requires a strict local aesthetic code that prevents the repetition of the developers' horrors that Council has already permitted in many parts of the city. It can be done and has been done in many cities overseas. It has been done in parts of Wellington - consider the medium density housing at the west end of Aro Street for example.

Within these comments, several identified the value of human-scale designs.

A considerable number of respondents suggested a planned approach or timing of development where firstly arterial routes and existing empty commercial properties, car sales yards, and empty spaces are identified as the priority for six- or more storey buildings and not building medium and high-rise buildings immediately adjacent to green belt areas or next to single storey houses in the inner suburbs.

Again, I strongly feel that density can and should be created along main arteries, using a retail on the bottom and five stories above structure. I'm not sure how you balance or rationalize six story buildings popping up next to single-family homes on a willy-nilly basis.

The Spatial Plan should be more gradually implemented in a controlled and considered way with intensification around key arterial routes such as Kent Terrace, Adelaide Road and Te Aro - these areas already contain higher density buildings which are with easy walkable distance to the CBD and development in these areas should be encouraged. A more gradual transition is preferable across a smaller defined area of the city to ensure more targeted development and growth occurs at a pace to meet housing demand. Otherwise random six storey or more developments (significantly higher with full site coverage buildings) will be developed in pockets in these character neighbourhoods at the expense of neighbours where the majority (owners, occupiers or tenants) wish to enjoy their properties in their current state and scale for a long time with existing amenity values. Having lived in Wellington all my life I have witnessed urban planning decisions of previous Councils to allow completely out of scale apartment dwellings be built in the Mt Victoria and Thorndon areas over several sites due to land merging which neighbours have had to live with the adverse effects for generations.

Comments supporting increased density or Intensification (63)

A substantial number of respondents supported increasing the provision of affordable housing and creating a city that is greener and less reliant on cars, with people living closer to work. It was also felt that denser suburbs would also increase city vibrancy. This was one of the comments:

My family lives off Lygon St in Melbourne and the density has led to thriving bars, shops, and restaurants. That's what I want Tinakori Rd to feel like!!

More intense development in those areas would provide more affordable housing with lower transport costs to access the city centre and its work, cultural, and sporting facilities.

Comments opposing increased density or intensification (43)

A considerable number of respondents argued that increasing density would destroy the character of the inner suburbs and the community. They also stated that intensification would increase the negative impacts of earthquakes, pandemics, and the pressure on current infrastructure, amenities, and street space.

Construction or consenting requirements (41)

Several respondents expressed the opinion that those living in impacted communities are best placed to decide what is worth preserving.

You need to work with each neighbourhood to understand what Character means and use that to define the new Character Areas and Sub-Areas.

A considerable number of respondents urged WCC to follow independent advice such as Boffa Miskell's recommendations or the NPS-UD exempting heritage sites and areas from intensification. A few comments suggested that decisions like this should not be up to a local council but are of concern to New Zealand's wider national identity and must involve Heritage NZ and tangata whenua. This was one all-encompassing comment:

Pre 1930s buildings contribute a great deal to Wellington's character through scale, form, detail and materials. Generally, they create a strong urban form, with limited setbacks and distances to boundaries, and do not have frontages dominated by garages/parking like more recent housing. These houses connect us to Wellington's early development. The change in styles illustrates the changing attitudes to design and home - the compact, practical workers cottage, to the highly decorative Victorian villa, to the more relaxed bungalow style. These designs also link us to wider historical design movements, particularly In the UK and the US, while being interpreted in a distinctly local style, i.e. timber weatherboards instead of brick cladding. Although many of these houses have been adapted and changed over time, and may not reflect the original designs, they should still require resource consent before demolition, so an individual assessment can be made. Incentives should also be in place to restore these houses to further strengthen these character areas. Density could be increased by subdividing and building at the back of plots. There are many suitable locations in the inner suburbs where new medium to high density housing can be located, rather than removing protections on the character housing.

Other comments supported smoother, quicker, and easier consenting processes than are currently in place.

Financial support for developments and developers (10)

Investment and support for landowners and incentives for developers to maintain character housing was supported by several respondents.

Māori heritage significance and consultation

16 comments

Consideration of iwi and Te Ao Māori more generally was discussed by a moderate number of respondents, all of whom wanted to see more of this included in the Spatial Plan. There was a desire for WCC to partner more with iwi to celebrate and understand Wellington's Māori history.

I would also add that protection of 1930's heritage houses is a very Pakeha view of heritage - and again question the basis of protecting colonial heritage over providing warm, affordable housing (especially when Maori homeownership is decreasing at a faster rate than Pakeha home ownership)

Several respondents considered heritage, centred around 'pre-1930s housing' to be problematic. These respondents argued that the Draft Spatial Plan's considerations of character and heritage focused only on colonial history, ignoring much of Wellington's Māori and natural history. These comments called for greater consideration of Māori history within the Spatial Plan. One respondent commented:

Character goes beyond our colonial history. I am saddened that our Maori history is not properly marked - there used to be a Pa where the Wellington Club currently stands, what other sites have been similarly desecrated? Our Maori history could be much better highlighted and understood.

Several respondents highlighted Pā sites such as in Te Aro, Thorndon, and Central Wellington that are not marked and have been impacted by modern developments. There was a desire for more of this heritage to be acknowledged and preserved. Others made reference to other pre-colonial landscape characters, such as:

It is really important WCC acknowledges pre-colonial landscape character as well as colonial character. These places (ascertained through korero with Te Taranaki whanui) include Te Puna Wai - the spring behind the hospital site, and the Omororo gardens (north facing Brooklyn hills). There are no doubt others.

A small number of other comments called for greater iwi consideration and consultation, or simply suggested that protecting Wellington's colonial buildings is being given too much priority over other factors. One respondent noted that an "outspoken, well resourced, privileged minority" who vehemently support colonial heritage preservation should not have their desires put above the needs of the general population, many of whom are currently unable to access suitable and affordable housing in the city they live, work, or study.

Other comments

64 comments

A broad range of other topics were discussed that didn't focus on what is special about Wellington's inner suburban history. These are briefly discussed below.

Equity and Fairness (28)

There was opposition to the Draft Spatial Plan and the council deciding what is heritage – the sentiment being that it is not the Council's place to decide what is deemed heritage. For example, there are places in Newtown that are not "grand" but have their own heritage value and should be protected.

Several respondents argued that the Plan is inconsistent in how different suburbs are treated. The sentiment was that poorer suburbs such as Berhampore and Newtown were going to be impacted more by higher-rise developments and more affluent suburbs would have less change and therefore less

subsequent impacts. Respondents referred to discrimination that seemed based on the socio-economic status of residents.

Greater value has been given to the historical value of more expensive housing and suburbs versus the majority of historic housing that can be found in Newtown

Several respondents were in favour of Newtown staying the way it is.

Expand the scope to include outer suburbs (9)

Respondents highlighted that there is character in the outer suburbs and requested for protection areas to include the outer suburbs, and not just focus on the inner suburbs – something that they felt was implied by the question.

Other topics covered (27)

A variety of other comments were received, including: a few respondents commented on not making Wellington a “Disneyland” façade, or turning neighbourhoods into tourist oddities, rather than suburbs people live in; older homes are beautiful and aesthetically pleasing, but if you own a home, you should be able to do with it as you please; once it’s gone it’s gone.

This comment looked to what may happen in the future, if the current trend continues:

More controls should be lifted - I can already see areas of the city, say Mt Victoria, where the removal of 'character' housing, and replacement with multi-story structures has improved the city. Practically, what are you going to do with these 'character' houses, once they get to be 200 years old? All they will be is a veneer of 'character' with most of the property reconstructed to use contemporary building materials etc - I mean already, how many 'character' houses haven't had insulation added, or gib board applied to walls - its just a slippery slope to they become a historical facade in a disney toy town...

Thorndon group submissions

Thirty-seven submissions were received that followed a prescribed format of bullet pointed comments. Some respondents omitted or amended certain points, but in general, all of these responses offered very similar arguments.

The general sentiment of these submissions was that respondents did not oppose residential intensification generally, but felt that due to the history and heritage of the suburb, Thorndon should be more stringently protected from intensification.

One submission describes Thorndon as “a heritage suburb of unique qualities and values which merits special attention”. In particular, respondents were concerned that heritage considerations had been specifically excluded from the formulation of proposals for Thorndon, and suggested that too much of the suburb’s heritage housing stock has been sacrificed already.

Specifically, respondents opposed the intention to rezone land in Thorndon on the City side of the motorway from “Residential” to “Central Area”, arguing that this would result in the total loss of heritage housing stock over time. Similarly, this group opposed the measures taken to promote new housing development on the Tinakori Road side of the motorway, arguing that this would also lead to further destruction of heritage housing stock.

Respondents supported the retention of existing planning controls, particularly the pre-1930 demolition rule, which respondents argued has worked well to preserve Thorndon’s heritage and residential character.

Overall, respondents who submitted this feedback called for greater protection of Thorndon’s heritage housing stock, and closed with the following statement:

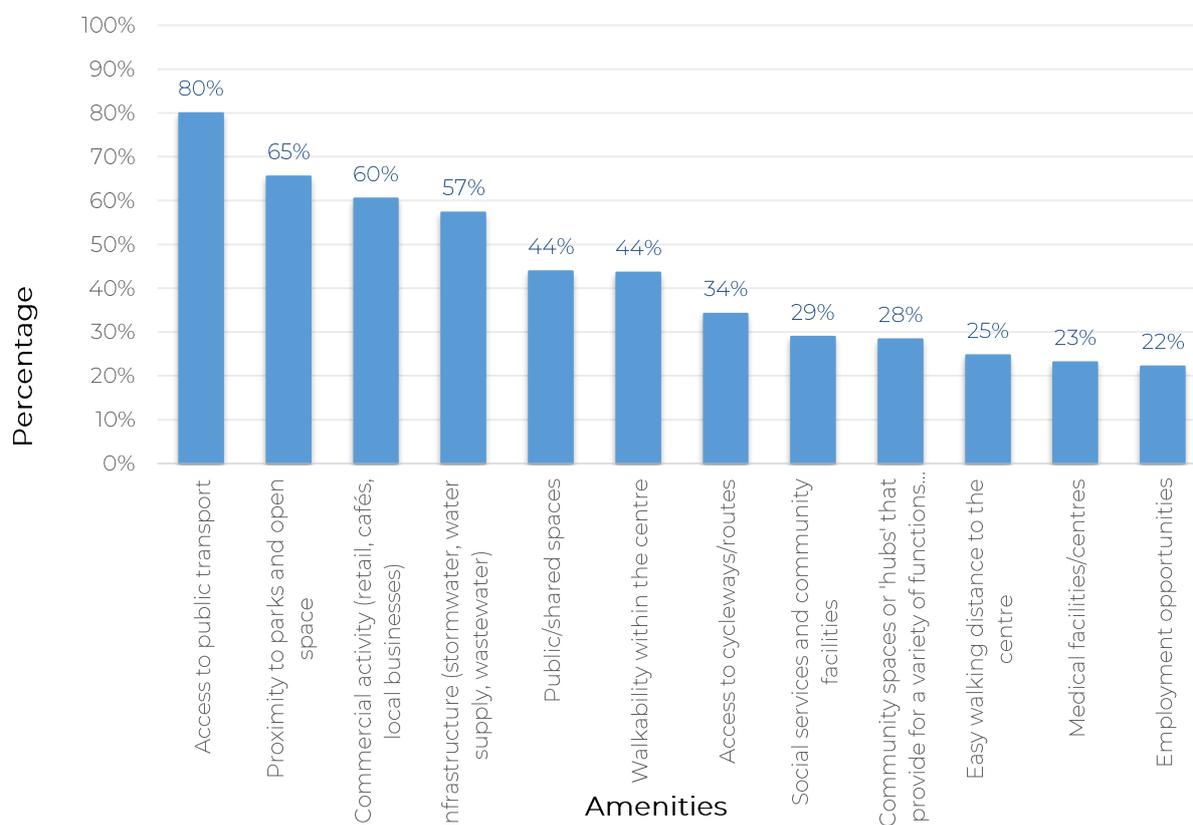
The protection of historic heritage is a matter of national importance and in this regard the Council should approach the future planning of Thorndon with a mindset of protecting, enhancing and promoting the suburb as a valuable heritage asset. This has been the policy for many years, and it is unconscionable that the Council is now actively working to oversee Thorndon's demise. Thorndon is a suburb worth fighting for.

Amenities to help create a vibrant suburban centre (other suggestions)

Respondents were asked: What amenities would you want to help create a vibrant suburban centre?

(Please pick your top 5 – options below)

Amenities respondents would want to help create a vibrant suburban centre



Key findings:

- > 2,047 respondents answered this question
- > The top four amenities respondents wanted for the creation of vibrant suburban centres were (wanted by a majority of respondents):
 - > Access to public transport (80%)
 - > Proximity to parks and open space (65%)
 - > Commercial activity (retail, cafés, local businesses) (60%)
 - > Infrastructure (stormwater, water supply, wastewater) (57%)
- > The following amenities were wanted by less than half of respondents
 - > Public/shared spaces (44%)
 - > Walkability within the centre (44%)
 - > Access to cycleways/routes (34%)
- > The following amenities were wanted by less than a third of respondents
 - > Social services and community facilities (29%)
 - > Community spaces or "hubs" that provide a variety of functions (*working, study, etc.*) (28%)

- > Easy walking distance to the centre (25%)
- > Medical facilities/centres (23%)
- > Employment opportunities (22%)

Other amenities suggested by respondents 901 comments

Respondents who selected 'other' when they answered the question above were able to specify amenities that weren't listed. A synthesis of *other* amenities that were proposed by respondents is presented below.

Summary: *other* amenities for the creation of a vibrant suburban centre

- The most common response to create vibrant suburban centres was to repeat or elaborate on the amenities that were listed as options to select from in the survey question. These included in order of frequency of discussion: **infrastructure**, because it is essential, and in particularly quality three waters provision; **shared public spaces**, for a variety of purposes; **commercial business** such as retail and hospitality; **accessible public transport** that is reliable and affordable, integration with and provision for accessible modes was also important; **health facilities** were also considered essential.
- **Built and natural environments**, for collective residential enjoyment, were considered important. Access to nature at home or nearby was also identified, especially to balance the impacts of planned increased intensification; there was a desire to increase provision to increase open and green space opportunities.
- **Development sequencing** was important for some, who wanted higher buildings developed first, and often near existing commercial developments.
- **Preservation of sense of place**, through heritage protection and the history and atmosphere they represent, as well as new buildings being sympathetic to what is valued in suburbs were also suggested to create vibrant suburban centres.
- **Transport considerations** were important from multiple perspectives: increased suburban parking was sought by some, counter to this though some observed that suburban intensification would require less car provision; transport infrastructure improvements were sought, including roads, footpath surfaces, and electric vehicle (EV) charging stations.
- **Community safety** enhanced by better safer transport options – in particular walking, cycling, and scootering provision was identified. Other aspects focused on were: playgrounds, vehicles speeds, and homeless people.
- **Adequate facility provision** was also sought in the form of: schools and pre-schools, particularly in growing areas, and more libraries. Greater provision for the arts and community festivals was also encouraged.
- **Inclusive design principles** in the form of multiple transport modes and access to buildings and public facilities were proposed. Accessible housing was also important to some, with some focused on housing affordability and others identifying the need to provide for a diverse community.

Discussion of options listed in the survey

276 comments

In response to what amenities respondents would want to help create a vibrant suburban centre, a very large number repeated items listed as options to select from in the survey question. Infrastructure was the most commonly discussed of these, with a considerable number of respondents suggesting that

infrastructure is essential, or making similar points. In particular, well-functioning water infrastructure (stormwater, water supply, wastewater) was supported, especially in light of forecast Wellington population growth. A moderate number of these respondents stated that water provision is a necessity, with a typical response being:

Infrastructure like stormwater etc should be a given as #1 and not counted in this 'nice to haves' list. It doesn't create a vibrant centre, It's an essential service.

Shared public spaces were also discussed by a considerable number of respondents. In particular, these respondents described the need for parks, with a few stating that they should be multifunctional to suit a variety of uses. Meanwhile, a small number stated that “imaginative” playgrounds would be welcomed. The need for teenage-friendly spaces was also articulated, in comments such as:

Not just kid parks but more basketball courts, skateparks, legal graffiti areas

A considerable number of respondents expressed the need to include commercial businesses in planning vibrant centres. A mixture of retail, café, greengrocer and/or farmers’ market, and a supermarket, with a few refining this to specify a “smaller supermarket”.

Accessible public transport was cited by a considerable number of respondents. The most common point made was focused on this being an essential service in a city, and for it to be reliable and affordable, with a few wanting it to be free. The integration of and connection to active transport – such as cycling, scootering, and walking – with public transport services was also highlighted by a few respondents, with one stating:

'transport routes' should by default be providing for all modes (cycle, scooter, bus, vehicle) in our future city.

Integrated transport for a considerable number of respondents included the need for safe cycle lanes, cycle routes and generally an inter-connecting network that would be easily accessible by the public. A moderate number of comments expressed the need for a walkable suburban centre, while several respondents highlighted the importance of living within walking distance to the centre. Another point mentioned by a moderate number of comments centred around social services and facilities, with libraries being the most requested.

A moderate number of comments stated that suburban centres need medical facilities, while the need for multifunctional community spaces was also mentioned several times. A small number of respondents expressed the need for employment opportunities, and another small number of comments argued for the inclusion and importance of Māori heritage representation.

Built and natural environment

251 comments

The built and natural environments’ contributions to the fabric of a suburban centre were discussed in a very large number of comments. Respondents expressed the importance of nature as either part of their home or nearby:

Denser housing without adequate adjacent provision of green spaces is a recipe to social disaster. Anyone living in an apartment, be they single people, families with children or older people needs ready access to open space and fresh air. Arguments that Wellington is well-served by the town belt are beside the point as what is required is recreational space close to where people actually live. Developers may have to work together to ensure adequate recreational space is provided, and the Council will have to acquire land for parks and other amenities.

A substantial number of comments argued that gardens, parks and trees need to be retained and others developed for public use, especially in consideration of future intensification. The need for private green spaces was highlighted in a small number of comments, while a few identified the importance of green corridors for birdlife and insects.

Planning topics were present in a substantial number of comments, with a moderate number stating that zones allowing higher buildings should be developed first. This sentiment frequently included being near commercial developments, such as a moderate number of comments focused on Newtown suburban centre:

New housing should be located near/in the heart of the Newtown's suburban centre. Let's put the taller apartments in areas already zoned for that type of approach and not mess up the character streets of Newtown.

The value of character buildings was recognised in a considerable number of comments. While some asked for more heritage recognition or protection, most focused on the history and atmosphere they represent. One respondent asked for:

Well kept heritage feel. Retaining the character of the suburbs that already have them, and updating / removing the post 1930's buildings that do not suit these areas already. Make them feel like home, and keep the parts of them that already do this.

This approach was further supported by a considerable number of respondents who commented on the sense of place and identity in existing suburbs, as something that should be enhanced and developed. A small number of comments expressed a dislike for the negative impact tall buildings may have on their surroundings including these issues — aesthetics, crowding, loss of view, and sunlight loss. It was stated that the articulation of future buildings needs to respond to existing natural and built environments deemed to be of quality and valued by the residents. A considerable number of comments expressed a wish for quality environments in their suburb, with sunlight, wind protection, and buildings of similar heights complementing each other. Several respondents focused on future-proofing neighbourhoods and buildings, with aspects such as earthquake resilience, climate change, and sustainability being represented most.

If there is going to be higher density housing (e.g. 3 to 6 story buildings) in suburban centres, there needs to be more focus on provision of infrastructure that will enable households to minimise their waste to landfill. The greatest minimisation of weekly waste to landfill, occurs when households are able to not send food waste to landfill, and this is best done through enabling worm farms, composting etc. It should be a requirement during development of any medium or high density dwelling that spaces are set aside where worm farms, composting and bokashi fermenting can be carried out. The final product of these systems could be put to use on site if there are gardens within the building (e.g. rooftop gardens for example) but even if there are no gardens attached to the building, the finished product could be collected by council or by a council-supported community garden situated somewhere in the suburban centre. We absolutely need to stop allowing so much organic matter to go to landfill, and housing development needs to be set up to enable this to be achieved.

Roads and traffic

125 comments

Roads and traffic were discussed in a large number of comments. A substantial number of these argued for increased suburban centre car parking, as they were considered transport connectors, especially for families, the elderly, and the disabled. Counter to this, a moderate number of respondents observed that suburban intensification would require fewer cars and increase active transport.

Improvements to existing provision was sought by another group of respondents. Road infrastructure and footpath surfaces were deemed to require attention by a moderate number of respondents, while several cited traffic congestion as being a priority issue requiring resolution. A small number of respondents would like the parking landscaping changed and argued for fewer carparks, seeking car sharing initiatives and active transport options to be the way of the future for suburban centres. One respondent said:

Increase support for car-sharing initiatives (i.e. Mevo), using car-sharing as a means to justify not supplying car-parking for new intensification developments that are within reasonable walking distance to the city centre, or public transport. Allocate space near common areas (i.e. outside large developments, parks, etc) for car-sharing parking. Provide short-term funding to incentivise car-sharing initiative to intensification developments (i.e. 5-10% discount on usage for people within new dense developments)

Charging stations for electric vehicles were suggested in a few comments while the remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments, and frequently not directly focused on the Draft Spatial Plan or the questions asked.

Safety, people & community, and culture

111 comments

Respondents expressed a need for safe transport modes and neighbourhoods. Lighting of footpaths and public spaces was commented on by a moderate number of respondents. One respondent commented:

Vibrant centres need all of the above choices, plus great footpath infrastructure that is safe, well maintained and well lit. Access should be an overarching aspiration to leave no one behind in housing and public transport that serves the centres.

Specifically, safe walking, cycling, and scootering routes for school children and preschoolers were mentioned by a small number of respondents, while a few said that these would also benefit the general public. Particular requests for separate cycle ways were made by a few respondents who cited safety as their main concern. Remaining points grouped under other topics were focused on playgrounds, lowering car speeds to 30km/h for cars, and support initiatives for homeless people.

Another focus was placing people and communities at the centre of vibrant suburbs. Amongst a moderate number of comments, one respondent stated:

If we're talking about vibrant and engaged suburbs, then Newtown must be a gold standard. It's a walking suburb with strong community. It's worth the WCC examining what makes Newtown a great place to raise a family or have a flat with your mates and build this into the city's blueprint future. The Newtown Festival is a fantastic example of an event that brings 70,000+ people a year to the suburb, is smoothly run on the day by an army of local volunteers and leaves no trace of its presence at 8am on Monday morning when you're heading to work.

Facilities that cater for people-centred communities made up a substantial number of comments, with just under half of those arguing for an adequate number of schools, particularly in growing suburbs, while several supported more libraries. The need for childcare centres in suburban centres to grow with populations was noted by a small number of respondents. The remainder were one-off suggestions.

A theme of cultural value was expressed in a moderate number of comments. Over half of them mentioned leisure, entertainment, and the arts – with a few respondents referring to the success and vibrancy of the Newtown Festival as an example. Respondents discussed a wide range of leisure and entertainment amenities, with art (both visual and performance) being mentioned in a small number of comments. Several comments suggested heritage, festivals, and multifunctional open public spaces that

would facilitate these activities. The integration and inter-relationship between heritage and different art forms was summed up by one respondent as:

Access to heritage and cultural sites, experiences and stories. Public artworks. Visible layers of history through physical reminders in the landscape, and storytelling (interpretation, artworks). Opportunities to interact with heritage and culture in a meaningful way.

Accessibility and housing

53 comments

A moderate number of comments centred on the accessibility and inclusive design principles of suburban centres, and their facilities, to all residents. This was sought by providing for multiple transport modes, including: cycling, scootering, driving, and public transport. They spoke also of general access into buildings and amenities for people of all physical abilities. The need and accessibility to housing was another theme, with a considerable number generally commenting on housing needs, while a small number of these comments focused on housing affordability. Locating high-density housing in the Newtown suburban centre and near commercial developments was suggested by several respondents, including behind the historic shop front. The need for social housing was also highlighted in a few comments, while a few respondents noted that apartment buildings should focus on creating diverse communities characterised by a variety of income levels, age groups, and owners and renters.

Other topics

85 comments

A considerable number of other topics were covered, with relatively small numbers of comments on each. A small number of respondents urged WCC to engage with individual communities on the needs and the development of their suburban centres; it was anticipated that such engagement would result in better outcomes. The necessity to have public transport was commented on by a few respondents, while the importance of commercial activity in a vibrant suburban centre was mentioned in a few other comments. A preference for the WCC to consult with communities individually was argued by a few respondents, rather than a blanket approach to suburban growth planning. Inclusiveness was a topic mentioned by a moderate number of respondents, focusing on different age groups, with the elderly and teenagers each being mentioned in a small number of comments, while accessible design solutions featured in a few comments. One respondent proposed:

One goal needs to be that a suburban centre should fulfil as many needs as possible for the residents living around it.

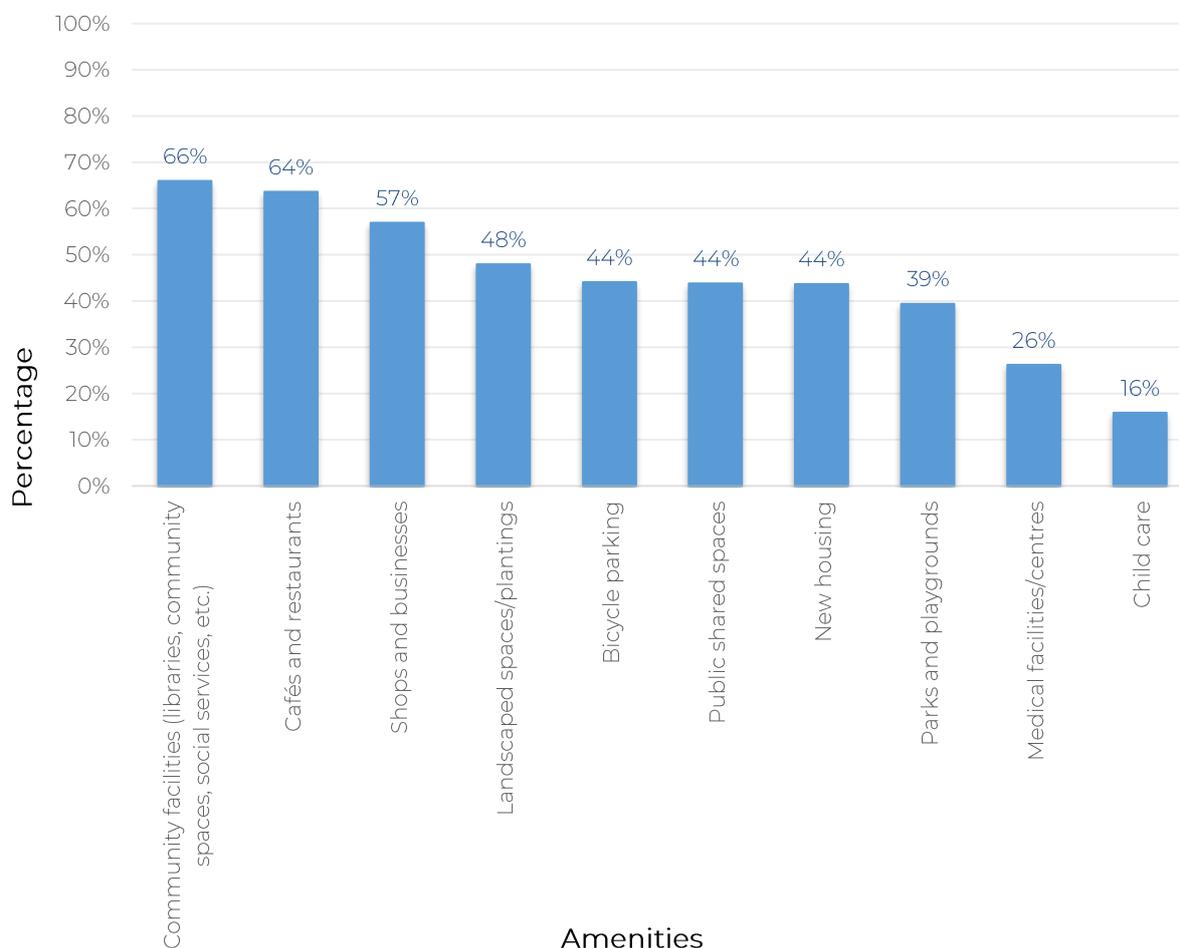
The need for public toilets in suburban centres was articulated in a few comments, while a few comments were not directly relevant to the question asked.

Desired amenities around future mass rapid transit stops

Respondents were asked: What amenities would you want to see around future mass rapid transit stops?

(Please pick your top 5 – options below)

What amenities would you want to see around future mass rapid transit stops?



Key findings:

- 2,047 respondents answered this question
- The top four amenities respondents wanted to see around future mass rapid transit stops:
 - > Community facilities (libraries, community spaces, social services, etc.) (66%)
 - > Cafés and restaurants (64%)
 - > Shops and businesses (57%)
 - > Landscaped spaces/plantings (48%)
- > The following amenities were wanted by less than half of respondents:
 - > Bicycle parking (44%)
 - > Public shared spaces (44%)
 - > New housing (44%)
 - > Parks and playgrounds (39%)

- > These amenities were wanted by less than a third of respondents:
 - > Medical facilities/centres (26%)
 - > Childcare (16%)

Other amenities suggested by respondents around future mass rapid transit stops 478 comments

Respondents who selected 'other' when answering the question above were able to specify amenities that weren't listed. A synthesis of the *other* amenities that were proposed by respondents for future mass rapid transit stops are presented below.

Summary: *other* amenities around future mass rapid transit stops

- **Parking facilities** in a variety of different formats and containing multiple different features were the most frequently proposed *other* facilities for mass rapid transit stops. The formats included on- and off-street parking and drop-off options, as well as features such as: charging stations for bikes and cars; bicycle parking; motorcycle parking and car sharing services; ticketing, public toilets, and water fountains.
- **Transport hubs** where multiple modes connect were envisioned by respondents.
- **Clustering housing** around transport stops was suggested, with mixed-use developments being supported to enrich the local community and add vibrancy. There was a desire for transport stops to connect with and contribute to the neighbouring community.
- **Opposition** was expressed toward the development of future mass transit stops. The main reasons given were that they would be unaffordable and incompatible with Wellington's topography.

Parking facilities and options 122 comments

A large number of respondents commented on the need for parking facilities around future mass rapid transit stops. A sizeable number, and the majority of these respondents, suggested car parking (either on- and off-street), especially near MRT stops. This included a small number of respondents who requested parking and/or charging stations for electric vehicles. Bicycle parking and park & ride stations were cited by a moderate number of respondents each. The changing landscape of alternative transport was also reflected in a small number of respondents arguing for scooter parking, while a few suggested kiss and ride (drive-through drop-off), short-term parking, motorcycle parking and car sharing services.

Transport hub amenities 97 comments

Transport hubs were envisioned by respondents as a nodal point, not only connecting a variety of transport services (train, bus, bicycle, scooter, and walking) but also accessorised with amenities such as ticketing, parking, public toilets, and water fountains. A small number of respondents expressed the need to connect transport hubs to outlying areas via smaller buses, facilitating a continuous network. Respondents noted that hubs should be located centrally in communities and near other public services such as libraries and commercial amenities (restaurants).

Furthermore, it was also stated by a moderate number of respondents that the design of waiting and transit areas would need to suit the Wellington weather conditions (wind, rain, and sun protection), include adequate seating and be well-lit and safe. One respondent expressed this need as:

Sheltered bus stops and footpaths giving safe pedestrian access between services

Accessible design principles were noted to be important by a small number of respondents. A few commented on bicycle access and connectivity of the hubs, and ability to transport bicycles on public transport. Equally, pedestrian safety and access in and around the transport hubs was mentioned by several respondents, with a few commenting on the need for reliable mass rapid transport services throughout the day and evening.

Housing development and connecting with the community 95 comments

A considerable number of respondents commented on housing in relation to the future mass rapid transit stops. Of those, a moderate number suggested clustering new and higher density housing around or near the stops, while mixed-use developments were supported by several respondents arguing that the integration of commercial facilities would enrich the local community and “add vibrancy”. A comment exploring this idea:

This is the place for large scale high density housing. If it was well done with cafes and restaurants on the lower floors it would add to the vibrancy of the area. Newtown's school and hospital already sit on this route.

A few respondents commented on the need for additional social housing in areas of Newtown.

A small number of respondents made statements about the atmosphere of transit hubs, with lighting (natural and artificial), murals, and existing heritage and natural features considered to add value to areas. Several respondents discussed the benefits of natural spaces as well as leafy plants – as part of additional housing around transport hubs, to be utilised and enjoyed by current and future residents – offsetting the carbon footprint of new housing developments. Some saw these natural spaces as being a component of “kiwi culture”.

Oppose mass rapid transport hubs 40 comments

A considerable number of respondents expressed a dislike for a future mass rapid transit system, with several citing unaffordability as the reason for their opposition. A small number noted that this system would be unsuitable for the city's topography, sea-side location, and limited size. It was pointed out by several respondents that Wellington's current transport is not a mass rapid system.

A small number of comments discussed suitable and reliable water infrastructure (storm and wastewater) and a few respondents commented on noise pollution emitted from mass rapid transit activities and a desire for resilient and earthquake-proof buildings. One respondent described the creation of transport hubs in this way:

I also think that we need some radical thinking and co-design about the future of amenities in the city due to Climate Change, remote working practice, the way we move, and what we are moving to

The remaining points were generally one-off comments, and not directly focused on the Draft Spatial Plan or the questions asked.

Facilities at transport hubs (options given in the survey) 124 comments

A large number of respondents commented on the amenities mentioned in the survey question. A considerable number stated that shops and businesses need to be near transport hubs and some also suggested that they be close to future residential developments. One respondent said:

Commercial amenities (shops/cafes/etc.) make the most sense around rapid transit stops as these will be easily accessible areas of high foot traffic, and thus desirable locations for shop owners who will accept higher rates, affording the council with greater financial freedom from central government for future projects.

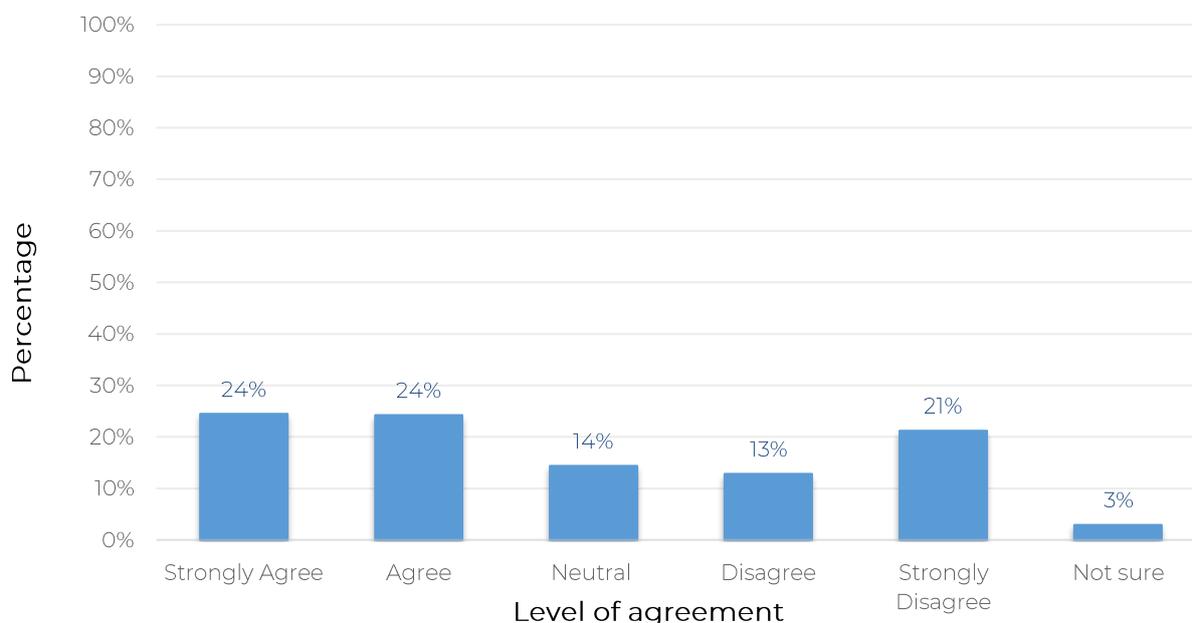
A moderate number wished to have cafés and restaurants near or inside the transport hubs, while a considerable number suggested community facilities (libraries, swimming pools, social services, medical services, schools) to be located in close proximity.

Extent of agreement/disagreement with 'Our City Tomorrow Blueprint'

Respondents were asked: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Our City Tomorrow outlines a 'blueprint' for how we can grow and develop that aligns with the five goals for Wellington to be compact, resilient, inclusive and connected, vibrant and prosperous, and greener.

Our City Tomorrow 'blueprint' aligns with five city goals



Key findings:

- > 2,045 respondents answered this question
- > Just under half (48%) of respondents *agreed* that the 'blueprint' aligns with the five city goals of being compact, resilient, inclusive and connected, vibrant and prosperous, and greener – 24% *strongly agreed* and 24% *agreed*
- > A third (34%) of respondents *disagreed* – 21% *strongly disagreed* and 13% *disagreed*
- > Fifteen percent of respondents were *neutral* and 3% were *not sure*

COVID-19 impacts on the city

Beneficial spaces/amenities/facilities in neighbourhoods during different COVID-19 levels

4,082 comments

Respondents were asked: What spaces, amenities, or facilities did you find most beneficial during the different levels in your local neighbourhood/suburb?

Summary: beneficial spaces/amenities/facilities during COVID-19 levels

- **A variety of natural spaces** were most frequently identified as beneficial during different COVID-19 levels; the most commonly referred to were: parks, reserves and the town belt, seaside spaces, and walking tracks. Benefits identified were connecting to nature, without having to be around other people, which brought/led to mental and physical health benefits.
- **Outdoor amenities** such as playgrounds, sports fields, dog parks, and golf courses were also considered beneficial for exercising and play, especially for families.
- **Local retail and hospitality** in a variety of forms were considered beneficial. Most frequently identified examples were: local shops, dairies, grocery stores, supermarkets, cafés, restaurants, takeaways, and bars. Places were valued for the services they offered and the meeting places they provided. Medical facilities, particularly pharmacies were also valued.
- **Transport or movement** in a variety of forms were also considered beneficial. Around half of these respondents discussed walking, and in particular the freedom that was possible with less cars using roads. People appreciated when there were good facilities such as wider footpaths. Some went further to state that walking experiences would be diminished if neighbourhood amenity were reduced. Safer cycling opportunities were also appreciated during lockdown, along with the availability of public transport.
- **Homes, and specifically private outdoor and indoor space** were also considered beneficial. Sunlight and greenery were specifically referred to. It was the extra space homes have, allowing people to get away from others or work from home, which was considered particularly beneficial.
- **Community spaces** such as libraries were also discussed. The benefits from support and interactions respondents received from connecting with others were discussed, in conjunction with the physical facilities.
- **Reliable infrastructure**, such as internet, wastewater, sewage, and rubbish collection were also all positively appraised. Over half of these comments identified the need for stable, reliable, and fast-speed internet connections to be essential.

There was a very large number of suggestions for spaces/amenities and facilities that were beneficial during different COVID-19 levels, discussed in the order of most to least comments made on each topic, below.

Parks, open spaces, green spaces

1,396 comments

Over one third of respondents who answered this question identified outdoor green spaces such as parks, reserves, and the town belt as having been beneficial during the COVID-19 levels. These were often identified in short statements, such as “parks”. Although, an underlying theme emerged regarding the benefits respondents gained from their time spent in a green environment, such as what is described in this comment:

Parks, forests and green spaces so I could get outside and feel connected to nature without being around other people.

These spaces gained in value and meaning for respondents during the pandemic, with one commenting:

From council services, parks were more appreciated than ever. Having places to go and walk was invaluable.

Beneficial spaces were also found near the ocean, with a very large number of respondents commenting on enjoying time there during lockdown. Respondents described these spaces as: waterfront, beach, sea, or coastline, while generally walking tracks such as the City to Sea were also reported to have been beneficial.

Playgrounds were a public amenity that a substantial number found beneficial during the COVID-19 levels. These responses were frequently single word answers, such as: “playgrounds”. A fifth of these respondents expressed that they missed the playgrounds when they were shut during levels 3 and 4.

Golf courses were reported to have been used by respondents and their families for walking and running on during lockdown, with two thirds of these respondents specifically stating that they enjoyed the open space on the Berhampore Golf Course. The use of open fields during all levels was also endorsed by a considerable number of respondents stating that they used sports fields and artificial turfs for exercise and fresh air. A small number of them commented that these open spaces were particularly beneficial to families, with one respondent saying:

We found easy access to the green belt and the sport fields vital to our getting through Level 4 and 3 with our young kids.

Finally, access and use of outdoor areas suitable for dog walking and playing was discussed in a moderate number of responses, with over half specifically stating that they used designated dog parks, while the remainder commented on dog-friendly spaces in general.

Local retail and hospitality outlets

1,128 comments

Retail outlets, with a strong emphasis on “local”, was the next most mentioned beneficial facility during COVID-19 levels, discussed by a very large number of respondents. Commonly referred to simply as “local shops”, some were more specific and referred to their local dairy or grocery store. Over a quarter of those spoke generally about their local shop while supermarkets were mentioned by just under a quarter. This too was mostly described in single word comments: “supermarket” and some emphasising proximity to the supermarket.

Cafés, restaurants, takeaways, and bars featured in the next largest group of comments, consisting of a very large number of respondents. Again, answers were frequently short statements: “café, restaurant” or “takeaway”. About three quarters of these respondents stated that they benefited from services received at a café while some pointed out the café’s value as a gathering place. The next most popular were restaurants followed by takeaways, and then bars.

Access and proximity to medical facilities was the next largest topic, commented on by a very large number of respondents. Again, many were short statements: “easily accessible medical facilities”. However, almost half of these respondents specifically mentioned access to pharmacies to have been of benefit during COVID-19 levels, a substantial number of comments highlighted that medical centres or GPs were beneficial, while hospitals and proximity to a local COVID testing station were mentioned by a few respondents each. In a small number of comments, safety during the pandemic was also a relevant topic, with one respondent stating:

Doctor and chemist without having to feel nervous about large numbers of people in any one place made me feel very safe.

Being able to have online purchases delivered home was also reported to be beneficial during COVID-19 levels by a moderate number of comments. The remaining points were generally one-off comments.

Transport

857 comments

Transport was a theme in a fifth of all answers to this question. Almost half of these related to walking, with the remaining responses in order of frequency mentioned: car related topics, public transport, and general transport.

Respondents noted that they benefited most from walkable neighbourhoods, utilising walkways and footpaths to travel around. Generally, walking was identified as an enjoyable activity during COVID-19 levels as well as being a mode of transport to local shops or work. The width of footpaths became a discussion point in a moderate number of comments, with respondents preferring them wider especially for times when social distancing was necessary. Several comments focused on safe walking spaces. And a similar number commented that they benefited from being able to walk into the city centre.

While walking, a quarter of respondents most enjoyed the character of neighbourhoods and heritage houses, while another quarter of comments on walking spoke about the attractive atmosphere in suburbs and their greenery. When answering this question, a moderate number of respondents reflected on how the walking experience would be changed and less beneficial if the Plan was implemented as currently drafted. The loss of sunlight, character, views, and changed streetscape were cited as not only giving a different but much less enjoyable and beneficial walking and living environment. A typical comment was:

Walking in our sunny, leafy suburb. It would have been much less pleasant if the streets were lined with 3 - 6 storey buildings creating shade and wind tunnels.

The change in traffic gathered a very large number of comments, specifically relating to alternative uses of roads. The reduction in car traffic was noted in a moderate number of comments, frequently in short answers: "streets for walking". Over half of the transport related answers noted that they enjoyed safe walking or cycling on or around streets that are usually filled with traffic. While active transport was experienced as safer, it was also reported to be more enjoyable. The overall effect the reduction of car traffic had was noted to have changed the streets visually and made them less noisy. A quarter of transport related answers commented about this change, as one noted:

Obviously, the removal of cars from public space was a welcome sight (and not only for the eyes but also for the ears (no noise) and nose (no exhausts)).

Streets were also noted to be less parked up with cars during the COVID-19 levels, allowing residents to park their cars closer to home and more easily find car parks. A small number supported free car parking in the central city during that time.

The next largest group of comments related to cycling, with a large number of these identifying cycle routes or cycle paths as most beneficial amenities during COVID-19 levels. Answers were frequently given in short statements, such as: "bike lanes" and did not identify the purpose of the cycle activity as transport, recreation, or another purpose. This was one comment:

Cycle lanes have been invaluable for safe commuting. Much lower risk during COVID-19 and good for health all round. I wish there were more cycle ways to encourage this awesome mode of transport.

A few were concerned about the increased use of bicycles in the city during lockdown levels and how that impacted other users such as pedestrians.

The final topic under transport related comments was public transport, discussed in a large number of comments. Again, they were frequently short statements: “public transport” or “bus services”. A sixth of those comments expressed their appreciation for and use of free bus services during COVID-19 levels, while the remaining points were general one-off comments.

Housing and neighbourhoods

240 comments

The fourth largest topic emerging from this question centred on housing and neighbourhood related answers made by a very large number of respondents. Half of those noted the benefits they experienced from being in private outdoor and indoor spaces. Sunlight and garden greenery were seen to be particularly important to respondents during this time while the homes’ suitability for working from home was also noted in a moderate number of comments. Frequently, access to extra space, such as spare rooms or gardens, was particularly important during COVID-19 levels, with one respondent stating:

Our own backyard provided the breathing space I needed.

It was noted several times that denser neighbourhoods with type 4 and 5 developments would not provide such benefits to residents. A sense of community and connection with neighbours during lockdown was a beneficial experience for a sizeable number of respondents. There was a sentiment of value found in inter-household connections taking place, with friendly and neighbourly interactions being conducted at safe distances on a considerably more frequent basis during COVID-19 levels than in normal times. Working circumstances were mentioned in a moderate number of comments, with a third reflecting on working-from-home options and how this would change the use of commercial space in the city. A small number of respondents said that they benefited from living close to work while the remaining points were generally one-off comments, and frequently not directly focused on the Draft Spatial Plan or the questions asked.

Public, community places, libraries, squares and similar

222 comments

Community spaces were also beneficial to respondents during COVID-19 levels. A very large number of respondents valued libraries and again these were frequently single-word comments: “library” or occasionally as one respondent noted:

Once it was Level 2, we loved being able to get back to the library and to playgrounds. Good libraries and good playgrounds are the two most essential things we find in our lives at present, with three small children to look after.

Community focused groups or locations were mentioned by a considerable number of respondents; their comments emphasised the benefits received from the support, interactions, and connections made. A few stated that courses at some local community centres continued online during COVID-19 levels and these were enjoyed. Several comments mentioned educational campuses (e.g. school, college, university); however, it was unclear if they were referring to their available space during lockdown or referring to their educational purposes. Remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments, and frequently not directly focused on the Draft Spatial Plan or the questions asked.

Infrastructure

60 comments

Reliable infrastructure such as internet; wastewater, sewage, rubbish collection; and, general infrastructure was found to be important during all COVID-19 levels by a substantial number of respondents. Over half of the comments in this group argued the need for stable, reliable, and fast speed internet connections to have been essential. This was noted especially in regards to working from home situations, keeping informed with news updates, and as a means of socially engaging with friends and

family. A small number highlighted the relevance and requirement for quality fast broadband in private households – for servicing the changed working environments and for utilising Zoom and other conference calls to conduct their work tasks. One respondent said:

A speedy and robust internet system. With more people working from home the need for good internet is a must.

Other infrastructure systems mentioned in a substantial number of comments (in the order of frequency of comments) were: three waters; and rubbish and littering. The final group of infrastructure comments were in order of frequency mentioned, and occurred in several comments: infrastructure in general; power; and, gas / radio/ TV reception. These were often short statements: “reliable infrastructure”.

Other

179 comments

In response to the question, a sizeable number of respondents made no comments while a further sizeable number of comments that were grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments, and frequently not directly focused on the Draft Spatial Plan or the questions asked.

Amenities/facilities missing or in need of improvement during different COVID-19 levels 2,506 comments

Respondents were asked: What amenities or facilities were missing or could have been improved?

Summary: amenities/facilities missing or in need of improvement during different COVID-19 levels

- **Nothing was missing** for the largest group of respondents who answered this question.
- **Transport concerns** was the most commonly discussed theme by respondents who felt that certain amenities were missing. Their comments covered multiple modes, specifically: *cycling* limitations were primarily focused on the under-supply of cycleways or poor quality cycling facility provision; *walking* facilities were also criticised with a desire for paths to be wider, particularly to accommodate social distancing, and a more comprehensive connected network was also sought; *public transport reduction* was criticised during lockdown levels, particularly because less passengers were let onto busses; and, *personal vehicle* comments covered the need for more parking and also traffic calming measures would have been desirable in some circumstance, with the reduction in cars appreciated.
- **Community spaces, facilities, and services** were discussed from multiple perspectives. *General benefits* from spaces to collectively gather were identified, such as squares, and it was observed that there needs to be more of them; *libraries*, likely due to their closure, were missed by a sizeable number of respondents; *reduction in rubbish and recycling services* were criticised; *public toilet closures* were similarly criticised; *infrastructure* quality, particularly three waters and internet were generally questioned; *social service* provision was discussed, in particular to dissemination of information across the whole community; and, *amenity improvements* such as drinking fountains and seating were also sought.
- **Parks, open-spaces, and green spaces** were another commonly discussed topic, with the most commonly made point being that there is a need for more of them. There was an underlying sentiment in these comments that an additional 80,000 people would increase this need, particularly if more people are living in smaller homes. The point was made that there was a lack of dedicated public sports facilities such as outdoor basketball courts, tennis courts or skateparks. Similarly, more playgrounds for younger people were sought. There was also a desire for a general improvement to street amenity, via more native plantings.
- **Retail and commercial outlets** such as shops and businesses; restaurants and cafés; supermarkets; GPs and pharmacies; markets; deliveries; and, entertainment were all identified as under supplied during lockdown. Specific points were made regarding the need for more “local” outlets, especially during lockdown levels; the meeting places that these outlets facilitate was another reason why they were sought; people missed their local hospitality venues during different levels, and when they were returned more local options were sought. Supermarkets and dairies were again preferred close to home, along with medical facilities – which were considered essential services – particularly pharmacies. Markets and delivery were both favoured means of expanding shopping options.
- **City and suburb** comments were another theme. Homes that accommodate people spending more time there were discussed by respondents; this expanded to people actually being able to afford a home, and there was caution about the virus transmission risks of living in apartment buildings. General amenity improvements were also identified as being needed, such as reduced derelict buildings, reduced graffiti, improved street lighting, and more future-oriented designs.

Nothing was missing

844 comments

A third of respondents stated that there was nothing missing in their neighbourhood during all COVID-19 levels or offered no comment. These answers were frequently given in short statements: “nothing”, or “no comment”. A considerable number of respondents pointed out that due to lockdown many amenities and facilities were shut, therefore nothing was missing, reflected in the following comment:

Due to lockdown requirements one couldn't use public spaces apart from walking within own area + own bubble so wouldn't be able to use amenities anyway.

Transport

599 comments

Transport was a focus for around one-fifth of respondents. In order of most to least common topics, the following transport modes were mentioned in response to the question: cycling; walking; better, more or improved public transport; cars, traffic, and roads; and, prioritisation of active modes over cars.

Cycling comments mainly focused on cycleways and cycle paths, with a very large amount of comments advocating for more cycle lanes and cycleways. A moderate number of these respondents also expressed the enjoyment of safer cycling during lockdown, due to fewer cars on roads. The following comment is reflective of several others about the risks to cycling in Wellington:

I went for more recreational bike rides around the inner and outer suburbs and it was great to see more people - however the cycle lane infrastructure still has a long way to go. It remains a fairly harrowing experience in between parked cars and rushing traffic most of the time.

The cyclability of Wellington was discussed in a considerable number of comments, with the main focus on cycle safety. In several comments, cycle-safety was discussed more broadly than just during COVID-19 levels. The following comment represents a view shared by a small number of these respondents on the integration of cycling in the city's transport network:

The proposed cycle lanes in Evans Bay presented a perfect opportunity to test out options. So many more people who were new to cycling were clearly out and giving it a go. But many were too scared to cycle on the road even when there were limited cars around. It was so disappointing to see these scrapped when the levels came down-a completely missed opportunity.

While the cycling infrastructure was mentioned as “missing” by several respondents, a similar number supported wider cycleways to provide safe and spacious options for children and families. They generally expressed a desire to use this active transport mode, but considered current cycle lanes too narrow and unsafe to use. Safe parking for bicycles and cycle stands were suggested as a beneficial addition to the city in a small number of comments, and a similar number noted that the cycle network could be better connected to enable cyclists' more effective movement around Wellington. A few respondents rejected the need for cycle lanes altogether.

Walking was the second most active transport mode, discussed by a very large number of respondents. Around half of these considered footpaths too narrow to safely navigate during COVID-19 levels whilst observing a two-metre distance. It was also noted that some footpaths were blocked with parked cars, making it difficult for people with prams or mobility scooters to get around. A couple of respondents commented on these issues:

The main streets could do with wider footpaths or fewer lampposts and other impediments on them so more wee seating areas could be installed, same in side streets.

Pavements are often impassable with a buggy due to cars parking on them.

Other walking related comments indicated a desire for a well-connected network of safe footpaths and walkways. This opinion was represented in a considerable number of comments, with almost half of them short statements such as: “walkways”, “lack of footpaths”, or “pedestrian access”, while others noted specific areas relevant to their situation and location. The need for interlinking walkways and walking spaces was highlighted in a few of these comments and demonstrated the validity and existence of walking transport. Being able to walk on footpaths or walkways safely from one location to another in a reasonable amount of time and not requiring any detours was described as a preferable way to walk around Wellington. A few identified the need to provide for pedestrian safety, particularly within parks and other public spaces. A moderate number gave short statements such as: “sidewalks”, “poor footpaths” or “lack of quality footpaths”. The quality of the footpath pavement was a discussion point in several comments, with a few mentioning vegetation growth as an issue.

Public transport during COVID-19 levels was the next most common transport issue discussed by respondents. A very large number of respondents shared their thoughts with one third of these stating the lower frequency of busses during COVID-19 levels did not meet the demand from the public, thereby making social distancing on public transport challenging. One respondent made this request:

More buses, as they were usually full by the time they got to our stop.

Responses were frequently made in short answers: “better public transport” or “more public transport”. However, reliance on the public transport system was described, with a moderate number stating that they are looking for improved public transport options in general. More seating at bus stops, accessibility of bus service and advocating for light rail were further topics raised in a small number of comments. Accommodating passengers’ needs around transport stops was also addressed in a few comments, suggesting more shelters be built to keep waiting passengers dry and protected, while a further few commented in support of extending the rail network.

Cars, traffic, and roads featured in a substantial number of comments when respondents were asked what amenities or facilities were missing or could have been improved. Points noted by respondents, in the order of the frequency they were made, included: requirements for car parking; traffic calming options; and, removal of car parking. The reality of continued car use was highlighted in a substantial number of comments and focused on the need for more car parking, particularly in residential areas. This point was supported by over a third of these respondents and the following statement is an example of the general sentiment:

Carparking got quite tight as so many people were home. I imagine this is also going to be the case when there is higher density in the city and inner suburbs. Despite being walking distance to the city, people will STILL own cars!

Traffic calming measures were proposed by a moderate number of respondents when thinking about what could be improved. Over three quarters of the comments suggested measures such as lower speed limits, the installation of speed bumps, fewer cars on roads, and designing streets for people. A few went further and argued for the “removal of cars”. This was supported by an “anti-carpark” sentiment with a small number of respondents proposing the removal of on-street parking and thereby freeing up roads.

Community spaces, facilities and service

417 comments

The next largest group of comments focused on community spaces, facilities, and services and represented a sixth of the total comments. They were grouped into ten sub-topics in order of their frequency: community places; libraries; rubbish and recycling; public toilets; infrastructure; social service; drinking fountains; shelter (from wind/rain); seating; and, schools and education. However, answers were not always specific to the COVID-19 topic and were often interpreted as general feedback on amenities and facilities that respondents wish to see improved.

Of these comments, a sizeable number expressed a need for more community spaces to be available for public use. About a third of these comments were short statements, such as: “shared open spaces” or “communal indoor spaces”. There was a general sentiment that respondents care and rely on community orientated facilities and services and they form a nodal point within the community. The inherent social nature of humans came to the fore in the collective comments, with requests for safe gathering spaces mentioned in over two thirds of the comments. Generally, respondents painted a picture of seeking social interaction and wanting purposeful gathering spaces, as is illustrated in the following comments:

There is a lack of suburban squares and gathering spaces - not that we 'gathered' during lockdown, but it became obvious how little consideration has been given to suburban community nodes (away from shops, but also even in some shopping centres).

As was noted in the Central Library hearings, the city is in desperate need of more large, sheltered, public spaces where people of all ages can gather to converse, mingle, access services (books, advice, solace) without the imperative of spending money. [...] Provision should be made in the new Convention Centre for public hangout space.

Suggestions for more arts and cultural features, and social services were supported in a small number of comments each.

Libraries are an example of a valued community facility and public space, featured in a sizeable number of comments, and representing a sixth of the total community space comments. The lack of libraries was expressed in comments such as: “missed library being open” while about a third of the library related comments were very short statements: “a good library” or simply “library”. A few lamented the temporary closure of the central library while others expressly missed being able to access books and services at their local library during COVID-19 levels, with a few suggesting that a mobile library or online booking system may have been beneficial.

Rubbish and recycling collection was a public service that a substantial number of respondents felt was missing during COVID-19 levels. Of those, over half expressed discontent about the paused recycling collection, while a moderate number felt the same about rubbish collection. Both were said to have “littered” the streets in a few comments, while a further few pointed out that this decision by the WCC was contrary to the mainstream message that encourages recycling and waste reduction. A few comments cited recycling stations as seen in other countries to further encourage responsible waste reduction. The inclusion of composting in the citywide waste collection service and possibly composting stations was also suggested by several respondents. A small number articulated the lack of litter bins in public spaces which were also infrequently, if at all, emptied.

The closure of public toilets was also noted to have been an issue during lockdown, most comments simply stating: “public toilets” or “toilets were closed”. The sentiment expressed in a substantial number of comments was that this is an essential utility, noted in this way by one respondent:

Public toilets and public (drinking) water fountains was obviously an issue for young children and elderly, who regardless of distance restrictions were susceptible to not making it to personal facilities. In the future in situations like the current pandemic - these facilities must remain open. Whether there is cleaning facilities that a user must use or there is a technology function with allows for sterilization of public toilet or drinking service availability.

Infrastructure was a further focus under community facilities, discussed in a considerable number of comments. Over half of these voiced their concerns about the status of three waters networks, with the next most frequently mentioned topic focusing on the need for reliable and fast internet. The remaining respondents made general statements on infrastructure, or one-off comments.

Social services were the focus in a considerable number of comments with regard to what amenities or services were lacking or could be improved. The most frequently mentioned improvement related to communication of information and changes about local facilities. This was further highlighted by an additional small number of respondents who identified an existing need for communicating via a variety of channels and media, that would also cater for residents who do not use the internet. Supporting and facilitating social networks during a pandemic and lockdowns was also seen as an important service by a small number of respondents, especially for people who don't have a large support network. A small number suggested a support centre to be established that offers a broad range of in-person service and advice.

Amenity provision was supported via a moderate number of short statements seeking more drinking fountains, while several comments focused on the requirement for shelter from the elements, both in public spaces and at public transport stops. Seating in public spaces was identified as lacking in several comments, while a small number commented on education related topics; however, the answers were ambiguous, such as: "schools" or "childcare", while a few others were clearly reflecting a view on the general situation and indicated a need for more schools.

Parks, open spaces, green spaces

292 comments

Parks and green spaces were the fourth most frequently discussed topic when answering this question, followed by: sport recreation facilities; playgrounds; greenery; dog parks; and water and wildlife. Over half of those articulating the need for more parks and green spaces described their popularity during COVID-19 levels resulting in busy places where social distancing was no longer safely possible. This was illustrated in comments such as this:

The local park was there but it got very busy and hard to keep away from other people. More parks would have given more room for people to safely interact with greenery.

There was an underlying sentiment that expressed concern about where the additional 80,000 people would spend their outdoor time as the proposed developments (type 4 and 5) were referred to as "shoeboxes" in several comments, which would require their inhabitants to escape into green space for some physical and mental recreation. Social interaction and wellbeing gained during time spent in natural spaces was a further focus in a number of these comments, while their location away from dangerous and loud road traffic was also appreciated.

Finding suitable places and spaces to exercise outdoors during all COVID-19 levels was a further topic a substantial number of respondents commented on. Respondents showed enthusiasm for outdoor recreation and collectively produced a range of suggested facilities to meet this demand. Not all answers were limited to the lockdown time period and therefore they are a reflection of amenities and facilities for public use in general. Of the sport and recreation related comments, a good quarter of respondents reported using walking tracks, both in green spaces and footpaths, and emphasised the need for well maintained, accessible and clear signage of walking trails in the town belt and hills. The width of walking tracks was found to not be suitable for the number of people who used them during COVID-19 levels, making social distancing an issue on overcrowded tracks.

It would have been safer if the Botanic Garden gardeners could have continued during all levels of Lockdown. Given the very high usage of the area, some paths and areas became unsafe.

Specific exercise-centred space and equipment were shown to be in demand in several comments, with over half of those suggesting outdoor gyms while a small number were in favour of more gyms in general. A lack of concreted surfaces for basketball, tennis, or skating areas was also highlighted in several comments. A small number of respondents noted that public pools are well-used by the population and that there is a need for further facilities to accommodate the growing demand.

Playgrounds were a further item a considerable number of respondents referred to as lacking in number and sometimes quality. A few of these specifically mentioned their acceptance of the necessary measures to close playgrounds during the higher COVID-19 levels. The majority of these comments were short statements: “more playgrounds” or:

Upgraded playgrounds with stimulating activities for children.

The question produced a further three small groups of topics relating to parks, open spaces, and green spaces, with the first advocating for more greenery in Wellington, noted in a moderate number of comments. Specifically, respondents spoke about street plantings in larger clusters instead of a single plant and a small number, each proposing that more trees be planted, and a greater representation of native plants. The second topic focused on the need for more specific dog areas and was highlighted in several comments. It was stressed by dog owners and non-dog owners alike, with an underlying sentiment to keep dogs safe when off-leash but also to segregate them from the general public, for everyone’s benefit. The final topic of water and wildlife was noted in a small number of comments, with a few expressing their desire for more visible waterways or access to the beach during COVID-19 levels.

Retail, commercial and hospitality outlets

247 comments

Retail and commercial outlets were said to be missed during COVID-19 by a very large number of respondents, comprising the fifth largest groups of comments. A variety of retail and commercial facilities were mentioned and in order of frequency these were: shops and businesses; restaurants and cafés; supermarkets; medical services, GPs, and pharmacies; markets; deliveries; work and employment; and entertainment. Comments were frequently short statements: “more small business”, and not always specific to the COVID-19 levels, often just describing normal-life shopping preferences.

Amongst the commenting on shops and businesses, there was a general preference for local shops over larger supermarkets and the desire to support local businesses was expressed in a moderate number of comments. This sentiment was supported by a moderate number of respondents who stated that they would have preferred to shop at their local butcher during all COVID-19 levels while smaller and “local” shops in suburbs were also shown general support through several comments. Similarly, the support for small business was vocalised by several respondents who stated that they are more inclined to buy from a greengrocer while several more stated specifically that they would have liked other retail services to have operated during lockdown. A desire for a pragmatic approach to shopping availability shone through in the comments, and one respondent said:

I also think some of the other shops should have been able to open e.g. greengrocer and butcher. It would have been safe for me to use these smaller venues than the larger supermarkets.

It was noted in a small number of comments that this later issue was outside the control of WCC, however the comments underline the general shopping habits of residents. The declining number of post offices, but continued need, was also noted in several comments and a collection of shops or a street mall were also suggested by small number of respondents to help create a suburban centre and meeting place. Banks, dairies, and essential businesses were mentioned in a small number of comments each, while hardware stores and bakeries also appeared in a few comments.

Hospitality businesses were not allowed to operate during some COVID-19 levels; however, a considerable number of respondents shared their thoughts on improvements or missing food related amenities in their neighbourhood, in general. Frequently answers given were short: “café” or “the café” and “restaurants”. The popularity of local cafés came to the fore in a moderate number of comments, while several stated that they wished to have more restaurants to choose from in their neighbourhood. A small number of respondents expressed that they missed visiting their pub during lockdown. As Wellington moved down the COVID-19 levels and cafés, restaurants, and bars re-opened – allowing those venues to

spill out onto paved outdoor areas to facilitate more seating, and custom – was recommended in a small number of comments.

Supermarkets were the focus in a further considerable number of comments, with almost half stating that the local supermarket was a priority shopping destination for essentials during lockdown. However, not every suburb has one, making access an issue for residents who don't own cars. The following comment is representative of the general sentiments:

Having a supermarket (or better quality of dairy) in walking distance would have been ideal under level 3/4.

A few respondents also commented that active transport to supermarkets should be encouraged in light of the population growth and that this would be another reason why they need to be located in suburban centres and be easily accessible to all residents. The remaining points focused on topics such as delivery availability or a lack of bag packing stations during COVID-19 levels.

Medical facilities was an essential service respondents discussed in a considerable number of comments. Comments were frequently short statements and general: “medical”, or “healthcare services”. The pandemic and its related lockdown made access to those facilities even more important and the need for local COVID-19 testing stations and localised, easily accessible medical services were noted by a small number of respondents each. Medical centres, GPs, and pharmacies were each specifically stated as being missing in a few of the respondents’ neighbourhoods, while the remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments.

Markets were seen, by a moderate number of respondents, as alternative and preferred shopping options to large supermarkets. Similar to the earlier section on supermarkets, a more relaxed approach to the handling of operable essential businesses during all COVID-19 levels was suggested. This would see a more equal spread and also support a wider range of businesses and provide more shopping options to customers. The benefits and relevance of this was highlighted in the following comment:

It would have been good if fruit and vege markets could have opened - much less risk being out of doors and much cheaper prices.

Produce and farmers markets received the most mentions in this category.

Delivery of online purchases during COVID-19 levels was a focus in several comments, with a small number supporting more options and availability for food deliveries not only from the larger supermarkets. Postal, courier, and non-grocery deliveries were other suggestions made in a few comments.

Entertainment was the final focus of comments with several respondents expressing a need for cinemas while one suggested a drive-in cinema.

City or suburbs

107 comments

A large number of comments were made about respondents’ assessment of their suburb’s or the city’s suitability to serve the community during lockdown. However, some responses were short statements and therefore the meaning was not clear: “more dwellings with sections” or “cheaper local housing” and should therefore be considered not only with the specific COVID-19 question in mind. The main group in this section centred around homes – rental or private ownership – with the following sections in order of frequency mentioned: suburb feel, experience of living; beautification or development of certain areas; street lights; and, sustainable, environmentally friendlier ways of building and living.

Homes – rental or private ownership gathered a considerable number of comments. Sustainable housing design solutions, provision of new housing, and housing affordability were the main discussion points in several comments on each topic. A couple of respondents stated:

High quality, warm, dry, energy-efficient, modern housing stock.

Access to good quality housing is more important when people are spending more time at home. Enabling affordable housing through responsive supply will mean Wellingtonians have more choice and ability to purchase better housing outcomes, such as more space, warmer, drier houses, etc.

Equally, several respondents expressed a desire for more sections of land with private gardens as these were felt to be beneficial and life enhancing during COVID-19 levels. At the same time, several more comments noted the health risks the type 5 developments would bring to their inhabitants as has been the case recently in Melbourne.

Suburban-feel, experience of living were deemed, in a considerable number of comments, to play an important part in forming a community throughout suburbs during all COVID-19 levels. The consensus was that local amenities and facilities help establish the heart of a suburban community, while the lack of the same was noticed in some areas to be an indication of a less connected neighbourhood. A few pointed out that people make the community, and this is reflected in the following comment:

I felt members of the Hataitai community "stepped-up" to provide support/information, etc to others in the community. This is a function of the culture of a community (now called community resilience). This is an intangible characteristic that a smart Council would seek to understand and foster. And this starts with reconnecting with communities in a meaningful way - not just "box ticking".

A further point made in a few comments focused on a trend for food resilience during the lockdown, while the remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off statements, and frequently not directly focused on the Draft Spatial Plan or the questions asked.

Beautification or development of certain areas was reflected in a moderate number of comments arguing for the development of derelict buildings, while a small number of respondents expressed their displeasure of unsightly graffiti observed on walks during COVID-19 levels. One specific location mentioned by a few respondents, and said to be in need of renewal, was Johnsonville Mall. Remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments.

Street lights were noted to be in need of improvement or needed to be added in a small number of comments. These were mostly short statements: "street lights". While a few respondents were in favour of sustainable, environmentally friendlier ways of building and living in Wellington, citing co-design and future orientated design solutions that take into account climate change and people focused developments.

Overall plan assessment

What was liked about the Draft Spatial Plan

5,782 comments

Respondents were asked: What do you like about Our City Tomorrow: A Draft Spatial Plan for Wellington City?

Summary: what was liked about the Draft Spatial Plan

While this question focused on what respondents liked, a significant number of respondents discussed aspects that they questioned or were opposed to. These aspects have been included in the body of this section, but the below summary focuses on what was liked.

- **Increased housing density and intensification** was supported by respondents who wanted to ensure that Wellington is prepared for future growth, and that positive living outcomes are created. Desired outcomes included close proximity to amenities, increased vibrancy, and housing affordability. Density along transport routes was supported for the compact city this is likely to create and the lower emissions that would result.
- **Character protection** was appraised in a variety of ways. While there was a group of respondents who offered outright support for the reduction of pre-1930s protection, others argued that character is nice but it shouldn't come at the expense of creating warm, dry, healthy homes. Some went further to contend that the Plan strikes a good balance between protection of character and allowing development.
- **Increased housing affordability**, as a result of more homes being built, was positively appraised. Respondents also made the point though that affordable, dry, warm homes need to be delivered for the Plan to be successful. Increased building heights were supported by respondents who felt that this was a good solution to the housing crisis; they pushed for these homes to be built close to essential services and transport connections. Zoning changes to different parts of the city to enable higher density in some areas were also appreciated. There was also general support for Plan provisions that aim to increase the quality of Wellington's housing.
- **Transport and connectivity** provisions were also positively appraised. Walkability was a popular focus of the plan along with the other main active transport option cycling. These were seen as a positive outcome of increased intensification and a good way to reduce the use of vehicles, improving the amenity of the city overall. Public transport improvements were welcomed.
- **Infrastructure** upgrades were welcomed, with comments containing the sentiment that these are overdue. The most common areas discussed were upgrades to water, waste, and transport systems.
- **Climate change and sustainability** considerations were applauded, and respondents valued how the environment was the basis for many changes under the Plan. Encouraging less car use through designing a more walkable city was a key example of this as well as the creation of sustainable, dense housing. Ensuring that growth is planned for ahead of time was also positively assessed.
- **Natural environment protection and expansion**, particularly green and open spaces where respondents recognised the multiple benefits that come from having green areas to meet, play and relax within. Respondents also appreciated a "greener" city and one that attempts to ensure sustainable methods are employed in development.

- **People and community** aspects were liked by a smaller number of respondents. In particular, respondents supported the focus on equity and considerations of a broad range of groups in the community. A small number of respondents discussed Mana Whenua inclusion in the Plan.
- **The Plan's Vision and goals** were generally positively appraised.

Housing and Buildings

2,931 Comments

Housing density or intensification (1,611)

Housing density and intensification increases were discussed in over 1,000 comments, making this the most widely discussed topic in response to this question.

There was overwhelming support for greater housing density and intensification in Wellington, with a very large number (over 300) of respondents agreeing that this is a necessary and urgent step to ensure that Wellington is well prepared for the future. Around one third of these comments were general in nature, simply stating that the focus on intensification and increased housing density was positive. Other respondents gave more specific reasons for their support of intensification, which included the belief that more people living close to services, amenities, and workplaces would: create a more vibrant, connected, diverse and interesting city; reduce car-dependency and increase the number of people using public transport or active transport (walking and/or cycling), thereby reducing emissions; and, be a necessary step to ensure that Wellington can accommodate its increasing population in an affordable and convenient way. A considerable number of respondents hoped that intensification and increased housing density in Wellington would lead to more affordable and better quality housing for more people. One respondent commented:

We need increased density. It is a must to support the most vulnerable in our community and those who are not able to get a leg up.

The majority of comments did not specify where respondents wanted to see increased housing density, though the comments that did generally focused on the city centre.

A considerable number of respondents also commented on the benefits of intensifying, building up rather than out, in a bid to combat urban sprawl. A couple of these comments used Auckland and Christchurch as examples of cities that have sprawled too much.

Below are a couple of comments that represent the overall sentiment of respondents who supported increased intensification and housing density in Wellington:

I like that the focus is on density and not horrible urban sprawl and soulless suburbs. It's been a long time coming but New Zealanders, are finally coming to terms with what a great city can and should be. Dense, vibrant and interesting.

Allows increased density, so that people can live closer to where they work, study, shop and play thereby reducing CO2 emissions from transport and increasing productivity through reduced travel time.

A very large number of comments (over 400) supported density along main transport routes. In particular, a substantial number of comments specified that they liked the Draft Spatial Plan's focus on increasing density around transport hubs and along future *mass rapid transit* routes. These comments suggested that respondents want to see Wellington become a more compact and easily accessible city, with effective, low-emission transport options easily accessed by residents. A few comments also noted that

keeping higher density living near MRT routes was a more suitable place for higher-rise buildings than some other suburbs, particularly those seen to have more “character”. One respondent commented:

It provides for higher density of dwellings on transport corridors. It goes a fair way with the overlays to protecting the environmental and heritage characteristics of areas.

Note that 355 comments on this topic were generated from the ‘A City for People’ website where respondents selected that they ‘support focusing development along future mass rapid transit routes and agree that strong amenity value must be developed alongside’.

Another 350+ comments from the ‘A City for People’ website where respondents selected that they ‘strongly agree with proposals to intensify the Central City, Inner Suburbs and Outer Suburbs to allow for compact, liveable, low-carbon urban form’.

Another 350+ comments from the ‘A City for People’ website where respondents selected that they ‘strongly agree with taking a city-wide approach to distributing density’. Note that a considerable number of similar comments were made by survey respondents about the need to distribute growth across the city. These are discussed later in this section, under ‘planning for the future’.

Concerns about increased intensification and housing density were expressed by a moderate number of respondents. While this question asked respondents to share what they liked about the Draft Spatial Plan, some respondents offered their concerns. The most common sentiment amongst this group was that while respondents supported the idea of intensification in theory, they felt that the Draft Spatial Plan needed to take a more considered and well thought out approach to density, to ensure that it is done “right”.

The following comment exemplifies this:

I do agree that we need to intensify development but this needs to be delivered with more deliberate direction and proactive management (if we are to avoid the city looking like a chaotic, hotchpotch of high and low density development)

Housing affordability and equity (679)

A very high number of comments (over 330) were generated from the ‘A City for People’ website where respondents selected that they supported the ‘council taking action to ensure everyone in Wellington can live in safe, warm, affordable housing that provides for a diverse range of housing needs’.

A large number of respondents made comments about housing affordability. Most of these comments expressed the belief that the Spatial Plan would help to increase the number of affordable homes in Wellington, by increasing the total number of homes. Several other respondents, however, expressed concern regarding the lack of specification about the new housing stock proposed in the Draft Spatial Plan. Several respondents argued that without regulation and specific directives from Council to ensure that new housing is affordable, developers are unlikely to build affordable housing. As one respondent explains in this comment:

The city relies upon developers to create new multi-storey accommodation. Developers are in the business of making money, not making affordable homes.

A sizeable number of respondents commented on the need for quality housing in Wellington. Respondents commonly called for warm, dry, healthy homes. Several respondents argued that New Zealand has a problem with substandard housing that urgently needs to be addressed. These respondents blamed a number of factors for Wellington’s substandard housing stock, including property investors who complete minimal maintenance on rental properties to maximise their profits; a lack of

appropriate regulation from both local and national government; and. the desire to protect heritage buildings, even if they provide unhealthy living environments. One respondent noted:

It addresses the reality that we need to create more and better housing, while still preserving the historic character that is ABLE and to be SENSIBLY preserved.

The housing crisis and the need for it to be addressed was at the forefront of a moderate number of respondent's minds. Respondents keenly supported WCC's efforts to help house current and future residents in affordable, safe, and healthy homes. Providing homes, and tackling the housing crisis, was one of the most frequently noted reasons for support of the Plan, comments such as the following were typical:

Apartment living is an important brick in the wall to solving the housing crisis, as supply is still the biggest obstacle, and it's good to see the council getting behind the solution in the area where they can have the most impact.

I like that it provides a sensible plan for dealing with the pressures on housing already extant and set to increase, and provides some hope for change to residents currently unable to find affordable housing.

Housing Character and Heritage (497)

Support for reducing character areas was expressed in a very large number (over 350) of 'A City for People' website comments, from respondents who selected that they support '*reducing the size of the character areas to focus on well-preserved sections while allowing homes in poor condition to be redeveloped*'.

General housing character and heritage character protection comments were made by a considerable number of respondents, who offered varying assessments and opinions about the Plan's approach to character protections.

A moderate number of respondents offered outright support for the reduction of pre-1930s character protection rules. Several comments additionally argued that while character is nice, protecting character buildings should not come at the expense of creating warm, dry, healthy homes for Wellingtonians. Over half of these comments stated that Wellington's current housing situation allows owners of character homes to rent these properties to tenants for "exorbitant" prices, while failing to maintain them to a standard that provides a healthy home environment. One such comment read:

'Heritage' homes don't count for much to people who are forced to pay exorbitant rents to live in places that make them sick.

A considerable number of respondents commended the Draft Spatial Plan's approach to character, as they felt that the Plan struck an appropriate balance between protecting some character areas, while also allowing for new homes to be built. About half of these comments expressed support for the Plan's proposal to create character sub-areas to ensure that some of Wellington's character will be preserved.

Several comments simply made statements about the importance of protecting Wellington's character, but did not state whether they felt the Draft Spatial Plan would achieve this.

A few comments noted that proposed character protection laws are elitist, protecting homes in wealthier suburbs and removing protection from suburbs like Berhampore and Newtown, or were critical that only colonial heritage is acknowledged in the Plan.

A considerable number of respondents urged the WCC to reconsider aspects of the Plan that sacrificed heritage buildings and called for greater heritage protection. These respondents were afraid of losing

irreplaceable manifestations of Wellington's history. The following two comments aptly express the feelings of such respondents:

Suffice to say our old buildings, and especially the Victorian/Edwardian weatherboard residences, are one of this city's most valuable and unique treasures... I humbly beg the WCC to pause before it continues on this tragic path [to] commission new housing... Please do not destroy the heart of Wellington, nor the hearts of its citizens.

I recognise the need for better quality housing stock and some increased density, but don't agree with the removal of protections for pre-1930's houses.

Building heights support (97)

Support for higher building developments was provided by a moderate number of respondents who felt that this was an effective solution to help combat the housing crisis and respond to the climate concerns and transport issues. Respondents particularly liked the concept of building higher multi-storey dwellings in close proximity to essential services and transport connections. The following comments give a clear indication of respondents who held these views:

I like that it proposes minimum building heights in some areas - this will help to increase housing supply and affordability. I like that it takes an integrated and holistic approach to planning for the future of the city.

I think increasing the height limit in the central city and Te Aro makes sense to help house future residents.

I agree with everything about it, especially the minimum storey requirements for climate change related sustainability and walkability.

However, taller buildings were opposed by several respondents. Objections were varied, with many concerned that higher modern buildings would detract from Wellington's current character and charm. Beyond these aesthetic concerns, respondents also worried that building higher would create wind tunnels and cloak sunny streets in shade. A couple of these comments were:

6 storey buildings inappropriately mixed in among 1 and 2 storey housing will create dark wind corridors (particularly in Winter) and destroy the special character of Newtown and Berhampore.

We all want Wellington to continue to be the vibrant exciting place it is today. Destroying communities by allowing six storey buildings to be build alongside existing character one and two storey building will ruin the character of many of the homes in Newtown as well as creating shade and wind tunnels.

A small number of respondents also raised concerns of building higher along fault lines and in earthquake-prone zones and the danger this may pose.

I believe that 6-storey housing should not go ahead - we need to heed the lessons of Christchurch post-earthquake.

Several respondents submitted suggestions regarding building heights; the majority of these proposed that buildings be no higher than three storeys in suburban areas and that six-storey buildings are

unsightly and unnecessary. These respondents did appreciate the need to build higher to accommodate growth, but wished for it to be done in a more controlled and character-sensitive manner.

Some level of intensification close to train stations seems logical, but not 6-8 stories. It needs to be no more than 3 stories in the suburbs.

Housing development and rules (87)

A considerable number of varied general comments were made on housing development rules, consisting of ideas about how WCC could regulate development, or ideas to improve the effectiveness of the Spatial Plan. Some of the comments made by respondents seemed to express anti-developer sentiment, while others favoured developers. Examples of comments on this topic include: calls for rules to ensure the most efficient use of land; more restrictions on the types of buildings developers can build; reducing red tape for developers; stricter rules around the quality and resilience of infill housing; requiring new developments to manage stormwater through water sensitive design; and, providing more opportunities in central Wellington for high-quality mixed-use development.

A moderate number of comments discussed a desire for a variety of housing types to be included in the Spatial Plan. One respondent noted that for Wellington to be a “unique and liveable” city, there needs to be a range of housing styles and sizes available, and that the Draft Spatial Plan does not help to achieve this as it currently stands. Several respondents noted the need for *choice*, commenting that not all kiwis want to live in three-bedroom family-sized homes, just as they don't all want to live in apartments. These comments argued for a variety of housing to ensure people can live a lifestyle that fits their needs and their budget. One respondent noted:

As New Zealanders I think we romanticize the idea of owning a house, but with the housing market being the way it is. I believe that many kiwi's will need to accept the fact that apartments and townhouses might be more of the reality of what is available compared to full houses.

A moderate number of comments were made about zoning. Almost all of these comments were supportive of the Draft Spatial Plan's consideration of zoning, whether up-zoning areas of certain suburbs to allow for higher density housing; considerations for mixed-use developments; or simply acknowledging the detail and consideration of zoning changes that has gone into the Plan. One respondent, however, questioned the merit of all the proposed rezoning, suggesting that developers were the ones who would benefit from rezoning, and not the general Wellington population.

General Comments on Housing (47)

A considerable number of respondents made comments about housing generally. These comments did not specifically mention housing quality, affordability, or the housing crisis. Instead, they were varied and included broad statements such as “houses for people” and “housing”. Other comments included calls for design standards to be introduced; density and development to go further than what is proposed; and, praise for the proposed reduction in “red tape” and regulation.

Overall, comments in this section supported elements of the Draft Spatial Plan that improved the provision and quality of housing in Wellington. Examples of the varied comments received include:

Catering to needs of people who desperately need inner city housing: teachers, nurses.

Terraced housing is a sustainable and smart housing plan.

I like how much development it allows! My only complaint is to allow more! Please open up an abundance of development opportunities so land prices fall, rents fall, homelessness falls, and poverty falls.

Not sure, maybe the fact that something is being done about housing?

Transport and Connectivity

701 Comments

Active Transport (469)

A very large number (over 350) of supportive comments were generated from the 'A City for People' website where respondents selected that they supported *'the establishment of safe and easy to use active transport routes alongside areas of development'*.

Walkability was commented on by a substantial number of respondents, who articulated how walking access must be a core focus of the Draft Spatial Plan to maximise accessibility and connectivity. There was general recognition that more walkable areas would assist in improving the liveability of the city as it becomes more densely populated. Respondents discussed the idea that there must be a transition from car-centric streets to streets that prioritise pedestrians.

Creating more walkable environments and neighbourhoods, designed for people, not vehicles.

Focus on people and walking and public transport, scrap the car culture.

Overall, these respondents keenly supported the Draft Spatial Plan's concentration on walkability and comments such as the following were typical:

I like the focus on sustainability and supporting people to move around the city on foot or on bikes.

Public Transport (68)

A substantial number of respondents detailed how they felt improved public transport was an essential consideration of the Draft Spatial Plan; the majority of these comments were limited to a simple statement such as "I like the focus on public transport". Other comments were more detailed and offered more specific ways that public transport may be improved; the following comment is an example of this:

Wellington's general layout, roads, and width restrictions really hamper fixing public transport issues to outer suburbs. Focusing development inwards is a great way to help the environment, ease transport congestion, and keep that all important "You can walk everywhere!" feeling that Wellington has.

Many respondents agreed that the current transport systems in Wellington are ill-equipped and unable to cater for the expanding population. They were keen to see changes implemented and improvements made.

Cycling (38)

The emphasis on cycling and incorporation of bike paths was commended by a considerable number of respondents. Respondents liked how this inclusion would likely offer both health benefits and improvements to the environment. Beyond this, respondents felt how the inclusion of cycleways would improve mobility and the liveability of the Wellington. For example:

I like the focus on cycle tracks and walkways to incentivise general public exercise and health, both mentally & physically.

Cities should be walkable and able to be cycled safely and this plan allows that to take place.

[P]lans for a more dense and compact city for better walkability and cycling and therefore responds to the dual crisis of housing inequality and climate change.

Car Parking (31)

There was clear concern from a number of respondents that there would be a troubling shortage of car parks in the city following the planned intensification and a failure to acknowledge car users.

There is no allowance in this plan for the impact of substantially more cars parking in the streets. This is already a growing issue in Khandallah without intensification.

Even now street parking is becoming quite severely limited in some areas and this would be severely exacerbated in some localities if relatively high-rise development without off-street parking occurred.

However, these concerns were offset by the majority of respondents who supported the removal of car parks and a focus on providing more housing and better public transport. The following statement captures the sentiment of these respondents' comments:

We support the relaxation of requirements for off-street carparking in developments built near public transport spines. While Wellington can accommodate considerable population growth, it cannot accommodate ongoing increases in the number of private cars on our roads. Every effort must be made to support car-free living and promote walking, cycling and public transport as healthy and viable alternatives.

Fewer Cars (23)

A moderate number of respondents were encouraged by the Draft Spatial Plan's shift away from car dependency and were looking forward to seeing alternatives implemented that reduced personal vehicle dominance. The improved feel of the city with fewer cars and the benefits to the environment were mentioned frequently, in comments such as:

The commitment to make the inner city friendlier to pedestrians is wonderful as well, and hopefully can be coupled with public transport improvements to reduce our reliance on motor vehicles in order to curtail our emissions as well as reclaim some of the huge amount of space we have currently dedicated to nothing but cars.

General Comments on Transport and Connectivity (70)

Comments under this topic were varied and brief in nature, largely summarising or reiterating the themes above. Most respondents simply called for better transport systems or improved accessibility.

General Unsupportive Comments on Transport and Connectivity (2)

Only two respondents opposed the Draft Spatial Plan in relation to transport and connectivity developments. The comments were as follows:

Dramatically increasing the number of dwellings in the outer suburbs will only exacerbate the already congested traffic situation. Trying to get from the Eastern Suburbs past the city to travel North is diabolical at the best of times.

Bikes in Wellington on sunny windless days - look - it's not the answer - it's a piece of the puzzle.

Facilities and Amenities (50)

A substantial number of respondents agreed that development and intensification must be aligned with improvements to infrastructure, facilities, and amenities. The most commonly noted requests were upgrades to water, waste, and transport systems. Emphasis was also placed on the need for schools and medical centres to support the growing population.

I like that there is attention to infrastructure and ensuring that these systems can cope with growth. The devil is always in the detail, so strong guidance and regulations about how this is managed when new developments are undertaken will be very important so developers don't cut corners or ignore these critical aspects.

I strongly agree that services need to keep pace (or be in advance of) a growing population.

Public transport, medical facilities, and childcare centres will have to be adequately funded, as well - we can't just leave those to chance.

Storm Water (362)

All the comments here were received from the 'A City for People' website where respondents selected that they 'support requiring new developments to manage stormwater through water-sensitive design'.

Planning for the Future

Climate Change and Sustainability (93)

Climate change was a central and significant concern for a sizeable number of respondents and as such the Plan's sustainability objectives were applauded. Respondents valued how the environment was the basis for many changes under the Plan. Encouraging less car use through designing a more walkable city was a key example of this as well as the creation of sustainable, dense housing. This is a selection of the comments:

I like the aim to incorporate more sustainable, environmentally friendly housing. Climate change is a very real threat so everything we do, including housing development, needs to keep this in mind.

I like that it plans for a more dense and compact city for better walkability and cycling and therefore responds to the dual crisis of housing inequality and climate change.

Recognition of climate change and sustainability, enablement of choices for micro-mobility and cycling, removal of car dependence.

Population Growth (80)

Support for planning for growth was offered by a substantial number of respondents who appreciated that the Plan aims to create a city that would seamlessly accommodate growth and could efficiently withstand an influx of people moving to the city. Respondents recognised how Wellington's population is already threatening to exceed manageable limits – and in some areas has already exceeded – the current capacity of housing and infrastructure. As a consequence, they were highly receptive to the proposed changes. Some examples of what respondents liked about the Plan in relation to population growth are these comments:

Recognises the need to accommodate additional population in the future. Proposes sensible approaches to balance interests of future residents (including today's children and young people who don't have a vote) and the public at large, against current property owners' vested interests.

I am overwhelmingly in favour of the plan. We desperately need to plan for our growing population before we reach the projected numbers, especially given that we are already experiencing a housing shortage.

Spread of growth was commented on by a considerable number of respondents who commended the Plan's city-wide approach, noting that spreading growth across the city is an important component of making Wellington a liveable city in the future. A small number of comments called for a more even or equitable distribution of growth, noting that some suburbs were called on to harbour more growth than others.

Growth prediction scepticism was expressed in a vague sense of distrust amongst several respondents who questioned the methods used to forecast population growth. Most respondents here rejected the data as already being outdated. Similarly, a few respondents noted how the data ought not to be relied upon given how drastically the Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way we live and work. This comment articulates this notion:

It is astonishing to me that the Council has produced a Plan dependent on growth estimates from 2019 when the world has since experienced a game-changing pandemic; that approach defies the basic discipline of evidence-based planning.

Future Focus of the Plan (80)

The WCC's pre-emptive planning and mitigation of future challenges illustrated through the Plan was widely admired. A sizeable number of respondents appreciated how the Plan looked ahead and spoke to a range of issues and how it engaged the community and encouraged them to think about how Wellington can and will develop.

I like that it is proactive to the future needs of Wellingtonians, not just the people that live here now. We need to think tomorrow before it gets here otherwise Wellington won't stay the cool fun place it is currently.

I like that the Council is taking an active "future-focused" role in looking to cater for the growth of Wellingtons population, which is much better than many other cities do! The key is to plan early, engage with the public, and forecast scenarios and growth, and I feel the Council have done this well.

Natural Environment

548 Comments

Green, Open and Public Spaces (156)

The retention and expansion of green, open, and public spaces outlined in the Spatial Plan was commended by a large number of respondents. Respondents recognised the multiple benefits that come from having green areas to meet, play, and relax in. The following comment articulates how important such areas are particularly as Wellington is set for further growth and densification:

I like the focus on resilience and greening. If we intensify, we need to put resourcing into designing bio-diverse, multi-purpose green spaces that can be used to promote food production, biodiversity, human wellbeing, and combat urban heat effect.

Many respondents commented on how Wellington is known for its green corridors and the ample vegetation dotted throughout the city. These respondents appreciated how special this is and insisted that it not be comprised or deprioritised through future development:

I also like the focus on keeping nature as part of any new builds or developments. One of my favourite things about Wellington is how it feels like it's built with nature. You never have to go far to find a bush or a park and I love that.

The green focus of the plan is welcome too. Wellington has a pretty green image, owing to all our parks and green-space, and it's a truly incredible place to live nature wise. Keeping an environmentally friendly focus is almost crucial to our city's image.

The underpinning sentiment was that green space was a non-negotiable feature that ought to be preserved and developed in Wellington as it delivers immense value to the community. These comments capture the appreciation respondents had for maintaining a focus on preserving and enhancing green space:

I like that there is a focus on maintaining and enhancing the areas of natural environment around Wellington which are so important for us.

Recognition that public spaces make a real difference to people life quality.

I like the prioritisation of green space and access to green space, it's so important to be outside and to be in nature- especially for tamariki.

Support Access to Green and Public Space (371)

All the comments here were from the 'A City for People' website where respondents selected that they 'support the council developing a plan to make sure everyone will have access to high quality green space and public space.'

Making Wellington 'Greener' (21)

Beyond the protection and extension of green spaces, a moderate number of respondents appreciated the Spatial Plan's approach to make Wellington a "greener" city and one that attempts to ensure sustainable methods are employed in building, infrastructure, and design practices.

SPL supports the aims underpinning the Spatial Plan, particularly the goal(s) of: a greener city where new initiatives and development reinforce the city's aspiration to become a sustainable eco-city.

A few respondents indicated that the Spatial Plan could be "greener" still and have a stronger stance in protecting the environment and Wellington's biodiversity and treasured green ribbons.

Greener: increasing the density of housing does not create a greener city. Dense housing will reduce the amount of green space available to individuals, i.e. lawns and gardens. The Council has already gotten rid of some of Wellington's pocket parks, further reducing the availability of quiet spaces.

Equity and Diversity (29)

A considerable number of respondents applauded the Spatial Plan's recognition that Wellington is home to a rich array of cultures and demographics and how this diversity must be protected and accommodated through the provision of affordable housing and inclusive design. The following comments illuminate this idea and show how respondents agreed that the plan is for all and not just a select few.

I think the plan is right to consider the needs of different groups and communities, and of future generations who need good quality and affordable housing, and I hope that the vision is not impeded by the privileged minority who are resistant to change.

I am pleased with the sensible approach it sets out. We need to plan for growth and do this in a way that supports all members of our community, not just those who have been able to access nice houses or investments in city fringe suburbs.

People and communities prioritised (34)

Having people, and the communities they live in, as a primary focus of the Spatial Plan was admired by a moderate number of respondents. Having places for communities to interact and strategies that foster connectivity was seen as a highly valuable goal and these respondents were pleased that strengthening the sense of community throughout Wellington was enhanced by the Plan's housing, transport, and public space design.

It is reassuring to know that WCC is thinking about the community, the environment and the city when coming up with this plan for development over the next 30 years. It is great to see core values and goals set that aren't just thinking about the economy and growing the city without thinking about the people who are living in it.

More homes, closer to work and community means that we'll have better lives - less time spent in cars, less carbon emissions, less loneliness and isolation and better community connections.

Several respondents specifically noted how pleased they are with the fact that people were at the centre of the Spatial Plan; these comments highlight this idea:

The draft spatial plan is a great first step to putting people first. I'm happy that it allows for a rethink of how we can live and gives housing innovation, development and growth a chance.

Love the foresight and public consultation; also how people-centric it is.

Cultural inclusion (10)

These respondents appreciated the incorporation of cultural considerations within the Plan. Specifically, that the Spatial Plan identifies that Mana Whenua are a living presence that will have an ongoing influence on the future. This was one of the comments:

I believe that natural heritage and the heritage of mana whenua are important and should be celebrated, protected and enhanced.

Positive Comments (218)

Additional to the support shown for specific aspects of the Spatial Plan (presented through the themes above), a large number of respondents offered general support for the plan. Respondents frequently noted how the Plan is a welcome response to the issues facing Wellington and appreciated how the Plan respected the City's distinct and special character. The following examples capture the complimentary nature of these comments:

In general, I am very proud that this plan promotes CHANGE. It is decisive and progressive, and proposals like these which accept that change is constant, and imperative will help our city to grow with us, and remain both a pleasant and functional place to live. It touches so many issues that may be contentious but which we cannot afford to drag our heels on. Well done.

It is transformational at a critical time of change for our country and city.

I really like that it aims to promote development in a way that fosters what makes this city special - a vibrant, liveable, and compact city that is accessible and enjoyable!

Urgency of implementation was a common thread throughout these supportive comments, such as:

It creates a clear blueprint on what is urgently needed for our city. Offering more opportunity to create density done well.

Recognition that these issues urgently require addressing.

Negative Comments (192)

A sizeable number of respondents plainly stated that they did not like anything about the Spatial Plan. Others were more explicit in their expression of distaste for the Spatial Plan. Generally, these comments were limited in their constructive value and were simple expressions of disagreement. The following comments were typical:

I am not in favour of this draft plan.

It needs significant work in my opinion.

Nothing. There is nothing to like about the idea of 6 story buildings going up.

Several respondents were unhappy with how the plan would impact them and other residents and ratepayers. Equally, a small number of respondents felt that it would be a few developers who would benefit from the changes and that local residents would continue to suffer from the effects of the housing shortage and lack of infrastructure.

A small number of developers will make a lot of money, will build very unattractive structures and only the well-off will be housed.

If affordable housing is the goal, then the proposed solution (changing plan rules) is simplistic and will largely fail. More options and better logic is needed - and better identification of dis-benefits.

Similarly, a few respondents felt that the Spatial Plan failed to protect Wellington's unique character and disliked the plan for this reason.

The changes feel like a sledge-hammer approach to respond to growth, which will threaten the very things that make Wellington City so treasured and admired elsewhere in NZ and around the world.

The Vision (115)

A considerable number of people made broad statements commending the Draft Spatial Plan's vision. Almost all of these comments were general, and made statements such as "it had noble objectives" or "the vision is good". A small number of comments offered more specific praise for the vision, describing the Plan as "ambitious", or linking the Plan's aspirations to the type of City that Wellington is.

A sizeable number of respondents stated that what they liked about the Draft Spatial Plan were its core values or goals; *Compact, Resilient, Inclusive and Connected, Vibrant and Prosperous, and Greener*. Over half of these comments were general in nature, simply listing the values that the respondent liked, or making broad statements such as, "I agree with all of the principles of the blueprint in their written form", "Overall I like the five concepts, and think they are a useful ground for the future", or "I support the goals of the Draft Spatial Plan". A moderate number of respondents specifically praised the Plan's goal of compactness, noting its benefits, which are summed up by the following comment:

A compact city is essential to enable more affordable housing in Wellington, and to create a zero-emission city

Balanced approach commended (19)

A moderate number of respondents discussed how the Plan successfully presented a balanced solution to Wellington's future growth concerns without unfairly giving weight to particular issues. Many respondents were pleased to see how Wellington's unique character was not entirely sacrificed to accommodate growth.

I like how it focuses on the needs of future residents. It carefully balances the important aspects of retaining Wellington's distinct character but acknowledging that development is needed.

Existence of a Plan praised (17)

The creation of the Plan itself was acknowledged by a moderate number of respondents as a promising step to improving Wellington. These comments were direct and concise and the following were typical:

It's important to plan ahead. The existence of a plan is a good thing.

That you are talking and consulting on this. It's a start!

Mixed Comments (169)

A very large number of respondents provided a mixed review of the Spatial Plan, commending certain aspects and challenging others. Many respondents commented on the ambition of the Plan, often arguing that it was not ambitious enough, but they appreciated that the Draft Spatial Plan was a starting point. Making points such as:

This is a necessary step for a city that is more liveable and affordable – but it needs to go further and be bolder.

I like the ambition and that the council are beginning to put the real challenges before Wellingtonians in this plan. I think this is an important step in creating a long overdue reformation of what a healthy and accessible city looks like. I do not think it is nearly ambitious enough though.

Identifying specific elements of the Plan but appearing doubtful of the success of their implementation was common. Examples of respondents stating what they liked but attaching scepticism can be seen below:

I like the idea of living in a green city that caters to people from all backgrounds and cultures. However, I do not think the proposed mapping in the draft Spatial Plan achieves this. I think the current zoning plans will negatively impact these goals.

I do like that you are taking the time to look at ways of improving and providing more housing for future generations to come but don't believe you are considering the infrastructure that exists.

Like the Vision, not the execution (41)

A considerable number of respondents stated that they supported and admired the vision of the Spatial Plan and that it was an admirable statement of Wellington's future. However, they felt that the execution of the Plan was either incompatible with the vision, unsuitable, or unrealistic.

I support the vision of our city being the most liveable city because it currently is, but the proposed mapping in the draft Spatial Plan will NOT achieve this. Ridiculously out of scale infill will have a negative impact on well-functioning urban environments.

I like the Vision - but the proposed spatial plan will not achieve it - and will most definitely detract from the vision.

Other comments

143 comments

Wellington Character (23)

A moderate number of respondents made comments about Wellington's character, or what makes Wellington a special or unique city. Generally, these comments suggested that the Draft Spatial Plan needs to be implemented in a way that protects Wellington's uniqueness, including its character buildings, the lifestyles afforded to Wellington residents, and the cosmopolitan feel of the city. Other comments discussed what respondents liked about Wellington more generally, and were not specifically related to the Draft Spatial Plan or the question asked.

Safety and resilience (21)

Resilience and safety, in particular relating to earthquakes, was discussed by a moderate number of respondents. These comments were varied, and included: calls for buildings in the CBD to be kept below six storeys due to the potential impact of earthquakes on high-rise buildings; praise for the Draft Spatial Plan's considerations of natural hazards; suggestions to build new dwellings out of light-weight materials (such as timber frames) to increase resilience in seismic events; and, calls to ensure buildings are safe and accessible for all.

Suggestions and concerns (17)

A moderate number of comments offered unique suggestions about what could be added to the plan, or other aspects that respondents felt should be considered. These suggestions and concerns were varied, but included comments such as:

It would be cool to allow suburbs to become more like satellite-hubs, not quite to the extent of Canberra but along those lines.

If we intensify, we need to put resourcing into designing bio-diverse, multi-purpose green spaces that can be used to promote food production, biodiversity, human wellbeing, and combat urban heat effect.

...the key to success of the plan will be great design - in terms of how new buildings will look and operate, and how streets and public spaces are built around them. I fear that the usual NZ approach to development (ie. lowest price/lowest cost option usually gets chosen) will mean we end up with a city that is intensified, but ugly, unliveable and not durable in the long term. This would be a great shame and would impact the attractiveness of Wellington as a location for new arrivals, visitors and new businesses and industries.

Other comments included concerns about the emergence of “ghettos” if the same types of housing are built in certain areas (as opposed to mixed-housing types); the need for quality decision making from WCC and those implementing the Plan; the need to address the current housing crisis before embarking on the Spatial Plan; and, rethinking the types of housing built based on the demographics expected to move to Wellington in the future, such as family homes or apartments.

COVID-19 (9)

Several comments mentioned the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of these comments suggested that assumptions and estimates, particularly around population growth, should be revised as these are likely to have changed significantly since before the pandemic. Other comments argued that a global pandemic is an inappropriate time to be consulting on such an important document, and that COVID-19 has exposed people to new ways of living such as working from home, and changed our priorities, such as the importance of having access to open space.

Other (73)

Other remaining comments were not directly relevant to the question asked.

Respondents were asked: *What would you change or improve?*

Summary: what respondents would change or improve

While this question focused on what respondents would change, a significant number of respondents also discussed aspects that they supported. These aspects have been included in the body of the discussion, but this summary focuses on what respondents would change.

- **The intensification approach** outlined in the Plan received a very large amount of comment, with a broad range of changes suggested – often conflicting. For some, greater greenfield development was sought because of the living outcomes this type of development delivers for residents, while around one fifth as many respondents had an opposing view, feeling that urban sprawl should be avoided.

Reduced vehicle parking, as a consequence of increased intensification, was a concern for another large group of respondents. Again there were opposing views on parking, and some wanted less provided. There were detailed suggestions for how the Plan's proposed zone changes should be modified, primarily focused on specific places or examples. Another relatively large group of respondents wanted the intensification plans to go further, with a large group of respondents seeking intensification to occur on main arterial routes or close to commercial centres, or at transit hubs – as these areas were considered more appropriate places for change to occur or lead to better, broader outcomes. In particular, the avoidance of impacts on character areas was sought. Another point made was that intensification should be equitable across different suburbs. Brownfield development was considered a good option because it would have less impact on residential areas. While others thought that changes to current Council planning rules would lead to more efficient development.

- **Character area changes** were opposed by a large group of respondents because the loss of buildings would reduce the visual attractiveness of Wellington, and because of the inherent value of heritage buildings. While fewer in number, there was another group of respondents who sought fewer heritage protection controls. This second group of respondents favoured the function of buildings over form. Another smaller group of respondents had a middle-ground opinion, expressing that character can be retained and development can occur concurrently.
- **The Plan in context**, within the broad range of existing plans, was an issue to be considered for another large group of respondents. Ensuring that there was consistency, and appropriate sequencing, between the Spatial Plan and a number of other plans and strategies, including: The District Plan, and its review; Te Atakura, the Wellington Resilience Strategy, the Wellington Regional Growth Framework; National Policy Statement – Urban Development; and, Let's Get Wellington Moving. Respondents also called for more detail or clarity within the plan so the public could make more informed decisions on it. In particular, there was discussion on the validity of growth estimates, especially in the context of changes resulting from COVID-19. There was also a call for WCC to engage with Mana Whenua when developing the Plan.
- **Transport and connectivity** was also a frequently discussed broad theme. Active transport was the most commonly discussed topic, with these respondents seeking a high level of provision for walking and cycling. There was also a desire for the public transport system to be improved, in particular because of the positive outcomes, such as less congestion and pollution. An efficient, reliable, and extensive network was sought. Points were also made that there is a need to maintain the roading network because cars are going to continue to be widely used, although others favoured disincentivising car use.
- **Plan implementation** was another frequently discussed theme, with a call for high-quality design standards being the most commonly discussed topic. People wanted to avoid rampant,

ugly development. Universal design principles were important for another group of respondents, so the future city is designed for all residents. Well thought out phased implementation was important for another group, with some suggesting that plans could be altered after there is feedback from early changes; they also wanted the least impact actions to be taken first. Community involvement in future decisions was also sought, and some wanted an avoidance of too much influence from profit-driven developers.

- **Building height changes** was another area that received a significant number of comments. A large proportion of these respondents opposed increasing heights, especially in the area they lived in. Concerns were that changes would irrevocably alter areas and cause negative impacts such as shading and wind tunnel effects. There was though a smaller group of respondents who favoured changing height limits and wanted higher building limits than those that are planned. While another group sought a more granular, rather than a blanket approach, to height limit changes.
- **Housing aspirations**, in particular the provision of more affordable housing to be prioritised, with increasing supply a key way to achieve this. There was scepticism that higher-rise apartments would be affordable to most people. There was a desire for housing to be provided for a broad range of living types, covering a broad range of demographic and life-stage/style groups. There were specific calls for more social housing.
- **Infrastructure's** ability to cope with current demand was questioned, and there were fears that any increase in population density would only intensify issues. In some areas, the opinion was that the infrastructure is already at capacity and that it needs to be fixed prior to more growth occurring. Key areas were three waters, transport, and waste management.
- **Public green and outdoor space** was anticipated to be increasingly important in the future, especially in light of the Plan's intentions to develop more intensified living with less private outdoor space. There was a desire for more public green space to be developed, along with protecting existing highly valued areas such as Wellington's town belt.
- **Hazards and resilience** were a serious concern for some respondents with a call for there to be consideration of what are likely to be the safest places to develop, faced with the significant future natural hazard risks that Wellington is faced with, such as earthquakes and sea level rise.
- **Sustainability and the environment** was an aspect that respondents wanted to be practically considered in future planning, such as taking actions to ensure buildings are developed sustainably and that nature and biodiversity are appropriately considered.

Proposed intensification

835 comments

Respondents made a very large number of comments about intensification when asked what they would change or improve in the Plan. Intensification, and, where and how this should/should not occur, was the most discussed topic.

Greenfield developments (117)

When asked what respondents would change or improve about the Plan, there was support from a sizeable number of respondents for the use of opportunity sites, such as Upper Stebbings Valley and Lincolnshire Farm, as well as other potential sites; growing "out"; or intensification at greenfield sites.

Respondents admired the idea of greenfield development offering residents "the possibility of a house and a lawn"; they highlighted that there was space available in outer areas, and they viewed development in these areas as an appropriate way to alleviate housing pressure. The following comments are representative:

Allow opening up of new land areas in existing suburbs.

A suburb built specifically for this in the northern area could be a solution. All same height complexes are grouped together etc. Everyone knows what to expect re building heights.

Look to undeveloped areas before you pile people in on top of each other.

Development of a satellite city north of Wellington with high capacity high frequency rapid transit to the current central city airport, and to the Hutt Valley.

In a moderate number of comments, including the one above, support for development at these sites was contingent on adequate infrastructure also being provided (i.e., three waters, and transport). In several other comments, greenfield development was offered as a location to house the future residents of Wellington that would not affect the retention of character in other suburbs.

Land is ripe for development in areas in the northern suburbs, in the Hutt Valley, and on the Kapiti Coast, please look at these before destroying our beautiful inner city suburbs.

A moderate number of pro forma submissions argued that:

The Spatial Plan represents an abandonment of WCC's responsibility to support its targeted level of greenfield residential development. In doing so, WCC appears to have given up trying to curb land speculation (especially in the northern suburbs).

However, around one-fifth of the greenfields comments opposed greenfield development. These respondents rejected urban sprawl as the solution to housing pressure. Objections to encroaching onto undeveloped land were made on the following grounds: that reserves or land reserved for ecological value ought to be retained; that greenfield sites are “unsustainable”; and, most frequently, that the distances to travel for those residing in such developments would negate the potential benefits (usually due to the carbon footprint of travel, or the road congestion caused). One respondent stated:

[Our organisation] would like the council to halt development of unsustainable communities in green-field sites in Upper Stebbings Valley & Lincolnshire Farm and instead focus on enabling density closer to the city. The city has declared a climate crisis and we cannot afford to be investing money in sprawl when we desperately need people to be living in more compact, low carbon homes.

Parking for private vehicles (111)

The majority of the large number of comments about the parking of private vehicles were about the perception that there will be parking pressure if intensification occurs. In particular, there were issues with the Plan stating that new housing developments may not be mandated to provide off-street car parking for residents.

Respondents cited current parking pressure around their current residences and were fearful that higher intensity housing would increase this. Some simply stated that they wanted new housing developments to “have enough off-street parking”, while others offered commentary (at times with some intensity) on both the current situation, and on the issues that were perceived to arise with the removal of the requirement for developers to provide parking. Respondents stated that, due to the belief that “people will still have vehicles”, this aspect of the Plan would lead to streets that are “clogged and impassable” with parked cars. The following comments are representative:

Many people in inner and outer suburbs will likely want / need cars and these will end up parked on the street.

There is a significant risk with the Draft Spatial Plan that inadequate car parking facilities will be provided for the owners of the apartments and units in the proposed 8 and 6 storey high density housing developments.

One respondent noted that “car parking” was “conspicuously missing” from the list of amenities on the survey, and added that:

Council should be prepared for opinions it doesn't like. Car parking is important, especially given the state of public transport.

A moderate number of comments, around a fifth of those under this heading, argued for a reduction in on-street parking, or parking generally. The removal of parking was called for in the CBD, the inner suburbs, in suburban centres, and along arterial routes. One respondent urged WCC to be “ambitious, particularly with removing as many on-street car parks as possible from the central city”. The sentiment in these comments was that car use is, or should be, diminishing and that less emphasis should be on providing for them.

Suggestions for specific intensification zoning changes (110)

Zoning changes comprised a large number of the intensification comments in response to the question of what people would change or improve about the plan. Just under half of these were specific suggestions for changes to zoning. Respondents questioned, for example, why certain properties, streets, or suburbs were zoned a certain way, and made cases for alternative zoning classifications to apply. Examples follow:

I would not mind if Happy Valley Park were to get developed on or at the very least, half of it.

Reclassify Kelburn as "inner residential", zone all the pink type 3 area below Grove Rd, Upland Rd and Salamanca Rd purple (Type 4b), along with the Type 2 areas along Upland Rd and along St Michael's Crescent, and the streets off the north of Bolton St; the rest of the teal type 2 area above/behind that should be zoned pink (Type 3)

I oppose the Council's intention to rezone Hobson Street and Hobson Crescent, two solely residential streets (bar two schools and two embassies) into a 'Central Area'.

Owing to the specific nature of these comments, they are not all included in this summary report, but are available for detailed review.

Remaining comments about zoning included several in which general comments were made. One stated that the boundary areas between zones ought to be reconfigured so that boundaries are not between properties, rather, that they should be bordered by streets. Another stated that there should be areas designated as high rise, and others designated as heritage.

Several other comments were made in support of zoning changes to encourage mixed-use developments which were thought to be effective to counteract underutilised locations, and to promote both affordability and the development of safe communities.

Several respondents added that commercial activity ought to be allowed in suburban hubs, with one respondent noting that:

There is a risk that WCC zone for too much housing and reduce commercial and light industry footprint in Newtown, therefore reducing the amenities that they are trying to connect people with.

Support measures to intensify Wellington (109)

The Plans' proposals to increase intensification were supported in general ways by a large number of respondents. Although a moderate number of these comments were made with the added provision that intensification was supported so long as it was appropriate, the comments all supported the intensification of the city, and, many were in support of greater intensification.

Respondents used phrases such as "more", "even more", "further still", and "greater" to describe their support for increasing density in the city.

Examples follow:

Be more bold with intensification.

Greater intensification of housing, more high rise buildings in the inner suburbs.

Council must enable increased density, at the right scale, height, and quality control for all new multi-unit and infill housing.

I would dramatically increase intensification and I would drop the winking attempts to frustrate the NPS on urban development through controls on character, design, urban form etc.

Intensive, higher development along main arterials, in commercial centres, at transit hubs (107)

The overwhelming majority of comments about propositions to concentrate intensification – around areas that already have dense housing, or around main arterial routes, or (future) rapid transit routes – were supportive. Respondents approved of intensification in these three areas, and used the following words and phrases to show this:

Focus on creating dense hubs serviced by public transport.

Build on main arteries.

Building heights increased along major corridors.

In a moderate number of comments, support for intensification along arterial routes or around commercial centres was offered with the view that this would prevent intensification in areas deemed inappropriate, such as character areas.

A sizeable number of respondents explicitly stated support for intensification, or for more intensification in these areas. Support was phrased in the following ways:

Identify priority sites for large-scale intensification subject to master-plan driven development.

We support focusing development along future mass rapid transit routes.

Kāinga Ora recommends that at least 5 stories development is enabled across Newton and in key areas, such as around the planned rapid transit stop and centre, additional height control of 6+ stories development is enabled.

In addition, several respondents supported higher density in suitable areas only, i.e., they argued that residential areas surrounding suburban hubs should be limited to certain heights, but that intensity should occur in centres.

More density in certain town centres and along the length of any arterial roads that have high quality bus service.

Remove 'at least 6 storeys' from the outer suburbs unless located above or directly adjacent to large scale commercial developments like malls, supermarkets etc.

Opposition to intensification along transport corridors came from several respondents whose objections were as follows: that density does “not fit the local character”; that it “would ruin the positive aspects of these suburbs” and places (Crofton Downs, Ngaio, Simla Crescent, Box Hill, and Khandallah); and, that:

I don't think over compressing growth into narrow transport corridors is an ideal approach.

A small number of comments opposing intensification along transit routes cited the Johnsonville line specifically and stated that it does not have the capacity to warrant the proposed density.

Oppose proposed intensification (87)

Opposition to proposed intensification came from a sizeable number of respondents. While some of the comments objected to basing planned intensification on the NPS-UD 2020 (see comment below), most were general appeals to leave certain areas “low density”, or narratives around why low density housing is thought to be important to respondents, Wellingtonians, or New Zealanders.

Action I would like WCC to take: Push back on Government regarding NPS-UD 2020 in this matter so that Wellingtonians have more flexibility to create their own solution to their own housing needs.

Relatedly, there were several comments in which respondents argued against the Plan’s adherence to NPS-UD 2020 standards on the basis that “there is the potential for sufficient development capacity to be realised under the existing District Plan”. Several other comments included mention of Wellington’s distinctive hilly topography, and that the NPS-UD 2020 cannot and should not apply.

Other threads contained in these comments included: that development (and corresponding intensity) should occur “naturally” or organically (i.e., that developers and rules cannot produce well-functioning neighbourhoods); that the plan is too intensive; general comments against high density (see below); and, that the proposed changes would deter long-term residents in dense housing areas.

Change the outer residential to remove high density housing / apartment living.

This last point was phrased in a number of ways by different respondents, including that proposed higher densities constitute an “excessive/unhealthy” number (for the inner city), and that this “cannot occur”.

Other suburbs were deemed to be inappropriate places for higher density, for a number of reasons. These are listed as follows: Mt Victoria (where high densities are said to already exist), Khandallah (where residents place high value on its “leafy suburb” status), Brooklyn (where elsewhere was considered more appropriate), Te Aro (where high-density developments were considered unattractive – the Paddington),

Karori and Mt Cook (where narrow and hilly streets render them unsuitable for high density – see comment below), Berhampore (where “Type 4a” “will destroy the character of the suburb”), Newtown (which was deemed to be receiving unfair treatment compared with other suburbs), and Hataitai (where the proposals were deemed “total madness”).

The thought of intensifying on such a narrow steep street is mind boggling.

Better or more equitable distribution of intensification sought (75)

Alongside comments discussed above, in which intensification was opposed on a number of grounds, there were a sizeable number of respondents who stated that the distribution of intensification proposed in the Plan was inequitable.

Comments on this topic were varied, and sometimes contradictory, with people arguing that there ought to be both *more* and *less* intensification in suburbs closer to the centre that are currently considered relatively sparsely populated. Two such comments follow:

The central and inner city suburbs, where more people aspire to live, will have a lower share of intensification than they should. All the suburbs of the city should share population growth.

There should be more focus on increasing the population density of the least dense suburbs not further increasing the density of the most dense.

Several of these comments touched on the topic generally or tangentially, such as those simply stating that they want to see “other suburbs included”, or “intensification spread more evenly”.

There was a fear that some suburbs have avoided the burden of intensification by virtue of their residents being wealthy; this was considered unfair (see elsewhere in this document for more discussion of this). Finally, one respondent noted:

The Spatial Plan does not share the burden of population growth evenly across the city. Just four suburbs (Te Aro, Karori, Tawa and Johnsonville) bear the burden of housing over half the mooted 80,000 future Wellingtonians. In contrast, all the Inner City suburbs combined will have to house just 7,200 new residents, which is barely more than Johnsonville by itself.

Brownfield development and landbanking (74)

A substantial number of respondents addressed brownfield development in comments about what they would change or improve about the Plan. The majority of these comments indicated that they believe there is potential for the use of brownfield development and that this should be considered in the Plan. Most comments suggested the consideration of industrial, “spare” or “existing brownfield sites”. The following comment describes the perceived benefits from this type of development:

The only way that we can sensibly fit more people into Wellington is to work as a community to identify sites - low rise commercial buildings (car yards, cheap commercial buildings such as on Karo Drive near Cuba Street), brownfield sites and some inner suburb streets with lower heritage/character values and - with strong, publicly agreed regulations - build mixed use housing that meets the needs for different sized families and individuals, affordability and accessibility.

A common thread within this group of comments was that if “suitable” infill occurred outside of the inner suburbs and CBD, then character areas within these central suburbs could be retained (note: character areas are discussed elsewhere in this report).

WCC could offer other possible changes, such as increasing allowable site coverage from 50%, or putting the population increase into other suburbs with capacity and fewer heritage buildings.

The remaining moderate number of comments concern respondent fears that landbanking will further exacerbate housing pressure by locking up land with high potential for development. Some of these comments were about character housing that is neither being renovated nor sold, merely kept for capital gains, but most argued that the Plan would result in developers banking land for future developments, thus, not alleviating housing pressure. This suggestion was made:

Review how the rating system could be used to discourage land banking or under use of prime city land. Use options for differential rates to encourage and cajole owners to contribute to residential development.

Council rules, regulations, and bureaucracy e.g. subdividing, new dwellings (42)

There were a considerable number of comments made about regulations, controls, and other WCC measures that respondents perceive as not helping to alleviate housing pressure. While a small number were general in nature, such as a call to “reduce red tape bureaucracy”, and “remove more regulations so we can build more houses”, most contained specific suggestions, such as those quoted below:

Remove restrictions on floor area to section ratios. Housing in Wellington is a crisis, its not fair to arbitrarily restrict density.

Remove all restrictions on growth and development. People need places to work and live. Council should enable that not restrict.

Lobby to improve body corporate structures to make living in the city more appealing.

Place restrictions on the basis under which council can decline both resource and building consents.

A common thread within comments was the belief that people (i.e., property owners) ought to have more control over what they can do on the land that they own. Respondents stated that it should be easier to change the configuration of buildings on their properties, and, in some cases, that it is their right to do so. A small number of respondents advocated for resource consents to be removed, streamlined, or made easier to obtain. This was thought to enable the building process to be expedited.

Proposed character area changes

665 comments

Following intensification, issues around the proposed character areas were the second most commented on aspect when respondents were asked about what they would change or improve about the Plan.

Oppose loss of character (491)

Over two-thirds of the comments discussed under this heading generally opposed the loss of character they believed the Plan would result in. Opposition was on the basis that the Plan was perceived to allow the destruction of heritage buildings and character areas, and that this is problematic given that these areas represent an attractive feature of Wellington. Respondents wanted to see character retained, protected, and even enhanced in some cases.

The very large number of comments in opposition to proposed changes were expressed in consistent ways, the most frequent of which was simply that character areas should be retained. For example, “minimise loss of character in all inner city suburbs”, and “preserve and enhance our unique heritage

housing". Some respondents went on to state that character is of inherent value to the city, and that this must be preserved. The following quotes reiterate this:

More focus on heritage and what Wellingtons and visitors value about it & how to retain it, not how to remove it.

I strongly disagree with a Spatial Plan that steamrolls through existing protections for heritage buildings.

The existing Pre-1930 Character Areas, where they have been implemented, have worked well to preserve the historic character of these suburbs and I support the retention in full of Pre-1930 Character Areas in the Inner Suburbs of Thorndon, Mt Victoria, Aro Valley, Mt Cook, Newtown and Berhampore, and urge that consideration be given to the possible extension of Pre-1930 Character areas to other suburbs.

Many made the point that it is difficult to recreate character once it is lost. The "once it's gone, it's gone" sentiment was evident in a considerable number of comments, in which respondents urged WCC to pay greater attention to the asset that character represents to the city.

There should not be a reduction in the protection of character buildings. Once gone, they are gone for ever. So much Wellington history has already been lost.

A few respondents went to great lengths to convey the value of character areas to them. This included a few that contained images of attractive character housing in their submissions, and the considerable number that used emotive language, or that included narratives conveying a strong sense of place. A selection of examples follow:

When I first came to Wellington I was entranced by the majestic turn-of-the-century homes dotting the green hills.

We've let investors, who aren't part of our communities, dictate what they look and feel like. Old homes that have stood the test of time, and are all made with virgin native timbers which are hardy, sacred and will never be found again. They have shaped who we are. Removal is permanent.

I am outraged at your plan for Mt Victoria. It should be designated a heritage area. All of it and the sub-areas make no sense in amongst the proposed character area. There would be no character left and any high-density housing would remove all any character.

My partner and other neighbours have lived here in Newtown as children and it is heartbreaking for us to hear that their character homes are no longer valued.

Around a third of the comments about character in this section directly addressed current controls for pre-1930 houses and argued that they should be retained. The very large number of comments communicated a clear and consistent agreement that the controls should be retained. Some extended the argument to provide reasoning as to how the removal of controls would be detrimental to the "historic housing stock". The following comments are representative:

I am opposed to the removal by the Council of the pre-1930 demolition controls.

[The] removal of the pre-1930s restricted demolition rule from the whole suburb...will quickly lead to the loss of an essential part of Wellington's identity. The historic housing stock of Mt Victoria and its unique form are used to promote Wellington, not least by Wellington City Council.

I support the retention in full of Pre-1930 Character Areas in the Inner Suburbs of Thorndon, Mt Victoria, Aro Valley, Mt Cook, Newtown and Berhampore, and urge that consideration be given to the possible extension of Pre-1930 Character areas to other suburbs.

A number of pro forma submissions generated by community groups were received that addressed this topic; however, a greater number of comments were from individuals who completed the online survey. They used the following words and phrases to make their points: "Retain the existing pre-1930s character protection"; "Keep the pre-1930s resource consent rule not allow demolition"; and, "I strongly disagree with the plan to reduce protections on pre-1930 buildings in character areas".

The final group of comments in opposition to the removal of character controls were the considerable number in which a 2019 report prepared by Boffa Miskell was cited. Respondents urged that WCC plans adhere to the findings of this report, which is said to have afforded more areas greater heritage protection. One example follows:

WCC engaged Boffa Miskell to map areas of significant character, this was completed and published. In Newtown WCC has reduced the area highlighted by Boffa Miskell by almost half and is therefore not fully utilising the mechanisms the government has created to protect areas...

Support for proposed changes to character controls (116)

A large number of respondents used the field in the survey asking about changes or improvements to the Plan to make a comment in favour of reducing the level of protection that character houses are afforded. Respondents consistently called for character controls to be removed or eased; a number of supporting arguments were offered, the greatest proportion of which were in relation to the liveability of character homes.

A considerable number of respondents conveyed the point that the utility in houses comes not from their "look", but from their function. They described character houses as, in some cases, not fit for purpose, and wanted to see more healthy, warm homes prioritised over the protection of character.

Character villas in Wellington to me don't mean beautiful houses, they mean damp, cold, mouldy houses with overpriced rent and too many flatmates.

Owners of derelict properties should be compelled to sell or maintain, rather than land bank them - think the rotten villas in Mt Cook with car bodies.

A moderate number of comments in this group were simple calls for the removal of pre-1930 character controls. They used the following words and phrases to convey this: "remove pre-1930 character areas in totality"; "remove character building limits"; and, "less protection for character sub-areas". Other comments provided additional reasoning, as quoted below:

Remove any council restriction on development of pre 1930 areas. They are exactly where the population needs to be - near CBD employment and services.

I'd put even less emphasis on a need to preserve 'character'. Just get on with building warm dry homes regardless of their design.

Other supporting arguments for the relaxation of character controls included: that it is an “affront to property rights” to have restrictions imposed; that smaller character areas would suffice; and, that the controls give too much power to lobby groups whose interests are perhaps skewed towards their own interests. Examples follow:

I consider that the refined approach to pre-1930s character areas offers heavy concessions to existing concerned property-owner lobby groups in these areas, perhaps even to the detriment of achieving the plan's goals.

Go further with intensification in the inner suburbs, removing excess 'special character' protections.

Character protections need to be applied to smaller areas of the best examples and removed entirely from arterials where significant development needs to be strongly favoured.

There were comments from several respondents suggesting that the Plan places too much emphasis on character retention, and that in doing so the vision of the Plan is negated.

Controls and rules for new developments in character areas (29)

A considerable number of respondents made points about how WCC might enable new developments within character areas, or the redevelopment of character areas to occur while not overly impacting on the character value. The overarching sentiment of these comments was that character can be maintained even while upgrading, changing, renovating, or building new homes. Suggestions included subsidising the cost of paint; demolishing derelict buildings; and, “character matching” initiatives, incentives, mechanisms, or directives.

It was thought possible that new developments within character areas could (and should) be sympathetic to the surrounding aesthetic. There was some reticence about the will of developers to voluntarily increase aesthetic standards (note, this is discussed elsewhere in this report in more detail).

New builds also do not have to go against an areas character. You can maintain a character area, to some degree, with newer buildings if you enforce good designs from the property developers.

Clarity around character classifications sought (29)

A considerable number of respondents made the point that the designations for character areas, or those in which changes to character would occur, were inconsistent, arbitrary, or not appropriately considered. People noted the subjective nature of character aesthetics, and were frequently unhappy that their area had been designated one way or the other. Comments invariably included specific addresses, streets or suburbs which they questioned. Examples follow:

Be more specific about which houses are heritage, which are not. Certain designations made of heritage streets in Mt Cook seems random. It should be done property by property, not by street.

I am writing to you re the proposed Mt Victoria plan: a) Because I feel that the designated areas are very inconsistent. I.e., some houses in protected areas, whereas others that should be protected aren't.

This Plan in the context of other plans

448 comments

Respondents made a very large number of comments about the Plan document itself, when asked what they would change or improve. Better integration with WCC's own District Plan and similar plans of neighbouring territorial authorities, lack of detail regarding many proposals, population estimates, COVID-

19 challenging previous assumptions about where people will work, a perceived lack of engagement with Mana Whenua, and the limited focus of the Plan were the main topics discussed.

How the Draft Spatial Plan aligns with other WCC, neighbouring council, regional, and central government plans and strategies (89)

The relationship to the District Plan and District Plan Review was commented on by a considerable number of respondents. Several respondents claimed that there could be potential conflicts between the Plan and the current or future District Plan, with clarification sought regarding which plan had precedence over the other. One respondent noted the Plan...

specifically restricts council from denying developments in areas they have zoned for 6 storey developments or more, which means there is a real clear risk that the protections or staging promised in the District Plan will never materialise because that would go against the purpose of the Spatial Plan

Another respondent was concerned that the Plan could remove specific character protections that currently exist under the District Plan:

an inevitable outcome of the present DSP process will be the diminution or deletion of existing District Plan Policy 4.2.2.1 which seeks to maintain and enhance the character of the inner-residential suburbs and protect the city's unique sense of place

Similarly, the need to give precedence to the review of the District Plan before the Spatial Plan was consulted on was expressed by a moderate number of respondents, some asking for the Plan consultation to be put on hold, with views shared in the following ways :

it seems contradictory to consult on the spatial plan before the district plan outline is known

Kāinga Ora recommends: 1. That a master-planning exercise be expedited to properly inform the current District Plan review

However, another respondent took the contradictory view:

To think that the WCC are already working on the District Plan without having the results of the Draft Spatial Plan is absurd.

A few respondents rejected the need for a spatial plan and suggested that proposed intensification changes could potentially happen instead under the current District Plan. One respondent wanted to know if existing resource consents issued through the District Plan would be affected by a new spatial plan.

A regional approach to spatial planning was supported by a considerable number of respondents, as a way of coordinating and equitably spreading intensification. Respondents urged WCC to work in partnership with neighbouring city councils and Greater Wellington Regional Council, as well as aligning with existing plans and frameworks such as Te Atakura, the Wellington Resilience Strategy, and the Wellington Regional Growth Framework. In referring to Boffa Miskell's 2016 Wellington region "Spatial Planning" report one respondent suggested:

The DSP appears to me to be the competitive strategy; Wellington City Council wants to pack more people into Wellington City rather than consider whether better quality of life for everyone could be achieved by gentle densification throughout the Greater Wellington region

The National Policy Statement – Urban Development (NPS-UD) and its influence in shaping and influencing was discussed by several respondents. Interpretation of building heights, intensification, proximity to mass transit and heritage protection were some of the issues raised. Several of these respondents questioned whether the Plan met the standard of the policies in the NPS-UD, or was a superficial response. The latter view was summarised in this comment:

The hasty attempt to superficially meet NPSUD 2020 height limit requirements resulted in a DSP which grossly over provided for capacity

A few respondents expressed support, noting that the Plan is consistent with the NPS-UD.

Engaging with central government to encourage review of relevant legislation, such as the Building Act's accessibility and sustainability provisions, and resource consent processes were suggested by a small number of respondents.

Involving the private sector and property developers to better understand their requirements was suggested by a small number of respondents.

One-off comments from respondents included suggestions for adapting the framework of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, an accompanying infrastructure plan, an accompanying transport plan, and recognition that "good site development practises" may not be practical in Wellington's steeper topography.

More detail, clarity and research needed, to be properly informed (69)

There were a substantial number of comments made about the lack of clarity and detail in the Plan document and the need for WCC to conduct more research and share data so that the public can be properly informed.

A third of these comments were general in nature where respondents sought "more clarity on when this could potentially impact homeowners in affected areas", noted "much more detail is required on how the rules / changes would apply", and asked WCC to "provide at least broad-brush assessments of costs, benefits, and risks" with one respondent commenting:

The draft spatial plan seems to have been written in a great hurry, with far too many important details missing.

Over a quarter of the comments questioned the statistical and GIS data used as well as the analysis processes undertaken in modelling the Plan. Several of those respondents sought transparency through the publishing of the scenarios and data used. The following quote reiterates this sentiment:

In order to provide more informed decisions, the public and affected persons need access to more of the evidence base that was used to inform the plan and the key assumptions that were made. Carrying forward with the plan in the absence of providing evidence that can be subject to appropriate scrutiny and validation is irresponsible and undemocratic.

Several comments were made seeking further clarification and detail of the scope and planned implementation of increased intensification in suburban areas. Some examples follow:

There needs to be a broad concept footprint plan showing how Council expects areas may develop and function.

There is no indication how fast this is will happen... and also how it will happen. For example, how does an area allocated for a 6 story building start to build them if there are houses there?

There were comments from several respondents asking for clarity and more information relating to transit and transport plans, infrastructure impacts and provision, decision-making processes for areas with new building heights, and how character areas would be preserved and maintained if development does occur.

Population growth estimates challenged (69)

A substantial number of comments voiced disagreement about or challenged the reliability of the 80,000 population growth figure estimate the Plan is based on.

Scepticism about the accuracy of the population growth predictions was expressed by a moderate number of respondents, with many generally stating that numbers were “unrealistic”, “inaccurate”, “not credible”, or “overstated”. Some examples follow:

The statistical analysis underpinning the plan is erroneous and numbers used are unrealistic

The growth predictions are now unrealistic and overstated.

The statistical demographic analysis underpinning the plan seems incorrect and the numbers unrealistic – 80,000 is stated as if it is a fact, whereas it is a higher end projection.

Several respondents suggested that COVID-19 will affect population projections because of recent border closures and people being more likely to work from home in the future. The following comment is representative:

The COVID-19 crisis both speeded up the extent to which workers could be expected to work from home and also highlighted how much office work could realistically be expected to be undertaken outside traditional office spaces twenty-three years from now.

Similarly, several respondents requested that WCC review the population projection figures, provide evidence the numbers are correct, or seek an expert opinion.

A small number of respondents noted that WCC updated the population projection figures during the course of the public engagement process. Respondents claimed this justified their belief that a lower amount of planned intensification was required, with one respondent explaining their reasoning below:

The Council's recently updated estimated growth distribution figures do not support the need for creating additional areas of dense housing in the inner city suburbs

The remaining few comments, relating to population projections, covered a range of topics including the assertion that intensification may unintentionally drive population growth rather than support it, that population growth should not be forced on outer suburbs, and that government work shifting to the provinces may drive down the forecast population growth.

COVID-19 and or the future of work, impact on previous assumptions (62)

A substantial number of comments made the point that the Plan does not adequately take into account the effects of COVID-19 on future population projections, people movement, and workplace behaviours.

Using data and projections obtained before Covid changed the world to plan our future communities

The assumptions on which the plan is based (that the people of Wellington still want, amongst other things, a compact city) need to be re-considered. The engagement with the public occurred in 2017-2019, before Covid-19 and pandemic viruses was an issue

Respondents also suggested that the Plan be revised or delayed to take into consideration COVID-19. The following comments illustrate this view:

Significant changes to immigration forecasts and employment patterns in the work-from-home Zoom era require new planning, based on robust post-Covid evidence.

We have yet to see the consequences of Covid 19 on Wellington. Until we have, the time is much too premature to make irreparable decisions

Generally oppose the Plan (50)

A considerable number of respondents stated that they opposed the Plan. Around half of these comments were short and simple expressions of disagreement, with the following comment being typical:

A complete rethink is required.

The Draft Spatial Plan is the wrong plan, at that wrong time, addressing the wrong problems.

In voicing overall opposition, other respondents gave more detail for their reasoning, often citing the potential effects on existing heritage, the engagement process, the lack of alignment with the five goals, and the “blunt” nature of the Plan. The following comments are representative of this opposition:

I liken the Draft Spatial Plan to one of trying to cram as many sardines into a very small can that is too small for the task. As a solution, it does not have an elegant fit or feel to it.

The basic assumptions driving it appear to lack analytical rigour. There is no cost benefit analysis. The legal basis upon which it is founded seems unclear.

Next time use consultants who have a feel for what makes Wellington special and really look to find what it is rather than those who see change as what has to happen regardless.

Mana Whenua principles, involvement, and heritage (37)

A desire for WCC to engage and collaborate with Mana Whenua and iwi was expressed by a moderate number of respondents, such as those quoted below:

I think there needs to a stronger sense of how mana whenua are being included and consulted in this plan. Meeting the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is not mentioned but I think this is very important.

We strongly encourage the council to partner with iwi and mana whenua, to ensure their aspirations are met, and the current decision making process while we plan for growth is decolonised.

A small number of respondents argued that proposals relating to “character” have solely focussed on “colonial heritage” while overlooking sites of significance for Māori. Two such comments follow:

The level of resourcing that has gone into the identification, classification, and protection of these character areas is deeply concerning considering how little resource has been invested into doing the same for the heritage and taonga of mana whenua, and of the natural heritage of our city.

Taking a protectionism approach to colonial buildings does a disservice to our treaty apartments under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

The vision / goals are missing the link with Mana Whenua, and therefore our landscape. And this is a major flaw. Where is the real story of the geography, the whakapapa of Te Whanganui-a-Tara, the awa that feed it, and the maunga that surround it? Incorporating this would enormously improve the spatial plan.

It's not a proper spatial plan (22)

A moderate number of respondents debated the Plan format, arguing that it's not a full and proper integrated spatial plan or land-use and transport strategy, instead variously describing it as a housing plan, a zoning plan, an intensification plan, and a density plan. Typical comments follow:

Excellent vision. However, the draft Spatial Plan does nothing to deliver this vision. The spatial plan is just a re-zoning exercise, and needs a re-think before a sensible review of the District Plan can be undertaken.

It is more a compilation of material directed towards the formulation of new residential zoning standards in the District Plan.

Integrate it with transport planning. It's not a spatial plan at the moment, nor really a fully-fledged land use plan, it's a housing plan.

General support for the Plan (21)

A moderate number of respondents supported or praised the Plan. Around half of these comments were short and simple expressions of praise, and the remainder urged WCC to be bold and not listen to opponents. A couple of examples follow:

Don't get ruled by vocal lobby group or 'press' people with agenda to push their own barrow

As a strategic high level document I think it provides a relatively clear sense of the direction we want to go in.

Overall goals, objectives, and vision – general comments (21)

The goals, objectives, and vision of the Plan were discussed by a moderate number of respondents. While there was some agreement and support for the stated goals and vision, respondents sought more detail and explanation about how the goals and vision would be achieved and more input from the community to create localised values. Some questioned the practicality and viability of applying the goals to the Plan. The following comments are indicative:

It would be most worthwhile if it gave specific plans of how these abstract, visionary goals were going to be achieved.

This is an ambitious list of objectives. Wellington will be worse off if, in an attempt to achieve all these things, we end up achieving none of them.

A few respondents suggested designing the Plan with the long-term view, with one noting:

It is hard to see a very long-term vision in the draft spatial plan. What is envisaged for Wellington 2100? How could the city and its people get from here to there?

Agencies, landowners and community groups seeking further involvement (8)

Several respondents sought a closer working relationship with WCC in developing the Plan. This included residents' associations proposing new community planning processes, government agencies sharing data or operational information with WCC, and developers wanting to collaborate on area growth plans.

Transport and connectivity

490 comments

Active transportation (169)

Matters concerning walking and cycling made up around 40% of transport and connectivity comments when respondents were asked what they would change or improve about the Plan. These consisted of those discussing the ability of Wellingtonians to walk and cycle, as well as the infrastructure needs for both, and additional comments involving micro-mobility (e.g., vehicles such as e-scooters/bikes/skateboards).

Walking and walkability was the most discussed topic within active transportation, receiving a sizeable number of comments. The walkable city goals of the Plan were broadly supported, and respondents reported wanting to see a city in which suburbs were walkable. This meant both generally (i.e. with the provision of adequate footpaths, etc.), and that there were amenities concentrated in suburbs such as that residents could and would walk to access them.

There were calls for more or better footpaths, "better footpaths and walking lanes"; closer distances between amenities, "Parks/Public Spaces/Playgrounds! Easy accessibility within 5min-10min of walking to these is needed"; better walkability, "Building for a walkable future"; and, more emphasis on pedestrians, "Road systems that put more value on pedestrians".

A thread of comments expressed aspirations for Wellington's walkability, and, although these were not always specifically tied to the Plan, they all supported measures to increase or improve walkability.

As Wellington's population grows, I would love to see increased housing density supported by: [amongst a list of others] walking/ cycle routes; pedestrian only areas.

Wellington has a walkable inner city, and has the potential to replicate this pattern across the city. It is good for everyone if more people are out and about and do not need to rely on other modes.

Encourage sustainable inner-city living by using public transport or walking/cycling as much as possible.

In around a quarter of the walking comments, walking was discussed alongside the benefits that walking would provide, these were: reduced road pressure/car use; increased public health; increased vibrancy; and, the contributions walking makes to carbon-zero goals.

The draft Spatial Plan has a real focus on 'walkability': Wellington is well known for its high rates of walking, and the emphasis on retaining a compact walkable form continues in this Plan.

Around a third of the walking comments were about the walkable catchments described in the Plan. Clarification was sought around the distances and times cited in the Plan, and in several comments, respondents raised the issue of topography (i.e., hills) and the impacts this would have on walking times (as well as the propensity for walking).

Cycling comments made up around a third of the active transport comments. These comments consistently supported cycling as a transport and leisure mode, and respondents wanted to see more, better, and safer cycling enabled. While these comments often came alongside support for walking, and public transport, many advocated for cycling in quite passionate ways, particularly in matters of safety. Typical comments follow:

More cycleways which are complete from hub to town.

With the growth of E bikes hills cease to be a problem instead it's the lack of safe cycle infrastructure and dedicated bus lanes that are the issue. This would then enable greater intensification in those suburbs and spread the load, instead of all being concentrated in a much smaller number of suburbs.

A small number of comments opposed cycling or cycleways. These respondents wanted to see less emphasis on cycling and associated infrastructure on the basis that cyclists are not the majority, and that cycle infrastructure is costly.

A moderate number of comments addressed active transport in a general way (i.e., not separating walking from cycling). Active transport advocates supported active transport in the following ways: “More active transport provision”; “Need to emphasis more clearly need for active transport links (bike/walk)”; and, a small number of respondents raised the issue of the needs for alternative transport modes, such as was examined in the following comment:

Expand the objective of "these streets are made for walking" to encompass alternative transport as a whole (e.g. cycling and scootering).

Public transport (168)

Public transport comments were in the most part concerned with improving this mode to allow for higher population densities. Half of the public transport comments called for improvements, many of which were predicated on the sentiment that current public transportation is not sufficiently reliable, fast, or networked, and that any population density increases would require improvements.

Respondents called for “decent” or “better” public transport; “more emphasis on public transport”; and, “improved bus network”. A moderate number wanted specifically to see more connectivity to outer suburbs, and, additionally, urged that any greenfield developments could occur with the provision of suitable public transportation. The following comments are indicative:

Build out and have better transport links.

The council should get its bus system functioning properly and build further out.

While some comments included additional supporting information such as “so that people are encouraged not to use their cars”, “to save us from air pollution”; and “...to support the influx of people”, most simply stated the need for an effective public transportation system.

Improve bus services so people are less reliant on private cars.

Make sure public transport can cope.

Rail services were specifically cited in slightly fewer numbers than public transport. Half of the rail comments directly addressed the Johnsonville line. Although people talked about rail in a number of

contexts (e.g., light rail, trams, rapid transit, extending lines, and increasing capacity) the defining feature of the comments was that respondents wanted to see an efficient, reliable and well-networked train system that could move sufficient numbers of people. Respondents made comments such as: “more light rail options”; “extend the existing suburban rail lines”; and, “more rail infrastructure”.

The Johnsonville line was of concern to a considerable number of respondents for the perception that it does not have the capacity to become a mass transit route.

Remove the requirement to enable six storey buildings near stations on the Johnsonville Branch Line as the train service does not meet the definition of mass rapid transit.

Given the single line through most of the Johnsonville line, the train system will be soon at capacity given the inability to add more cars to the existing trains due to the short length of the double track cross over sections and platforms, and no more trains can be added due to the number of double track cross over sections.

Several respondents argued that public transport connections ought to be improved between the city, the airport, and the hospital. One respondent stated emphatically:

Enabling better access to the City and Hospital by PT and AT!!

Broader transport planning and LGWM (58)

A substantial number of respondents raised the issue of broader transport planning, and of integrating the Plan with the Let’s Get Wellington Moving plan (LGWM). The main sentiment of these comments was support for an effective network encompassing both outer and inner suburbs. While some were very succinct in nature (“Integrate with transport planning”), many were more descriptive, and outlined (for example):

We Request that WCC works closely with GWRC, NZTA and the LGWM programme in relation to transport outcomes and public transport as part of these master planning exercises.

Realising that transport is not the responsibility of the WCC, I think it should outlined in the plan better how it fits in to the plan and where high density should be encouraged further near transport hubs such as light rail (if it ever happens), bus lines, ferry terminals, railway stations etc.

Within these comments were the several that called for more detailed attention to transport planning, such as the following:

Wellington's public transport and transport planning needs improvement which needs to be addressed to discuss a spatial plan for the city

The spatial plan is ok, it needs a more detailed transport plan to go with it.

Several additional respondents expressed scepticism about the ability of the Plan to effectively provide for transportation requirements. Criticisms were levelled at WCC for not implementing LGWM initiatives, and that the Plan appeared to be based on existing transport plans whose effects were neither known nor proven.

It seems crazy to build a spatial plan that will destroy communities, based on a Transport plan that at this stage is just an idea.

Streets and roading (57)

A substantial number of comments were made on the topic of streets, roading, the associated infrastructure, and on general movement about the city. The roading network was raised in the context of capacity, congestion, and its ability to withstand increased population densities as proposed in the Plan. While some of the comments addressed specific sections of road, certain bottlenecks, or intersections, most were in relation to the general ability of traffic to move about freely. Narrow roads were one concern, (e.g., parked cars further narrowing the road space), access points to/from outer areas such as Newlands, and other northern suburbs were another; and, the importance of a functioning road network, as the following comment reiterates:

Stick to the basics - fix the Mt Vic tunnel that services the already clogged Eastern suburbs.

It is easy and affordable to get around regardless of the mode of transport we chose and our accessibility needs

A moderate number of respondents made the case that private vehicles will continue to be used and needed, and that this must be provided for in the Plan by way of adequate and adequately maintained road networks. One respondent phrased this succinctly by stating that they wanted to see “realistic expectations about vehicle ownership and use”. Another stated:

I know people will say public transport, but Karori is (generally) an affluent area so regardless of quality of transport people will still choose to drive. As we move towards EVs, people won't feel guilty about doing it either.

Disincentivise or reduce car use (38)

A considerable number of respondents wanted to see the use of private cars disincentivised and felt that the Plan did not go far enough in this area. Most comments were attached to calls for better/more public/active transport, or those calling for better liveability or shared space, and respondents consistently agreed that having fewer cars is a worthy aim for the city.

Respondents spoke of “people priority streets”, “promote walking over cars”, and that “low levels of car dependence” are already a “key strength” of the inner suburbs. One respondent stated:

Please can Wellington be ambitious and be the leading city to reduce car trips. Remove them from the CBD, congestion charge single drivers, create car-pooling/sharing systems.

Implementing the Plan

373 comments

Design standards (162)

A very large number of respondents urged for the Plan to include standards that ensure new developments remain in keeping with both the surrounding aesthetic, and with Wellington as a whole. The phrase “design standards” was frequently included in comments, and support for new developments was often contingent on their adherence to a set of standards that frequently went unspecified other than to call for standards.

There was a sense of fear that development would be “rampant”, and that it would result in a proliferation of tilt-slab concrete style medium-high rises that were considered ugly and not considered desirable by these respondents. The following comment is typical of the very large number in this group.

The Spatial Plan needs to specify quality design and beautiful buildings, rejecting low-ball noddy boxes and flaky builds, to create habitats that people will want to live in.

Additional comments included:

Design and construction of modern buildings to replace demolished ones...are all possible while maintaining the overall architectural rhythm and interaction.

Make it easier to achieve increased density done well, at the right scale and height to fit the neighbourhood, with quality control on the design of all new multi unit housing and infill housing.

A proposal that would actually ensure "design excellence" which is something the city lacks.

A subset of the design comments included a moderate number in which adherence to a set of accessibility principles was proposed. These respondents urged WCC to consider the needs of older people and those with disabilities, particularly in the context of high-rise apartments. While this was often phrased simply as "accessibility", more frequently the concept of "universal design" was cited. Either way, it was important to this group of respondents that "human-scale" development occurs, and that it caters to the basic access needs of all abilities.

We would like to see high level aspirational statements that link directly to Three Waters, Accessibility and Universal Design, and climate change included in a more visible way.

An additional considerable number of respondents called for continued (or renewed) emphasis on the design of heritage and character. These comments were more than simple admiration of character, rather they urged that targeted measures directed towards specific aspects of character be implemented. Respondents recommended design-oriented consenting, measures to keep character consistent, and customised approaches. In addition, one respondent noted:

I propose you create a board of advisors who dictate what area character features are, and then consult with heritage workers, designers, architects, and engineers to figure out what is feasible to maintain in new builds. Enforce new builds from developers to match these styles...Let's do these things, but let's do them right, and with the advisory of experts

Phased or staged approach and implementation (92)

Comments were made by a large number of people about the potential for a slower roll-out of the Plan. This was universally suggested, with the idea that this would allow the time for more appropriate development to occur. Although there were differing opinions about what and where "appropriate" development should occur, the sentiment was clear that respondents did not want to see quick and/or substandard development, or development at the expense of heritage if this was not necessary. For example:

The Draft Spatial Plan should be re-written to include a staged approach, to show what areas will be permitted to have developments in the next 5, 10, 15, 20 years. People deserve to know if they can expect to see a 6 storey development next door if their neighbour decides to cash in on the new market.

Let's make a start by increasing residential building in areas where housing demolition is not necessary and then see how things progress over 5/10/20 Years.

Phase the plan, start in the newer areas and suburbs as a priority so precious heritage is not lost

For some respondents, a staged approach referred to targeting areas “which need regeneration” first. The rationale for this was that this would allow time to better understand how population changes play out. In most cases, the central areas were deemed to be the most appropriate for delivery of phased intensification. However, several specific locations were cited as suitable and these included: areas already zoned for high density; Adelaide Road and Cambridge Terrace were noted in several comments; central Te Aro; the CBD; and, sites that are “climate robust” (as explicated in the following comment):

Develop an explicit sequence of intensification, starting with climate robust “win-win” sites, and build in regular reviews of this sequence to support learning by doing, the regular incorporation of new information, and co-design processes for key aspects of the Plan.

Desire for inclusive community engagement, not a developer-centric processes (63)

A substantial number of respondents called for community-led development, or, at least greater community involvement, particularly in communities where change would occur. Respondents urged that communities be not only consulted, but also involved to a greater degree in the future of their own areas. Comments ranged from those calling for the recognition of “people’s experience of their community” and to “work with them”, to those in which respondents reported fears of disenfranchisement of residents as large scale changes occurred around them, such as:

Significant thought and discussion with developers along with residents needs to occur to achieve solutions that do support inclusivity and connectedness. It would be good if such a cooperative approach could be sufficient to encourage inclusion of shared community spaces in high rises. However, it may be necessary to mandate these.

Respondents noted the potential for issues to arise in the event that residents feel excluded from the process. Residents’ rights were frequently raised in this context, and, when discussed alongside the rights of developers, residents were perceived to have been afforded less.

Early and clear consultation with potentially very impacted residents (eg. me) is important or the blowback will be huge.

As well as residents, other community segments were identified as requiring further or more consultation concerning proposed intensification; this included essential workers (including teachers and health professionals), young people, “the locals”, and older people.

At the heart of these comments was the urge to protect the “spirit, interaction and support” that exists within communities.

Concern about developer involvement (56)

There was concern from a substantial number of respondents about private developers and their profit-driven motives impacting negatively on the Wellington’s housing stock. Primarily, respondents were concerned that low-quality, aesthetically unappealing development would occur, and that such development may not even meet the affordability objectives of the Plan. There was a high level of distrust in developer’s ability (and their will) to create liveable housing.

While some comments included calls for developers to be mandated to adhere to certain standards (e.g., to ensure minimum access to light, sustainable energy use, and access to green space) most respondents simply expressed anti-developer sentiment, such as that they “don’t care about anything but profit”. The following quotes are indicative:

The Plan gives more power to developers who are motivated by money.

I don't think the developer really cares about the neighbours surrounding that house, just the huge profit that he would be making

You are providing a heaven for developers and riding roughshod over the needs and desires of the local community..

Several respondents were wary of the Plan's seeming reliance on developers to solve housing supply issues. Developers were said to not be invested in communities or the needs of residents, other than in financial ways, and their influence over how the city would look was considered too great.

Proposed building heights

394 comments

Oppose proposed height changes (266)

A large majority of the comments about building heights in this section were in opposition to proposals that would allow taller buildings in certain areas, usually the area where the respondent lived. Respondents objected to greater building heights citing that such changes would irrevocably change the character, feel, and aesthetics of the area, and for specific reasons such as: shading; reduced access to sun/light; reduced access to views or sight planes; and, the creation of wind tunnels.

The following comments represent and summarise most in this section well:

I reject the council opening this area to 6+ story buildings with no consideration for sun, light, footprint, heritage or streetscape.

And personally, if a 6 storied building went up opposite my house I would lose all my afternoon sun and any views across the city.

I abhor the thought that ill-conceived unsympathetic multi story blocks are built in the redefined areas without allowing the residents of the area to have a full and fair say in the matter.

A common thread within comments was the use of emotive and/or urgent language. Respondents were convinced that building heights, particularly those over six storeys, were not appropriate in areas that are currently low-rise. High-rise buildings were resisted based on their imposing "grey" nature, their potential to attract "undesirable" short-term tenants, the perception that New Zealanders do not want to live in this type of housing (given their penchant for the outdoors and space), and, that the narrow streets upon which development is likely to occur cannot cope with the extra people.

[I] would question having a compulsory height of 6 stories as it could start and look like Hong Kong or the council flat towers in parts of London which have developed into the slums and crime areas.

The opponents of the spatial plan love to cite 'pepper-potted' 6 Storey apartment blocks. These understandably are hated by their neighbours and should not be permitted.

One respondent stated that they were anxious about such developments, due to them being "out of place" and "unattractive"; they preferred to see such development occur in commercial zones. See the following quote:

I'm really anxious about the proposed 6-8 story developments in places like Miramar, Strathmore, and Kilbirnie.

Support for proposed heights, or for even greater heights (61)

A considerable number of comments expressed support for proposed heights in the Plan, with around three-quarters of these supporting even higher developments. Support for greater heights was predicated on impressions that such density could be absorbed, particularly in central areas, and that increased heights would align more closely with goals to house increasing numbers of people. Broadly speaking, the centre was considered a more suitable location for high-rise than the suburbs. Examples follow:

Expand up in the central city.

Increased building heights for taller residential (and commercial) developments in the central city area (namely the high city).

I would build higher than what is currently proposed and build less Greenfields development. Time to break the cycle of wasteful GJ Gardner box set one storey homes, on huge sections gobbling up precious land- we need to go UP.

Oriental Parade, Johnsonville, Kilbirnie (specifically the PAK'nSAVE site there), the city centre, inner suburbs, Tawa, Karori, Kelburn, Lyall Bay, and Bowen Hospital were all cited by respondents as places suitable for greater heights than currently proposed. Note that Kainga Ora supported increased heights (and densities) for much of the city suburbs.

General support for proposed heights came from those who simply stated that they approved of the heights proposed; this included: "allow 8 storeys within a 10 minute walk of the city centre", and the small number who opposed minimum height requirements (usually on the basis that this removes individual choice):

Minimum height requirements should not be implemented. Enabling greater building heights I do support; requiring them I do not.

I think the proposed local zone heights are excellent.

Suggestions for adjusting or distributing proposed heights differently (47)

A considerable number of respondents raised the idea of altering or redistributing proposed sites for taller buildings. These comments included some that expressed scepticism about what was considered a "blanket approach"; in these instances, respondents urged that specific locations be treated according to their particular specifications. This ranged from individual property boundaries (e.g., "narrow sections" or those with a "small property parcel size"), to entire suburbs in which the proposed development of six+ storey building was considered inappropriate.

Some simply stated that there should be a "cap" or a reduction in maximum heights, while others urged that a "granular", "finer tuned", or "phased" approach be used to distribute heights so that any development that does occur is not out of place.

The tall buildings should start from the 'back'.

Some of the height minimums and maximums are somewhat blunt. The general aims are very good, but require more nuance and allowance for different types of housing.

Clarity or more detail sought (20)

A moderate number of respondents wanted to see more detail or rationale for how the zones were applied, and how or why the various housing types were settled on.

I feel like it lacks clarity. There is plenty of scope already for development within areas zoned commercial for living without developing high rise buildings in character and heritage areas..

The universal enablement of being able to place a 3, 4, 6 to 8 story buildings. Not necessarily opposed to these but more detail and granular controls on the specifics of where these are or can be placed.

There is a lack of clarification on how the areas of Type 4b are to being applied in the outer suburbs.

Housing aspirations

297 comments

The need for more, better, and more affordable housing was a consistent theme in response to the question of what respondents would change or improve about the Plan.

Affordability (126)

A very large number of comments addressed affordability. Respondents consistently pointed out that affordability was desirable, and that the Plan needs to ensure a greater stock of affordable housing. While some comments expressed reticence about the Plan's ability to provide this, a large majority were simply suggestions that affordability be prioritised. There was little buy-in for the idea that the proposed **four- to six-storey** apartments would be priced at a level that was accessible for renters, and respondents wanted to see more targeted and specific information about how the Plan would achieve affordability goals. Some stated so unequivocally, as the following comments show.

A key objective for the Draft Spatial Plan is to provide affordable homes. Unfortunately the plan doesn't provide any answers about how this can be achieved.

Have clear ideas about achieving affordable housing.

It is too timid to tackle affordability in any serious way.

There are also no ideas around affordable housing. I believe that the city and the government need to take this up. Private developments will not provide affordable housing.

The need for housing affordability stands as a recurrent theme throughout this consultation, with comments expressing the fear that people other than those with a high income will be priced out and thus, that Wellington's diversity and vibrancy will suffer. Affordability was frequently discussed alongside other aspects, including questions about the ability of developers to prioritise affordability (this is discussed elsewhere in this section under the heading *Implementing the plan*), and heritage. Where heritage was paired with affordability in these comments, respondents reported that affordability should be prioritised, for example:

The number one priority should be building a city that has adequate affordable, safe, housing. 'Character' considerations need to fall well below this challenge. There is no negotiation.

Respondents frequently listed "affordability" amongst a series of points; the sheer number of times affordability was included indicates its importance to respondents.

Provide or promote a wider range of housing types (56)

A considerable number of comments were received on the need for greater variety in the types of housing available. Several respondents cited the importance of building “the housing types that more people will want to buy”; another respondent expanded on this, calling for:

Further research and evaluation of the short, medium and long term housing needs by population cohort and how the needs of each cohort are expressed in terms of market demand (overall numbers and typology mix) to allow for spatial planning outcomes that seek to close rather than increase the gap between market activity and actual housing need for all people.

Respondents reported wanting to see varied city housing stock that can cater to the needs of a wide range of residents, including: elderly, young, family, single, couple, multi-generational, multi-family, and co-housing living arrangements. The following housing types were provided: tiny houses; granny flats; “small minimalist houses along rear boundaries”; garage conversions; and, in addition, simply “better options”.

We believe Wellington city should be one of inclusiveness and variety, and it should cater for all of society in a fair and equitable way. A range of housing types should be available in inner city suburbs.

Be bold WCC! Lead on values-based propositions that reduce carbon and incentivise (the trending movement) to co-housing.

Several of these comments were focussed on the needs of families. It was thought that families ought to be encouraged to live in the city, and that for this to occur they need to be appropriately provisioned with the following: more 2–3 bedroom apartments; homes with space (either around the home, or by way of rooftop gardens or communal gardens); and, homes that are “workable for a modern person/family”.

Better quality, sustainable housing stock is needed (35)

A similar number of respondents called for better quality housing generally, often using the term “sustainable” with reference to environmentally conscious designs and builds, but also to refer to the ability of buildings and homes to remain warm, dry, and liveable for many years to come. Environmentally sustainable elements called for included: sustainable building materials; energy efficiency; passive heating and cooling; inclusion of solar where possible; and, adequate insulation to protect against dampness and cold. One respondent introduced their suggestions with the following comment:

Put simply, our city is plagued by a number of low-quality housing developments, which are designed and built for short term profit at the expense of sustainable good-quality housing that serves the health and well being of our city's people.

Other respondents gave examples of leaky homes, and the number of people living in cold and damp (and draughty) homes as examples to make their point for the need for high quality housing stock.

Connect Wellington stated:

We think it is appropriate for a Spatial Plan to talk about the quality, affordability and sustainability of development that is sought in particular locations, rather than simply what height.

Social housing, public housing (30)

The importance of social housing was emphasised in a considerable number of comments; in many cases these reiterated the calls for affordability, described above. There was broad support from this group of

respondents for greater attention to social housing. Comments were frequently articulated in simple and clear ways, as the following examples show:

I think public housing should be more of a feature of the programme.

I'm all for bringing more social housing into Mt Victoria.

I would be glad to pay higher rates to support a state-owned housing model.

Provision of social housing to date was considered “woeful” by one respondent, and several urged that social housing be provided with appropriate supporting services and measures. This was thought to guard against alienation and to avoid the worst-case scenarios of what others have referred to as slums or crime-ridden areas. The following example articulates this sentiment well:

To place those who are socially disadvantaged in one of the proposed vertical streets e.g. the Frederick Street development leaves them vulnerable. Wrap around services are not commented on in the design. The only 'add' this design gets is a park. This does not deal with the budgeting, drug, alcohol, health problems, and crime that gravitates to such developments. To put the disabled in this complex as well just makes matters worse and shows little or no foresight.

Rental properties and renting (26)

Rental properties were the focus of a considerable number of comments. There was the impression from respondents that not all landlords have the interests of their tenants in mind. There were calls for measures in the Plan to address “sub-standard rental accommodation”, and many narratives were offered of instances where respondents had encountered landlords whose rental homes were “squalid”, not up to standard, or “not fit for living” in. In addition to the state of the rental homes, respondents frequently noted high costs.

The following comments are representative:

More accountability for landlords.

Assurance and specific commitments about levers council should activate to make rents more affordable across the city, and houses warm, dry and safe.

Housing crisis can't be acknowledged with more houses without rent caps or landlord ownership maximums.

Increase housing stock, increase supply (17)

A moderate number of respondents made comments about increasing the housing supply. In some cases, this was tied to the issue of housing affordability, and many put it simply using phrases such as “more supply” and “build more houses”. One respondent expanded on this in the following way:

The plan should also avoid the concept of providing “enough” housing. There is no single level at which demand will be satisfied – rather, the benefits of more housing are greater the more is provided, and there is no real problem with “over-provision”. The more the better.

Subsidies, incentives, assistance loans for buying or upgrading (7)

A small number of comments were received in which respondents suggested assistance be provided to residents that would facilitate greater intensification. This included low interest loans to get properties to

a “healthy home standard”; rates rebates or other incentives for improving heritage homes; and, financial support from the community for strengthening heritage homes (on the basis that it is “the community” who benefit from the existence of heritage buildings).

Infrastructure

241 comments

General infrastructure (121)

City infrastructure was a significant concern for a large number of respondents. The ability of Wellington’s infrastructure to cope with the current demand was questioned, and there were fears that any increase in population density would only intensify problems.

The state of current infrastructure was variously described as: crumbling; strained; at capacity; limited; requiring maintenance; too old; at risk of failure/failing; unable to cope; and, inadequate. The following comments show this:

Existing infrastructure in Khandallah is barely adequate for even current population - overflowing sewage, broken waterpipes

We are burdened with aging waste-water systems, insecure water supply, erratic sewerage treatment.

Respondents’ comments emphasised the vital role of infrastructure, and that this issue was “the elephant in the room” so far as a well-functioning city is concerned. One group submitter reported that they:

...do not accept the load the Inner City is expected to take given already unacceptable density levels with totally inadequate infrastructure along with resilience issues.

Infrastructure was frequently discussed in the context that it requires a high level of investment and that this needs to occur – especially in the face of the even greater numbers reliant on it. There was broad support from this group of respondents with regards to planning for and implementing future infrastructure needs, prior to increasing intensification. One respondent conveyed the urgency with which this should be addressed:

Start planning and building the infrastructure to support this growth NOW, now when it has already happened.

The following comments are typical of many in this section:

Infrastructure (pipes etc) will not be able to cope with intensification suggested.

Consider the negative impacts of densification - including the impact on already strained or inadequate services.

And infrastructure, infrastructure, infrastructure- how can more housing go on top of our already aging infrastructure? It will break. Who will pay for that? The developers? Yeah right!

Several comments included reference to “waste” to mean solid waste (i.e., that destined for landfill). The terms “waste management” and “waste disposal” were used, and in a few cases “waste” was included amongst a series of infrastructure concerns, as the following comment illustrates:

Has the cost of replacing and increasing infrastructure (water, waste, electricity) to support the population increase been taken into account?

Three waters (drinking water, stormwater, wastewater) (78)

Although the majority of respondents simply referred to “infrastructure” and the need for it (discussed above), a sizeable number did expand on this. They used the following words and phrases: drinking water, wastewater and stormwater systems; three waters; 3W; water supply; sewage; and, “pipes /water/electricity/internet bits-and-bobs”. While many comments simply expressed concern at the ability

of the water infrastructure to cope with higher living densities, some conveyed that there should be no attempts to increase density prior to these issues being addressed. Examples of each position follow:

Wellington contains some very old infrastructure. The linking in of higher density medium and high rises to this infrastructure will cause overload.

I am appalled that the Council, which can't provide a 21st century infrastructure (water, sewage etc) for Wellington, would even dare to entertain increased residents in Wellington without a plan to fix the infrastructure for current residents.

Similar to the comments about general infrastructure, there were urgent calls for upgrades to water-based infrastructure so that increased demands would not consolidate capacity issues.

WCC needs to be able to confirm that the infrastructure will support a greater population. Sewage, drinking water and storm run-off will be impacted and all need to be upgraded accordingly.

Building upwards also brings issues with infrastructure. In Bidwill St, the water pipes are old and we need regular drain cleaning, especially after heavy rain.

In several cases, the provision of water infrastructure was linked to environmental concerns (see quote below), but the vast majority of comments simply conveyed a strong desire for there to be better, well-functioning infrastructure.

The wastewater treatment network is currently at capacity and overflows during heavy and prolonged rain, contaminates waterways and flows into Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour. Contamination is exacerbated by old leaking pipes and incorrectly connected pipes. This is of particular concern for Ngāti Toa as it impacts of the mauri of the waterways, and the harbour itself.

Where suggestions were provided as to how to deal with this, the most commonly offered was investment. For example: “develop and implement an investment programme”, or “provide increased investment in infrastructure”. Another proposition was to stagger development to follow areas where infrastructure has been upgraded or improved.

Social infrastructure (42)

A considerable number of respondents addressed the demand on social infrastructure that intensification would bring. Three-quarters of these were in relation to schools. And the remaining quarter discussed medical facilities.

Respondents noted that more people would inevitably mean greater demand on schools, which in many cases were already reported to be at or reaching capacity. It was considered urgent that integrated planning occur to deal with this.

*How will the local schools, kindys, intermediates and colleges cope with the influx of students?
They're heavily zoned, bursting at the seams and not fit for purpose as it is*

Similarly, the provision of (local) medical centres and places for residents to access medical care was considered an important aspect that the Plan did not adequately address. This was the case for several respondents.

Green space and outdoor space

163 comments

A large number of respondents discussed the need for providing more green space and public outdoor space, protecting and enhancing existing public landscapes, and a desire for more recreational space.

Intensification means more public green space and recreational space is needed (110)

Three quarters of these comments made the point that increased density and intensification would require the provision of more public green space, public open space, and public recreational amenities than Wellington currently has.

A sizeable number of respondents stated that new public green spaces and planting would be needed with a mixture of suggestions for particular types of parks. Some respondents claimed that not enough green spaces are proposed in the Plan, and gave ideas for particular types of plants to be used. Examples of comments follow:

Need much stronger language around ensuring adequate provision of public greenspace (which will require property acquisition) in CBD and inner suburbs. We have a lack of useable park space for existing residents so will need significant increase in coming years

Plan to add new diverse green and open spaces for future generations, particularly those living in more intensive development areas.

When considering green spaces, the Council should consider how it can use them to provide for WSUD and address the urban heat island effect.

I would add a stronger emphasis on more native trees along streets, especially wider ones.

The need for active recreation spaces and children's play spaces and playgrounds was discussed by several respondents, and the provision of urban farms and community gardens was suggested by several respondents. A small number of comments urged WCC to mandate through building consents that new developments provide green space for future residents, and suggested the repurposing of existing green spaces.

Protect and preserve the heritage of existing green spaces, flora and fauna, Town Belt (36)

The value, utilisation, and enjoyment of Wellington's existing public green spaces and private gardens within the city and suburbs, as well as continued or better access to the Town Belt, was discussed by a considerable number of respondents. Some comments made the point that WCC should consider the idea of heritage as not just being about character houses but to take into account the surrounding flora and fauna. The following comment was typical:

Older suburbs, especially Berhampore, have many old trees, many being natives, which are a key feature and priceless community assets, proven to enhance human well being and provide habitat for birds, butterflies and insects. Trees as well as heritage buildings need to be protected

A few respondents specifically mentioned Significant Natural Areas and claimed that SNAs may result in bush removal rather than the desired bush protection.

Other comments (17)

A moderate number of respondents offered suggestions for other ways to incorporate new green spaces within an intensified city, including suggestions for rooftop gardens, green roofs, green walls, new nature reserves, and distributed spaces – with some respondents asking for greater guidance and detail of how a proposed "green zone" will be implemented.

One respondent did take a contrary viewpoint and suggested that “Wellington does not require all its existing green space”.

Hazards and resilience

113 comments

Consideration of natural hazards, climate change, and the subsequent need to provide better resilience in a denser Wellington was commented on by a large number of respondents, when they were asked about what they would change or improve about the Plan.

Earthquakes, seismic activity (71)

Respondents expressed concern about the Plan enabling intensified development in a seismic area, with a wide range of reasons given for those concerns.

A moderate number claimed that it would be inappropriate and unsafe to construct high-rise buildings in a known earthquake zone, near a fault line, on reclaimed land (e.g. Te Aro), on steep hillsides, or on potentially liquefiable land (e.g. covered streams and beside waterways), for example:

Wellington is on a major faultline, why are we proposing building even more high-rise living?

I find it so bizarre that in an earthquake prone city like Wellington you are planning to build up and it seems to me misplaced confidence in current builders and engineers to do even propose this.

Any Multistorey Building Construction, near the Stream, along Silverstream Road (Crofton Downs), will be a High Risk Seismic Hazard, for Failure during an Earthquake.

A small number of comments suggested that an increase in population size through intensification, coupled with the limited roading capacity, would make it more difficult to evacuate residents in the event of an earthquake:

In an earthquake prone city one major vehicle link (the motorway) through the city is plain daft

Let's not forget this is basically a 'one way in and one way out' city

A few respondents claimed smaller wooden structures would perform better in earthquakes than tall buildings:

A multi-storey apartment block is less resilient, than many small infill timber houses.

A new six storey building, designed to 100% NBS will likely have greater damage after a significant seismic event than a two storey timber home in Mt Cook

The impact on insurance costs and premiums was noted by a few respondents:

Intensification of these risk areas is a huge risk and insurance companies are responding to that. These are areas where insurance companies are starting to balk at house and contents insurance.

More evenly spread low to medium height limits would spread the risk. Insurance cover may not be available for high rise apartments above potential liquefaction and flood prone sub-strata.

The identification by WCC of areas subject to natural hazards and the related development of risk management mitigation frameworks or strategies was discussed by a small number of respondents. One such comment read:

Kāinga Ora considers that it is the mitigated risk of the hazard that requires consideration and that in some instances the mitigated risk may or may not require alteration to the intended spatial land-use allocation

In discussing technical land-bearing capability where a seismic hazard exists, the Earthquake Commission suggested that WCC follows best practice, which “would mean not increasing the density of high buildings on soft soil, and, where development is progressed on soft soil that these are appropriately designed, low-rise buildings”. Hazard maps and diagrams were attached to this submission, and in urging WCC to engage in hazard risk-reduction stated:

EQC strongly recommends WCC include greater consideration of hazards into the Spatial Plan before it is finalised.

The Insurance Council noted that because the Natural Hazard Seismic Model is currently being updated to conform to best practice “the Council should not make critical long-term planning decisions and resilience requirements until this upgrade is completed, which is expected in 2022.”

A small number of comments suggested WCC learn from the impacts of the 2011 Canterbury earthquakes to better understand the effects on business, hospitality, and residents in the event of a disaster. Some also claimed fewer people would want to live in high-rise buildings because of the Canterbury experience.

Other comments included respondents who expressed concern regarding existing earthquake-prone buildings around the city, avoiding intensification in known tsunami zones, and one respondent suggesting six-storey buildings in tsunami zones could act as refuges from tsunami in a seismic event. Tsunami risk is further discussed below.

Sea level rise, tsunami risk, climate change (42)

Sea level rise, storm surges, flooding, climate change, and environmental risk mitigation issues were commented on by a considerable number of respondents.

Similar to above, respondents expressed concern about the Plan enabling intensified development in low-lying areas at risk of damage from sea level rise, storm flooding, storm surges, and tsunami inundation. Comments included suggestions for mitigation such as managed retreat, moving to higher ground, not intensifying in areas of highest risk, and that the Plan needs to address these issues in more detail. Comments follow:

Relocate development from existing low lying parts of the central city to higher ground, so that development in low lying areas will not be so badly affected by sea level rise

I would be very cautious about approving higher densification in the Kilbirnie/Lyall Bay areas where flooding is a major risk. Climate change is only going to exacerbate these issues so we shouldn't encourage development where it is not sustainable.

It wasn't clear to me what thought had been given to sea level rise or flooding.

Respondents also urged WCC to take climate change into account and generally claimed that the Plan was not sufficiently addressing the issue. The following comments were typical:

New development needs to be focussed towards areas where it will be viable long-term from a climate perspective.

It's not very clear to me how the plan intends to ensure resilience - particularly to challenges associated with climate change.

A small number of comments discussed the potential severity of tsunami damage being compounded by rising sea levels. Respondents specifically mentioned the southern suburbs and eastern suburbs such as Kilbirnie and Lyall Bay as being most at risk.

Sustainability and environment

85 comments

Sustainable building design (15)

A commitment to sustainability and green building standards in the Plan were topics discussed by a moderate number of respondents in this section, with the range of ideas including the implementation of efficient insulation, solar panels, electric vehicle charging points, passive heating, and green roofs.

Examples follow:

Introduce requirements for new buildings to meet sustainability standards to improve the quality of accommodation across the City.

I appreciate that there is a trade-off with affordability and speed, but as much as possible would like to see Wellington lifting the standards for the products it uses and making considerations about energy and water use and waste minimisation central to any new developments.

In making these suggestions one respondent acknowledged that the District Plan rather than the Plan might be the more appropriate way of bringing change:

Introduce requirements for new buildings to meet sustainability standards to improve the quality of accommodation across the City. I appreciate this is probably something that should sit within the District Plan rather than the Spatial Plan.

Incorporate and consider nature and biodiversity in urban design (14)

A moderate number of respondents wanted WCC to take into consideration existing flora, fauna, biodiversity, and Wellington's natural heritage in any intensification plans. A small number of those respondents claimed the "Greener" vision "could be stronger, and more exciting" with one respondent making the point:

The plan should take more drastic measures to ensure nature is incorporated in urban design/infrastructure - this is absolutely critical in the protection of our ecosystems, human health around air pollution and heat control, mental health and peace of mind

Other suggestions included implementing "blue green streets", restoration of Mana Whenua's natural heritage at a landscape level, and one respondent asking WCC to "consider the impact artificial lighting has on fauna".

A few respondents expressed concern that proposed six-storey buildings in Ngaio and Khandallah would negatively affect the birdlife in the adjacent reserves and nearby Mount Kaukau, with one of those respondents suggesting:

If there are to be multistorey developments allowed, there should be a corresponding requirement to retain sufficient tree and shrub growth on each residential section to maintain this local birdlife.

Alternatively, some of the sections around the forested areas should be excluded from that permitted level.

Carbon reduction (14)

A “zero carbon city” was an aspiration supported by several respondents with one requesting this aspiration be included within the Plan’s vision:

A ‘sustainable’ or ‘zero carbon’ city is in our view the single most important additional feature of the city we would like to see included in the vision informing the WDSP. The current vision (‘ensuring a green, vibrant and prosperous, inclusive and connected, compact and resilient Wellington city’) does not explicitly include this, and could be amended either to include the word ‘sustainable’ or include the words ‘zero carbon [city]’.

A small number of respondents sought more clarity and detail about how the Plan would enable carbon neutrality or carbon reduction. Scepticism about achieving a net-zero carbon target was expressed by a few respondents who claimed the need for private vehicles and that a potential second Mt Victoria road tunnel would make achieving such a target difficult.

Retain, reuse, and repurpose current building stock rather than demolish (14)

Several respondents commented on the potential carbon emissions and subsequent waste created if intensification were to result in the demolition of existing properties. Instead, respondents suggested that enhancing and retrofitting housing stock would be a more sustainable approach, with the added benefit of retaining the character and scale of existing suburbs. The following comment reiterates this:

The building industry is responsible for a significant contribution to NZ’s energy-related Green House Gas emissions and about 50% of waste in our landfill is from construction and demolition. The retention and refurbishment of our current building stock will reduce both of these negative statistics and contribute to a more sustainable future.

Waterways, freshwater and water-sensitive urban design (13)

The effects of urban development on Wellington’s waterways was discussed by several respondents with support for uncovering, cleaning, maintaining, and enhancing the city’s natural waterways.

A small number of respondents suggested WCC mandate that developers incorporate “water-sensitive urban design” features and principles in any new development. The following comment is representative:

Any developments must include water-sensitive urban design, required by by-law, not voluntary, to reduce the flooding of open-air creeks and piped creeks in heavy rain events. Flash floods endanger native freshwater fauna and in streams open to the air, scour and undermine the banks.

Transport’s environmental impacts (11)

Several comments discussed the negative effects current transport usage will have on proposed carbon emission reduction goals. As above, a few respondents reiterated their concerns that the demand for private vehicles and a potential second Mt Victoria road tunnel would make carbon emission reduction difficult. Respondents also claimed that increasing density and intensification would make the goals easier to achieve because of reduced reliance on private vehicles and more use of active and sustainable public transport. A typical comment follows:

Greater emphasis on getting to carbon zero through making active and public transport easier and with disincentives for driving a car, with the exception of mobility users. For example, I would

love to see low traffic, filtered neighborhoods that allow bikes and foot traffic through while stopping through traffic from cars.

In discussing the Emissions Trading Scheme and carbon emissions in relation to transport, one respondent suggested that congestion charges rather than intensification may be a more practical way to get commuters to use public transport and reduce emissions:

Restricting urban expansion because of potential effects on NZ's GHG emissions then does nothing to affect NZ's GHG emissions - but can have severe implications for housing affordability. The ability to expand at the fringes helps to limit land price appreciation at the core - this is some of the basics of urban economics.

Other comments (4)

Other respondents requested that infrastructure be designed and maintained “in a sustainable and environmentally focused way”, “more emphasis on the wellbeing of our people and planet”, and “creating incentives for people to make more of an effort environmentally”.

What else needs to be considered as we plan for the future, that is not provided for in Our City Tomorrow 2548 comments

Respondents were asked: Is there anything that needs to be considered as we plan for the future that is not provided for in Our City Tomorrow?

Summary of responses to this question: what else needs to be considered as we plan for the future

Respondents were asked to share anything they felt needed to be considered that hadn't already been provided for in the Draft Spatial Plan. Despite the question, many respondents used this space to reiterate topics that have been covered elsewhere in the Draft Spatial Plan. Where this has occurred, readers will be directed to the appropriate section of this report.

- **Transport** was widely discussed by respondents who felt that the Draft Spatial Plan did not go far enough to address the need to improve Wellington's public transport system and general transport infrastructure. Respondents described issues with the current transport system, and noted that if the city is going to accommodate more people, public transport urgently needs improvement, as do the city's roads more generally. Respondents wanted to see transport planning more explicitly mentioned in the Plan.
- **Housing and built area aesthetics** were common concerns for respondents, who were concerned about how increased density and building heights could negatively impact Wellington's overall look and feel. Respondents were concerned that multi-storey developments would cast shadows on existing homes, and that they would decrease the quality of life for existing residents. Character was also widely discussed, with residents noting that Wellington's character areas were what made the city special, and that they should therefore be protected. Respondents wanted to see a variety of housing types built to cater to the needs of different groups, and they discussed the need for affordable housing options.
- **The Spatial Plan** itself was widely discussed, with respondents sharing criticisms and concerns about the consultation process, as well as offering suggestions about how the Plan could be improved. Respondents wanted more targeted consultations with affected communities, and noted a need for more robust research and analysis before the Plan is implemented. In particular, respondents were concerned that the projected growth figures were no longer realistic, and felt that the plan should be revised based on updated growth figures. Respondents also argued for a staged approach to implementation, suggesting that this would allow for more flexibility, should the city's needs or circumstances change over time.
- **Infrastructure** was commonly mentioned by respondents, who argued that upgrading Wellington's infrastructure was an urgent step required before the city could accommodate more people. These comments discussed existing issues with the city's three waters infrastructure, as well as with roading and transport infrastructure and other services such as power and waste management. Social infrastructure, such as schools, libraries, and medical facilities were also discussed similarly, with respondents calling for more detail in the Plan about how the issue of infrastructure would be addressed for a growing population.
- **Development and design** were commented on in a range of capacities – from suggestions about urban planning and design, to comments about where population growth should be distributed, and calls for WCC to be more prescriptive in the types of developments being sought. Respondents wanted to see unused land and buildings being redeveloped first – and discussed the merit of creating new suburbs to accommodate population growth – to lessen the impact on existing residents. Some respondents were concerned about the motivations of

developers and suggested that restrictions and guidelines should be implemented to ensure positive outcomes for the people of Wellington.

- **Futureproofing, sustainability, and climate change** were all widely raised issues. Respondents expressed concern that the Draft Spatial Plan did not go far enough in taking measures to “futureproof” Wellington, particularly in regards to sustainability. Respondents wanted to see more proactive measures taken in the Plan to reduce Wellington’s carbon footprint, as well as more robust planning for sea-level rise, earthquakes, or other disasters.
- **People, population, and communities** were mentioned in a wide range of comments. Respondents called for more consideration of accessibility, safety, and inclusiveness within the Draft Spatial Plan. Additionally, respondents wanted to see growth distributed across the wider Wellington region, so as not to overburden the city.
- **Green, public, and open spaces** were commonly discussed, with respondents suggesting that these spaces should be given greater priority within the Plan. Respondents felt that green and open public spaces were critical in maintaining a healthy quality of life, particularly as the city moves toward more high-density housing.
- **Ways of living** are rapidly changing, and respondents wanted the Draft Spatial Plan to take this into consideration. In particular, comments discussed how the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way that people live and work, and noted that the Plan should be updated with these changes in mind. More people working from home and less demand for office space in the CBD were two issues raised, a phenomenon which respondents argued would impact the Plan.

Transport (buses, trains, roads and cycleways car parking etc) comments

484

Public transport (139)

Public transport was discussed by a large number of respondents, who expressed the overall sentiment that the Draft Spatial Plan does not go far enough to address the need to improve Wellington’s public transport system. Almost all of these comments noted that Wellington’s current public transport system is unfit to accommodate the projected growth, and that this should be considered before development begins.

A moderate number of these comments were general in nature, making statements such as “better public transport” or “mass rapid transit”, or “public transport is not sufficient”.

More specific comments about how the city’s public transport system could be improved included calls to: make public transport more affordable; extend the capacity of the Johnsonville train line; increase the overall capacity of Wellington’s public transport; and, update other infrastructure to support public transport, such as adding more bus lanes to roads, and ensuring that public transport stations/stops have all necessary amenities available such as bicycle and car parking. Several comments simply called for more reliable and efficient public transport, noting that more people were likely to use public transport if it was better executed.

The proposed light rail was also discussed by several respondents, who showed support for the idea and wanted to see it brought to reality. Several respondents wanted WCC to do more to encourage people to use public transport or green transport options for environmental reasons, with a small number of these comments calling for more electric buses and trains to be introduced. Several comments that discussed public transport also mentioned cycling, wanting to see both modes of transport accommodated in the Plan to ensure more uptake in the future.

Car use was also mentioned by a moderate number of respondents, most of whom wanted to see the overall number of cars used in Wellington reduced. These comments suggested that by investing in public

transport, the city would enable more people to get by without cars. A small number of comments offered further suggestions alongside this, such as increasing car parking prices or removing car parking. One respondent commented:

Need to consider that to enable better public transport that car transport needs to not be improved or enabled. Parking spaces should be reduced and parking prices increased to encourage public transport use and enable a safer, cleaner and more walkable city.

The issue of traffic was also discussed more broadly, with a small number of people noting traffic problems already facing Wellington's outer suburbs. These respondents hoped that improved public transport would lead to fewer cars on the road and therefore less congestion.

Several comments also stressed the need for Wellington's public transport network to be improved prior to any growth. Some of these comments expressed the strong sentiment that the current transport system is inadequate already. Comments typical from this group included:

Removing car parks and/or the requirement for car parks before ensuring Wellington has a robust public transport system is folly. If public transport was affordable and up to scratch fewer people would use cars but the reality is that it, s not and there

Public transport has to come before the houses, not the other way around

A small number of respondents expressed scepticism about the reality of Wellington ever having a functional Mass Rapid Transport system.

A comment that sums up the overall sentiment of these comments follows:

Subsidising public transport by incentivising it to become more efficient would make decrease the growing log jam that is Wellington Traffic. If it was easier to travel by train or bus then people would take that option. But with risks of cancellation and breakdowns causing lateness and overfullness of transport options, people just take the car.

Roading and transport infrastructure (112)

A large number of comments were made about the need for roading and other transport infrastructure to be updated. In general, these comments all supported the idea that the Draft Spatial Plan inadequately addresses these issues, and that updates to transport infrastructure are vital if Wellington is to support the population growth predicted.

Around half of these comments were general in nature, making statements such as "transport planning", "maintenance of existing roads", and "it's critical to consider transport". Other comments that were more specific covered a range of issues, most commonly the need to improve roads. Comments about roading were varied, ranging from general statements about needing to improve roading to cater to increased demand, to improving general connectivity between the outer suburbs and the CBD, or personal accounts illustrating existing issues with roads and the urgent need to address these before growth can happen. One respondent commented:

I want to see the city thrive, especially with public transport, but we simply cannot grow the density without mending out stressed roading network that doesn't even cope with non-peak traffic. It takes 20-30 minutes to get from central Berhampore to the terrace Tunnel entrance on average for me; that's crazy. If we are to grow another 50,000 people then I cannot see how transport will even be possible.

A considerable number of comments also discussed the proposal to add a second Mount Victoria tunnel. Almost all of these comments were in support of this, with only one saying that a second tunnel is not necessary.

A moderate number of people called for improvements to active transport infrastructure, including cycle lanes and cycle paths, and walking paths. One respondent stated:

Get the active transit in first. Remove private vehicle lanes to do so.

Several respondents also mentioned Wellington's transport plan, Let's Get Wellington Moving (LGWM). These comments called for greater integration of the Draft Spatial Plan and LGWM to ensure that transport needs are met alongside growth and development.

Other comments were made that suggested specific changes to roads, intersections, and transport infrastructure generally. These comments have been provided to Council in a separate document.

Car parking (88)

A considerable number of respondents made pleas for WCC to reconsider the Plan's stance on car parking, arguing that there is a great need for parking spaces to be included in new developments. These comments generally expressed the view that expecting new developments not to provide onsite parking for residents was unreasonable and would only create problems. Several comments suggested that kiwis as a nation are very reliant on cars, and are unlikely to give them up for a number of reasons including: that they are needed for holidays or trips out of the city; that public transport is insufficient to meet peoples' needs; that many people need cars – particularly families and those who are unable to cycle or walk – and while they may not use them every day, they will still need somewhere to park them; and, that in the future more people will own electric vehicles and therefore will still need space to park them.

Below are a couple of comments that are representative of the overall sentiment of this group:

To suggest erecting 6+ storey apartment buildings in the outer suburbs without provision for parking is, frankly, absurd.

Also having no go zones in town for cars is great but to not provide parking facilities doesn't solve the issue that people need cars / transport not including this in builds will not stop people owning them it will just cause carnage on the roasts

Other issues with parking were also discussed by a considerable number of respondents, particularly on-street parking. Over three quarters of these comments mentioned issues currently faced by Wellington residents who described the difficulty they experience finding car parks near their homes already. A small number of respondents explained that due to increased difficulty driving and parking in the inner city, many people drive their cars to public transport stations/stops in the outer suburbs, and use free street parking on residential streets while they are at work. This creates issues for local residents, who are unable to park close to their homes as nearby parks are being used all day by commuters. These respondents argue that removing requirements for off-street parking would simply exacerbate existing problems with on-street parking. One respondent sums up this issue well, stating:

If the requirement for off-street parking is removed, people will park on the street. Parking does not seem to be explicitly dealt with. It is becoming increasingly difficult to drive into Wellington and park. This does not mean that people use public transport, it means people in the northern suburbs drive to Porirua or Petone where there is free parking. This clearly disadvantages Wellington merchants.

A few other respondents suggested that the Draft Spatial Plan would only make parking more difficult, making comments such as:

Trying to get a car park around the Kilbirnie area is a nightmare as it is. Filling up suburbs with more people fixes one problem but creates so many more

One respondent argued that there are too many private parking companies operating in the city that could be turned into council owned and operated car parks instead.

Several comments took a different stance, calling for the removal of existing car parks to reduce the overall number of parking spaces in Wellington. These respondents felt that reducing the number of car parks, combined with increased parking prices and improved public and active transport networks would result in fewer cars being driven in Wellington.

Walking, cycling, active transport (61)

A substantial number of comments were made calling for the Plan to better address cycling and walking. Over half of these comments were very general in nature, offering statements such as “increasing the walkability and cyclability of Wellington city” or “more/better cycleways”.

Other, more detailed comments expanded on ideas such as: the need to separate cycleways from roads for safety; calls to improve cycle connection between different suburbs; the need for more bike parking around the city, particularly near public transport stations/stops and in the CBD; suggestions that roads, such as Upper Adelaide Road and Rintoul Street, could be converted into one-way streets to make room for a separated cycle path; and calls to create car-free pedestrian zones in the CBD.

One respondent suggested:

More rain shelters on arterial roads to encourage people to walk from the Inner Suburbs even when the weather is acting up. I have to acknowledge it's one feature of malls that I like, being able to better regulate their environment and keep shoppers dry.

A small number of comments also argued that scooters should be accounted for in the Plan, and that these should be allowed to share cycleways and walking paths.

One respondent called for WCC to stop spending ratepayer money on cycleways, stating that Wellington’s weather and topography mean that cycleways are “not for the masses”.

People need cars (31)

A considerable number of respondents opposed the Draft Spatial Plan’s stance on car ownership and use. These respondents felt that it is unrealistic to expect Wellingtonians to give up their cars in exchange for public transport, cycling or walking, as many people need cars. Respondents who commented on this topic felt that the Draft Spatial Plan failed to consider the reasons why some people rely on the use of private cars. Arguments offered as to why some people need cars included: that existing public transport networks are inadequate and do not meet everyone’s needs; that older people and young children are often unable to walk or cycle places; and, that people simply want to drive cars instead of using alternative transport options.

Several comments argued the need to retain spaces for people to park cars in Wellington, arguing that the removal of car parks would create problems for residents who own cars. One respondent noted:

Provision of adequate car parking. No matter how much the Council may wish cars away, they are here for another 20 or 30 years and need to be provided for in a controlled way.

Clean transport, E-vehicles (low emissions) (28)

A considerable number of comments were made about “clean” or more environmentally friendly transport options. These comments generally wanted to see the future of clean transport being considered in the Draft Spatial Plan, but were varied in how they felt this should be achieved.

Several comments called for more Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations around Wellington, and that the ownership of low-emission vehicles should be encouraged. One respondent suggested:

WCC should be doing more to support homeowners who contribute to reducing our emissions by switching to electric vehicles (EVs). I've seen some awesome infill-housing overseas, for example, that have a shared EV or two between the units, and a designated carpark and EV charger.

A few comments mentioned the need to retain car parking in the city, noting that in the future many more people will be driving electric cars and will require places to park them. These comments suggested that removing car parks in order to encourage more people to cycle, walk or use public transport would create problems with parking, and that it is unreasonable to expect Wellingtonians to give up cars altogether.

Electric vehicle sharing was mentioned by a couple of other respondents, who suggested that car-sharing should be encouraged, particularly with electric vehicles. A small number of other respondents suggested that the Draft Spatial Plan should better accommodate the use of various low-emission transport modes, including bicycles, walking, and electric scooters. Comments along these lines included calls for more bike parking, particularly around public transport stations/stops, and calls for affordable or free scooter/bike rentals to be made available within the city.

Fewer cars (25)

A moderate number of comments called for the Plan to better address the issue of cars – specifically, this group of respondents wanted fewer cars in Wellington, and hoped the Draft Spatial Plan could help to achieve this goal. These comments called for greater emphasis on providing reliable public transport and good active transport networks to allow Wellingtonians to travel conveniently without a car. The majority of these comments simply stated that they wanted fewer cars in Wellington but did not clarify the reason for this. Of the small number of comments that did provide a reason for wanting to reduce the number of cars, the reasons given included concern for the environment, and a desire for more enjoyable and pleasant streets.

Those who discussed the environment and climate change advocated for sustainable transport options such as cycling, walking, and public transport. A small number of other comments noted that reducing the number of cars on roads, particularly in the CBD, helps make the city a more pleasant place to be; makes areas more aesthetically pleasing without cars parked in front of or around homes or other buildings; can have economic benefits associated with reducing the number of parking lots and parking spaces; and, increases safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

Housing and built area aesthetics

518 comments

Against increased density, high rise (160)

A substantial number of respondents made comments in opposition to the proposed height increases in parts of Wellington that were outlined in the Draft Spatial Plan. These comments were similar in nature to those discussed on page [121](#), calling for low-rise developments in the suburbs in particular. A small number of comments noted that some high-rise buildings would be acceptable in the city centre, but the overall sentiment was that building heights should be kept low wherever possible.

Loss of sunlight was a concern raised by a substantial number of respondents, who worried that increased building heights would negatively impact on the quality of life for existing residents. The overall sentiment of this group was that building heights should be kept low, particularly in areas around existing homes, to ensure that residents have access to sunlight.

A considerable number of respondents made comments identifying issues with the goal of compact and intensified living. The overall sentiment amongst this group of respondents was that having open space on a section was crucial for a good quality of life. Reasons given included: that respondents enjoy having a garden; that not everyone in Wellington has access to public green/open space; the lack of consideration for how residents would dry their laundry outside without space for washing lines; and, the importance of space for children to play outside. A small number of comments specifically noted that this shift towards high-density living seemed to ignore the needs of families. One respondent noted:

where are families to live? the Kiwi way of life with a backyard for kids to play in, light sun, community

Heritage and character (118)

A large number of respondents commented on the value of Wellington's character and heritage areas, and the need to protect these. These comments were similar in nature to those discussed on pages [50](#) and [51](#).

Several respondents felt that the heritage value of Wellington's character homes and areas is overstated. These comments argued that quality, affordable housing and the wellbeing of Wellingtonians is more important than protecting heritage. A few comments suggested that if people want to protect character or heritage buildings, they should have to purchase them and be legally required to maintain them to a high standard. A couple of comments noted that current character protection rules do not serve the best interest of the public, and are preventing access to healthy, dry, warm homes that could be built to replace them.

The comments in this section can be summed up by the following statement:

Heritage is important, but wellbeing is more important.

The need for (affordable) housing (117)

A very large number of comments were made, emphasising the need for affordable housing in Wellington. These comments were similar in nature to those discussed on page [123](#). Along with general calls for affordable housing, a moderate number of comments suggested that WCC should take a more active role in ensuring that affordable housing is built in Wellington as a result of the Spatial Plan. Suggestions included: requiring a certain percentage of new developments to have social housing allocations; including provisions for high-density student housing, close to the university; providing incentives for developers to build affordable housing; and, ensuring that a mix of homes are built to accommodate the needs and budgets of single people – especially women alone – with or without children, low-income families, immigrants, and students. Several comments expressed scepticism about the ability of developers to provide affordable housing without intervention from the government.

Below are some examples of comments received about housing affordability:

Possibly outside the scope of a planning document, but local and central government needs to take a more active role in leading new housing development. The market alone will not deliver healthy affordable housing, and on their own, relaxing restrictions risks encouraging further gentrification.

Affordability will be the key housing factor going forward. To some extent this falls outside the current process, but council needs to be outlining now how it intends to encourage and assist affordable housing supply in future. It will also be important to spell out plans for incentivizing intensified development given that is not where the market is leaning at present.

Have some plan for renters and implement controls on private landlords to provide warm, dry and affordable housing.

Built area aesthetics (63)

Concern for how the Draft Spatial Plan could affect built area aesthetics was raised by a substantial number of respondents. Almost one third of these comments related to build quality, with these respondents eager for more certainty that new developments would be built to a high standard and would last over time. The following comment sums up the overall sentiment from this group:

Quality. Quality. Quality urban design and build need to be achieved now - if we don't the opportunity will pass us by and we will be stuck with a city that is not fit for purpose or aesthetically pleasing to be in.

These respondents wanted to ensure that new housing is aesthetically pleasing and liveable, built from materials that would not wear poorly. One respondent offered the following suggestion to encourage high-quality development:

Increase urban design and architectural panel requirements for all large new buildings to ensure new development is of a high quality and will be enduring. Establish new incentives for high-quality new architecture, and adaptive re-use of historic places that increase the housing stock of our communities.

Most remaining comments echoed similar concerns but did not specifically mention quality. These comments tended to focus on the look of new buildings, expressing concern about “ugly” buildings destroying the look and feel of established suburbs, particularly those with heritage areas.

A solution for this issue was to introduce design guidelines to ensure that new developments were built to adhere to a certain look or standard. This idea was suggested by several people, who saw it as a way to ensure that new buildings would not detract from the overall look of a suburb or area.

Another solution put forward by a small number of respondents was to ensure that new developments are built to be sympathetic to their surrounding streetscapes. One respondent offered:

An example if this done well, is the new build on the corner of Majoribanks St and Roxburgh St. Although new it has classic 1920 style fitting with the surrounding character

Housing design or type (60)

A substantial number of respondents made comments relating to housing design. These comments were varied, and covered issues from the need to provide a variety of housing types to cater to the needs of different groups, to the need for healthy and comfortable homes.

The most common issue discussed by this group was the need for housing to be designed well, meaning that homes are functional, healthy, and comfortable for people to live in. Noise, access to sunlight, space constraints, and general housing quality were issues raised by several respondents. A few comments also called into question whether developers could be trusted to provide adequate housing. Several respondents suggested that implementing design guides or standards could ensure a high living standard in new builds. These comments mentioned guidelines for things such as minimum space requirements, soundproofing, window placement, and safety features such as fireproofing and weathertightness, particularly in multi-storey apartments. When noting what they felt was missing from the Draft Spatial Plan, one respondent commented:

Beauty & human-centred design! There needs to be provision (in the District Plan, or elsewhere) for true design excellence in response to human behaviour and psychology- we get in such a hurry to build the volume of homes necessary that we forget to make sure that they are enjoyable, pleasing and actually enhance human wellbeing, while adding to the landscape of Wellington. Just because an apartment building is six-storeys and can help contribute to the number of houses we need doesn't mean that it is good for the people occupying it (or who see it from the street).

Another factor mentioned by several respondents was the need to provide a variety of housing types to cater for the diverse population of Wellington. A small number of these respondents seemed concerned that the development of high-density apartment style housing would mean that new developments would cater to single people or couples without children, noting that families require more space and are less likely to live in apartment blocks. A similar number of respondents noted that while providing high-density living options was positive for some, not everyone wants to live in this type of housing, so low-rise stand-alone houses should remain a part of the Plan.

Some of these comments also raised the issue of green space, noting that for dwellings without gardens, access to green space is even more crucial. One respondent who discussed the need for varied housing types noted:

Confirm the preferred housing choice mix of residents and how this plan will help deliver it. I highly doubt the majority of people imagine living in townhouses or apartments.

A few respondents also suggested that tiny houses could be a good solution to providing affordable housing for those who are happy to live in a small space but would rather live out of the city in a lower-density environment. One respondent suggested that outer suburbs could be rezoned to include smaller section sizes for tiny homes. A few respondents noted the need to improve existing housing as well as ensuring that new buildings are built to a high standard of liveability.

Other specific ideas (34)

A considerable number of respondents made specific suggestions about changes to the plan. Several of these were beyond the project scope, but those that were relevant to the Draft Spatial Plan have been included verbatim in a separate document provided directly to Council. These comments not been included in this report as such specific comments do not lend themselves to a synthesised discussion.

Timing, staging (33)

A considerable number of respondents commented on timing for the implementation of the Draft Spatial Plan. Over half of these comments called for a staged or phased approach to allow for more flexibility. Several of these comments raised issues with planning too rigidly for a 30-year time frame. They noted that population growth figures may change significantly (in either direction); natural disasters, pandemics or other unforeseen events can drastically alter the way people live and what Wellington can manage; and, how technology and other changes over the next 30 years may change the demand for housing in certain areas, or certain types of housing. One respondent commented:

There is no strong case for making such broad and extreme zoning changes based on 2-year old data that has already been superseded. There should be a phased approach which includes short and long-term scenarios that can be evaluated and adapted on a regular basis.

Remaining comments on this topic were varied and included: calls for infrastructure to be upgraded before the Plan comes into place, including three waters and transport infrastructure; calls for more consultation and consideration of the Draft Spatial Plan before any decisions are made; suggestions that

the Plan should focus on five years at a time and be adapted periodically; and, the desire for more clarity around time frames for the Plan's implementation.

Funding and cost (20)

The cost of the changes proposed in the Draft Spatial Plan was a concern for a moderate number of respondents, all of whom wanted further clarification on how these costs would be covered, and how it would impact Wellington ratepayers. A few respondents noted that many significant costs weren't disclosed in the Plan, most commonly, the cost of upgrading infrastructure to accommodate predicted growth. One respondent wanted to see a clear cost-benefit analysis for the proposal.

A small number of others simply asked, "who is going to pay for all this?". A few of these comments expressed concern about how ratepayers would be impacted with rates increases likely, alongside a depreciation in property values due to multi-storey developments being built on neighbouring sections.

One respondent suggested that the cost of investing in infrastructure and amenities should be shared with developers.

Infrastructure

255 comments

Service Infrastructure (160)

Service infrastructure was mentioned by a very large number of respondents, all of whom felt that this area needed greater consideration than it was given in the Draft Spatial Plan.

Over two thirds of comments discussed Wellington's "3 waters" systems, arguing that existing infrastructure is struggling to cope with current demand, and that this issue needs urgent attention before any new growth can be accommodated. The overall tone of these comments was one of frustration, as residents argued that water infrastructure has been overlooked for too long. Several comments noted the need to invest in infrastructure before beginning to accommodate growth. Below are some examples of comments made by this group:

More focus on fixing existing infrastructure. As it stands WCC is failing ratepayers.

Take a close look at the infrastructure, particularly the subterranean stuff. Can our sewers and treatment plant handle another 50-80,000 people? No? Then fix those first!

The infrastructure to support this new housing density is not there. Please concentrate on getting the water and the sewerage right. Other activities, including housing density, can follow.

Other types of infrastructure mentioned by respondents included roads and transport infrastructure, power/electricity infrastructure, and waste management (rubbish and recycling collection and composting). All of these comments echoed the sentiment of those discussed above, calling for urgent action to improve Wellington's infrastructure.

Community Infrastructure (85)

Community infrastructure, including schools, libraries, medical facilities, sportsgrounds, and other public facilities and amenities were mentioned by a sizeable number of respondents.

Over half of these comments discussed schools, usually questioning how existing schools will be able to cope with growing rolls over the next 30 years. These respondents argued that many schools are already at capacity and/or struggling financially, and felt that these schools would simply not be able to accommodate the number of school aged children projected to be moving to Wellington over the next 30 years. Comments typical from this group included:

There doesn't appear to be consideration of schools (already at capacity in my suburb)

Yes, our schools are in cramped locations, and expansion will be hard on the 10 year horizon with population growth. Some forward planning on that would be wise.

Other types of community infrastructure mentioned were libraries, medical centres and facilities, and general community facilities.

Several respondents also called for improved “community infrastructure”, “community facilities” and “community spaces” more broadly. These comments included things such as community halls, sporting facilities and community gardens, and public amenities such as footpaths and street furniture, but generally did not specify.

General infrastructure (10)

Several respondents discussed the need for infrastructure to be upgraded, but did not specify which types of infrastructure they were referring to. These comments were similar in nature to other comments discussed above, generally suggesting that the city's infrastructure must be addressed before any building is considered.

Development and design

220 comments

Planning, development, and zoning (88)

A sizeable number of respondents made comments relating to planning, development, and zoning. These comments were quite varied and covered a range of issues. The most frequently commented on topic was the idea of repurposing land that is currently being underutilised, which was discussed by a moderate number of respondents. This included car yards and parking lots, unused council-owned land, empty office blocks in the CBD, unused sports fields, and unoccupied buildings generally. These respondents felt that using existing land first would be a more prudent approach than densifying areas already occupied, particularly by low-rise stand-alone houses that will be significantly impacted by new, large developments.

Several respondents also noted the need for the consenting and approval process to be made easier, and cheaper. These comments noted that often, consenting is a barrier to development and that the current system is unnecessarily arduous and costly.

Blanket zoning rules were criticised by several respondents, who wanted more case-by-case considerations regarding building heights. One respondent noted that their neighbour's home sits 2m above their property, so if a three-storey building was built on this section, it would have a similar impact to a four-storey building simply because of the topography. Other respondents suggested changes to zoning rules such as allowing for mixed-use developments or the introduction of inclusionary zoning. A few respondents suggested that densification could be achieved under existing zoning rules and that this should be explored before making changes to zoning.

Remaining comments covered a range of issues, from suggestions about urban planning and street design, to comments urging WCC to be more prescriptive in the types of developments being sought, and conflicting calls for the Plan to both increase *or* decrease densification targets.

Some other comments received were:

I thank the Council for all the work on the Draft Spatial Plan, but submit it needs amending to accommodate more areas for densification, more dwelling types, and more intensification in suburbs within 30-minutes walk or cycle from the edges of the central City

I'd suggest lessening noise restrictions in the inner city so bars and venues aren't threatened by new apartment residents noise complaints. If people choose to live in the inner city they should be aware of the vibrance they are moving into and not act to remove it. Also council support of music venues would help retain Wellington's cultural character.

Enforce all new streets to be built as Healthy Streets.

Coherence in city planning eg blocks of multi-storey development supported by planning of public spaces and community amenities eg many more people could be housed close to the city in high rise buildings in Cambridge Tce and Kent Tce than in blocks randomly scattered through inner city suburbs.

Developers (64)

Developers were the subject of comments from a substantial number of respondents, who generally felt that developers as a group could not be relied upon to create positive outcomes for Wellington. The main concerns shared by this group were that the Draft Spatial Plan did not specify how it would achieve quality, affordable housing, and that too much decision-making was left to developers, who were seen as being more focused on making profit than providing positive outcomes for residents.

A moderate number of respondents stated that developers cannot be trusted to deliver desired outcomes that benefit the people of Wellington, or that planning and decision-making should not be left up to developers. The following comment was typical amongst this group of respondents:

Decisions and this process should not be led by of profit-motivated developers.

Several respondents made general comments that expressed anti-developer sentiment, while others were more specific. A moderate number of respondents questioned how the Draft Spatial Plan would lead to positive outcomes for Wellington communities, arguing that developers are profit-driven and cannot be relied upon to consider the needs of the public. They felt that this would lead to cheaply built, poor-quality housing with poor design and aesthetic value being built around Wellington – that would be sold or rented at unreasonable costs. Therefore, this group argued that developers could not be trusted to provide high quality, affordable housing. The following two comments are examples of this sentiment:

Developers will look for profit opportunities so are unlikely to address affordable housing.

New Zealand developers tend to build "cheap as possible" buildings, especially away from the CBD. In other words, developers tend to create ugly boxes, which neither benefit the user (it's depressing living in an ugly box) nor the community that have to look at them.

A moderate number of respondents offered suggestions as to how WCC could address this issue. Suggestions included: introducing regulations to prevent landbanking, ensuring a high standard of quality is achieved, and a certain percentage of all developments are affordable housing options; offering incentives such as discounted development fees or rates for developers who build affordable housing; and, introducing design standards for quality and aesthetics.

A couple of respondents stated:

Recent building scandals and our own private experiences make Wellingtonians rightly distrustful that the private sector can look after the quality of new houses and community developments in any way adequately. Strong laws, regulations and oversight by authorities and citizen coalitions are essential.

The social experiment of allowing the private sector to provide and manage housing for citizens has been a failure. WCC, City Councils and Central Government need to take back some level of control. This means building and owning houses,

One respondent made the following statement that captures the overall sentiment shared by the substantial number of comments made about developers:

The only people who will benefit is property developers, not the people who pay rates or those who aspire to get on the property ladder.

One respondent was in favour of reducing regulations currently in place and allowing developers greater autonomy in decision-making.

Build new suburbs (44)

A considerable number of respondents suggested that creating new suburbs or satellite towns outside of Wellington would be a better approach to accommodate projected population growth. Just under half of these comments called specifically for more consideration of greenfield developments, making comments such as:

The Spatial Plan specifically excludes consideration of adding more land that could be developed for housing. The WCC must consider all options to address this housing crisis and provide affordable housing to our city.

The majority of other comments on this topic suggested that new suburbs should be created to accommodate growth, rather than intensifying existing suburbs. This was seen as a good alternative to the proposal to intensify Wellington, as it would not have negative impacts on existing properties or overburden existing infrastructure. Instead, this was seen as an opportunity to create new suburbs that could be intentionally built to contain necessary services and amenities including green space.

A few comments went further to suggest that new satellite towns should be built to accommodate the growing population. One comment suggested:

One possible solution could be to develop a completely new satellite town in a greenfield to house a large part of population growth over the next 30 years. This would be similar to Christchurch's satellite town of Rolleston. Over time, that town would gradually morph into being another Wellington suburb.

Similarly, a few comments suggested that, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic showed us that many jobs can be done from anywhere, the appeal of living close to the CBD has lessened and more people would be willing to live in new outer suburbs or satellite towns, the concept of which are called "zoom towns".

Commercial Activity (24)

A moderate number of respondents discussed the needs of businesses and commercial operators. These comments raised questions about what provisions would be made for the development of commercial land, noting that the Plan focuses on residential development. One respondent commented:

Detail how business land supply is to be provided according to the growth projections for 2020-2050. For example, in relation to business land supply, beyond the City Centre / Central Area, there does not seem to be any spatial allocation of land for business needs.

A small number of comments urged WCC to retain car parks around commercial centres, noting that the removal of car parking would likely negatively impact local businesses. Other comments from this group of respondents included a call for increased focus on businesses and commercial activity, and suggestions for more mixed-use developments, with a few respondents noting that ground floors of apartment buildings should be reserved for shops or offices.

Future proofing and sustainability (74)

A sizeable number of respondents made comments about planning for the future. In general, these comments expressed concern that the Draft Spatial Plan did not go far enough in taking measures to “futureproof” Wellington, particularly in regards to sustainability. Just under half of these comments mentioned sustainability directly, several of which were quite general in nature, making statements such as “sustainable living” or “I think the Plan would also benefit from a greater emphasis on ensuring sustainability”.

Other calls from respondents urged WCC to: incorporate more regulation on the efficiency of new buildings including sustainability parameters into the Plan and design guides; ensure that the Plan aligns with best-practice water and infrastructure management; protect Wellington’s nature and biodiversity; and make a general commitment to reduce the city’s carbon footprint.

One respondent suggested:

*Affordability isn't just about \$, it is also able creating a city that the planet can afford to sustain.
The Spatial Plan could contain a vision of car share, electric and hydrogen vehicle facilities,
provision of public/green space, three waters on-site management etc. being delivered in exchange
for greater height/density etc.*

The environmental issues associated with demolition and rebuilding were raised by a moderate number of respondents, who questioned the need to create such vast amounts of landfill waste and resource consumption in the process. One submission noted:

We are also aware that the building sector is responsible for around 20% of New Zealand's energy-related GHG emissions and about 50% of New Zealand's waste is from construction and demolition. Plastic recycling is a normal part of our daily lives, but huge amounts of carbon are locked up in existing buildings...Part of the solution to our climate change problem is retaining, reusing and retrofitting our existing building stock

Natural disasters, earthquakes (65)

Wellington’s earthquake prone position was raised by a substantial number of respondents. Comments about earthquakes and natural disasters were very similar in nature to those discussed on page [129](#). Several respondents questioned the rationality of building high-rise buildings in an earthquake-prone city, noting that these tend to perform significantly worse in earthquakes than lower-rise buildings. Several respondents also argued that higher-density living may not be a sensible way for Wellington to move forward, especially given its “low-lying access-restricted and earthquake-prone location”, noting that evacuation in the event of a natural disaster would be significantly more difficult with a larger population. In general, remaining comments simply called for greater consideration of Wellington’s earthquake risk in the Plan, and a degree of planning and preparation for natural disaster events to be included.

Climate change, sea level rise, flooding (44)

A considerable number of respondents made comments about the risks of climate change, including sea-level rise, extreme weather events and other natural hazards. These comments were similar in nature to those discussed on page [130](#). and expressed concerns about the lack of climate-change specific planning involved in the Draft Spatial Plan. These comments noted the need for climate change, in particular sea level rise, storm surges, and flooding to be thoroughly considered to ensure that the city is developed with potential hazards in mind. Suggestions included ensuring adequate climate change assessments are conducted and disaster plans are put in place so that the city can cope with these climate issues if or

when they arise. A few respondents also expressed concern about money being spent on “risky developments” that may end up underwater or otherwise damaged due to climate change.

One respondent suggested:

Work with scientific/policy/financial & insurance sectors to plan for natural hazards, climate change - don't consent risky developments.

Gardens and food production (23)

A moderate number of respondents made suggestions to incorporate community gardens and urban farming into the Plan. These comments generally argued that this would help provide a sense of community that is sometimes difficult to achieve with high-density living, and would have positive health benefits – both mental and physical – by increasing access to healthy, fresh food and building food resilience for the future.

People, population, communities

192 comments

Accessibility, safety, inclusive (45)

A wide range of comments were made calling for more consideration of accessibility, safety, and inclusiveness within the Draft Spatial Plan. Several respondents made calls for universal design principles (such as zero-step entrances and wide interior doorways) to be used in new developments and the public realm to enable easy access for all, including children, the elderly, and those with mobility issues.

Safety was a concern for several respondents, who mentioned the need for the Plan to incorporate measures to increase safety, whether for children, women, or the public at large. Below is an example of such comments:

There also seems to be no mention of safety if you want everyone to walk up to 10 minutes from the train to their house. This is not safe for women and children especially

Other comments included: calls for improved lighting in public spaces; safety considerations for sexual violence prevention; concerns about displacement of existing residents if new developments are not affordable; cultural awareness and inclusivity; ensuring that essential services are located near all communities so that everyone can access them without having to travel long distances; and, providing accessible and inclusive community spaces.

One respondent felt that the consultation itself was not inclusive of the vision impaired or those with learning difficulties or who speak languages other than English.

Spreading growth, cooperation with other councils (32)

Spreading growth across the whole of Wellington City or the greater Wellington region was a priority for a considerable number of respondents, who felt that the Draft Spatial Plan failed to address this option. Several respondents wanted to see more equal distribution of population across Wellington including the inner city, as well as inner and outer suburbs. Almost all remaining comments wanted to see other parts of the Wellington Region or New Zealand accommodate some of this projected growth, arguing that too much of the onus was being placed on Wellington alone. A few of these comments asked for clarification on how *Our City Tomorrow A Draft Spatial Plan for Wellington City* would link with other councils' plans, while others noted that confining growth to the city of Wellington was not the best way forward. These respondents suggested that including the wider Wellington Region in these plans would allow for a greater quality of life for more people. Those who wished to have gardens and larger sections and did not mind living away from the city itself could move out of the city to the Hutt Valley, Porirua, and the Kapiti Coast, which would reduce the amount of development and densification necessary in Wellington proper. This would allow those who wish to live in the inner city to do so, while also allowing residents in Wellington's inner and outer suburbs to remain there with less development happening around them.

Comments that were typical from this group included:

How does this plan fit in the overall plan for the Wellington Region? Has it been integrated with Porirua, Hutt Valley and Wairarapa plans? If it has we need to be told. If it hasn't, locating people further afield where houses are cheaper and people could have gardens is another option you haven't provided to Wellingtonians in this plan.

I am concerned about the fragmentation of the greater Wellington area between the various councils as I feel this hinders a unified plan for the region. The Auckland supercity has the advantage of a shared vision throughout the region. I worry that Wellington City's vision will not be shared by the other councils.

Representation of Māori (26)

A moderate number of respondents made comments calling for greater involvement and recognition of Māori in all stages of the Draft Spatial Plan. These comments all shared the sentiment that consultation with mana whenua is important, and that Te Ao Māori, tikanga Māori, Māori history, and the natural history of the area should be adequately considered, represented, and protected. Below are some examples of the comments received on this topic:

Greater emphasis on recognition and appreciation of Te Ao Māori, especially tangata whenua. I would also like to see greater recognition of our history - pre-European and colonial periods

Ensure Māori are consulted and provided with options to aide in housing their whanau and iwi in the city

I would also like to see concrete treaty commitments and steps for engagement with iwi and protection of Māori sites in the plan, particularly in pipitea.

Communities and cohesiveness (25)

Community and social cohesion were the subjects of a considerable number of comments. These comments tended to focus on the need to create an environment conducive to connected and resilient communities. The majority of these comments simply call for consideration of how communities may be affected by the plan, and how these negative impacts must be mitigated to maintain the sense of community that so many Wellingtonians cherish.

A small number of comments raise the issue of social cohesion, claiming that processes such as the Draft Spatial Plan exacerbate conflicts between different sectors of the community who are impacted differently.

A few respondents noted that high-density living is a relatively new concept to most Kiwis, and therefore maintaining harmony between existing residents and newcomers may prove challenging. One comment stated:

Those lucky enough to have homes in the inner suburbs need to listen to and appreciate the perspectives of those wanting housing in the area, and accept this will come at some cost. Similarly, potential new residents and developers alike need to be respectful of the communities they hope to come into.

Population Growth (23)

Comments about population growth were varied. A small number of comments suggested that WCC should plan for even greater population growth than is currently predicted. One of these comments argued that because development is a slow process, by the time many of these new developments are built, Wellington's projected population growth is likely to have increased dramatically. Along these lines, these comments generally suggest that the Plan should be flexible enough to be expanded upon should population growth figures increase. Meanwhile, a similar number of respondents questioned the idea of population growth in itself, asking why Wellington should even consider allowing such a large number of people to move to the city. One respondent suggested that Wellington should not have an "open door policy" to migration, while another suggested that growth should be reverted back to similar rates as in the 1980s to help younger people afford to buy homes, and ease demands on infrastructure.

A few other comments also mentioned infrastructure, expressing concerns about how Wellington's infrastructure would cope with such a large increase in demand. Similarly, a small number of respondents noted a number of additional needs not mentioned in the plan that would arise as a result of large population growth. One respondent commented:

How to cater for the needs of those often left out of urban planning - babies and the people caring for them, children, teens, those with a disability, and those with less money (ensuring that their are limited cost barrier to fun opportunities by providing them through good urban design).

The cultural and social needs of Wellington's new residents were also mentioned by a small number of respondents, who wanted to see Wellington take measures to ensure that it is a culturally sensitive, diverse, and inclusive city.

A couple of respondents suggested that WCC needs to consider how available land can be used most effectively. Suggestions offered included incentivising the release of brown field sites to combat the effects of landbanking and installing solar panels on unoccupied land to help lessen the environmental impact of such a large increase in demand for energy.

One respondent suggested that creating new towns was a more prudent way to accommodate such largescale population growth.

Social Issues (16)

Social issues not considered in the Draft Spatial Plan were raised by moderate number of respondents. Over half of these comments discussed financial inequities such as the intergenerational wealth gap, and how those who are already wealthy benefit from a system that hinders the younger generations. One respondent called for regulation to ensure that properties are purchased by owner-occupiers rather than investors. The following comment sums up the overall sentiment from this group of respondents:

Provide further assistance to prevent undue gentrification and displacement, and ensure that those less well off people are not "evicted" by monied developers. Further government assistance for state run housing, or rent-to-own schemes.

Other comments from this group included calls for greater commitment in ensuring that housing is affordable; questions about WCC's plans to address the issue of homelessness; and, calls for a more equitable approach to housing in general.

One submission received from an organisation that focuses on sexual violence prevention noted that the Plan does not adequately target sexual violence prevention in Wellington. This submission argues that the way that people of different genders use public space needs to be taken into consideration, stating:

Part of this is recognising that safety and security issues and concerns are not gender-neutral. When planners fail to account for gender, public spaces become male spaces by default.

This submission calls for greater consideration of the safety needs of women in planning for transport and public space to ensure that Wellington is a safe city for all.

Ageing Population (15)

Several respondents made comments calling for the Plan to be made more sensitive to the needs of an ageing population. These comments covered a range of topics, but the most frequently mentioned issue was mobility and transport. These comments noted that while a shift towards public transport and cycling/walking was commendable, considerations need to be made for the older population of Wellington who are unable to use these options, and require the use of cars instead.

A few comments were received from residents of Khandallah, who called for planning considerations to be made for the growing and ageing population in the suburb, to ensure that the suburban centre can accommodate the lifestyles of older people.

Youth (10)

Several respondents made comments about youth or young people specifically. These comments were varied, ranging from calls for the Plan to incorporate areas for children to play, to providing youth centres, schools, and other youth-focused programmes for Wellington's young people. A few respondents wanted to see the Draft Spatial Plan focus more on younger generations, as currently these are the Wellingtonians who are living in sub-standard rentals and may struggle to enter the housing market unless changes are made to Wellington's housing.

Green, public, and open space

[120 comments](#)

Greenspace, open space (83)

Green and open spaces were a topic discussed by a sizeable number of respondents. The overall sentiment from this group was that the Draft Spatial Plan did not provide sufficient planning for new green spaces along with the new, denser housing that is proposed. Respondents felt that green and open public spaces were critical in maintaining a healthy quality of life, noting the need for people, especially apartment dwellers, to be able to enjoy gardens, parks, playgrounds, and other open spaces freely and easily. Several comments highlighted the benefit that access to green space has on the mental and physical wellbeing of individuals. The following comment captures this sentiment:

More open and green spaces, including green spaces/pocket parks around intensive housing, are needed for people's mental and physical health - there seems to be little provision of these despite proposed increases in populations.

A small number of respondents expressed concerns about existing greenspace being built on following a change in zoning around Wellington. Several respondents called for "pocket parks", community gardens and rooftop gardens as solutions to a perceived lack of green space provisions in the Plan.

Public spaces or places (15)

Several respondents noted that along with the changes proposed in the Draft Spatial Plan, namely increased density and more people living in apartment buildings, would come an increased need for "third spaces" for the public to use. These comments wanted to see public spaces that are accessible to all; easy to get to on public transport; and able to be used for community events such as farmers' markets and other meetings or activities. A couple of comments also mentioned the need for some existing WCC facilities to be renovated or redeveloped, such as community libraries.

Greening the city (15)

Several respondents called for more plants and vegetation in Wellington, as well as protection of existing trees and wildlife. All of these comments supported the desire for a green city, with nature accessible to all.

Sport and recreation facilities (7)

A small number of respondents raised concerns about the lack of commitment to providing public facilities for sport and recreation in the Draft Spatial Plan. Almost all of these comments noted that facilities such as sports fields, recreation centres, playing fields, playgrounds, swimming pools, and other sports facilities would need to be considered as the population grows and living becomes more dense. One respondent called for more concrete commitment from WCC on how these additional public spaces and sport/recreation facilities would be achieved, stating that “exploring” the purchase of new land was an insufficient commitment.

Ways of living

115 comments

The impact of COVID-19 (111)

A large number of respondents made comments about how the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way that New Zealanders live. The most frequently made comments related to new ways of working, and changes to business. A considerable number of respondents noted the increasing number of jobs able to be done remotely, with more people opting to work from home since the COVID-19 pandemic made this a necessity during lockdown and showed people that it is possible. Alongside these comments, several respondents argued that the demand for office space in the CBD is likely to decrease as a result of the pandemic, therefore freeing up space for office buildings to be converted into apartments. A small number of respondents argued that these changes to work behaviour removed the need for a Central Business District altogether.

The effects of COVID 19 on the community with more people working from home and the consequent emptying of commercial buildings in the inner city that could be used for housing intensification. The choice of people to move out of the city and go to places where they feel safer and where housing is more affordable.

Another common topic of discussion was the need for general assumptions and estimates made in a pre-COVID time. In particular, a moderate number of respondents challenged the validity of population growth estimates since COVID-19 struck. Most of these comments noted a need for the whole Plan to be reconsidered based on updated, more realistic population forecasts.

A moderate number of other comments referenced COVID-19 related changes more generally, sometimes noting that changes are likely to happen in the future as a result of the pandemic – changes that we don't yet understand.

The importance of more spacious living, green space, and the option to live in suburbs with lower density was discussed by a small number of people, who noted the heightened awareness of this after the COVID-19 lockdown.

A small number of comments also discussed the need for future pandemic planning to be incorporated into the Draft Spatial Plan, to ensure that the city is properly equipped to handle any future emergencies or pandemics.

Changing ways of living – tech, digital etc (4)

A small number of comments suggested that the Draft Spatial Plan “does not seem to anticipate technology and lifestyle sufficiently”. These comments discussed how the way that people live is rapidly changing, noting how the advent of driverless vehicles and increased ability for people to work and study from home may mean that fewer people will want to live in the city. Instead, these comments argue that many people will move out of the city into larger homes with space for home offices, and that the ageing population will likely move into retirement facilities in warmer climates, thus changing the demographics likely to live in the city, and the way that people live.

Other

101 comments

Over half of these comments stated, “no comment” or “N/A”. Other remaining comments in this section were not directly related to the scope of the Draft Spatial Plan.

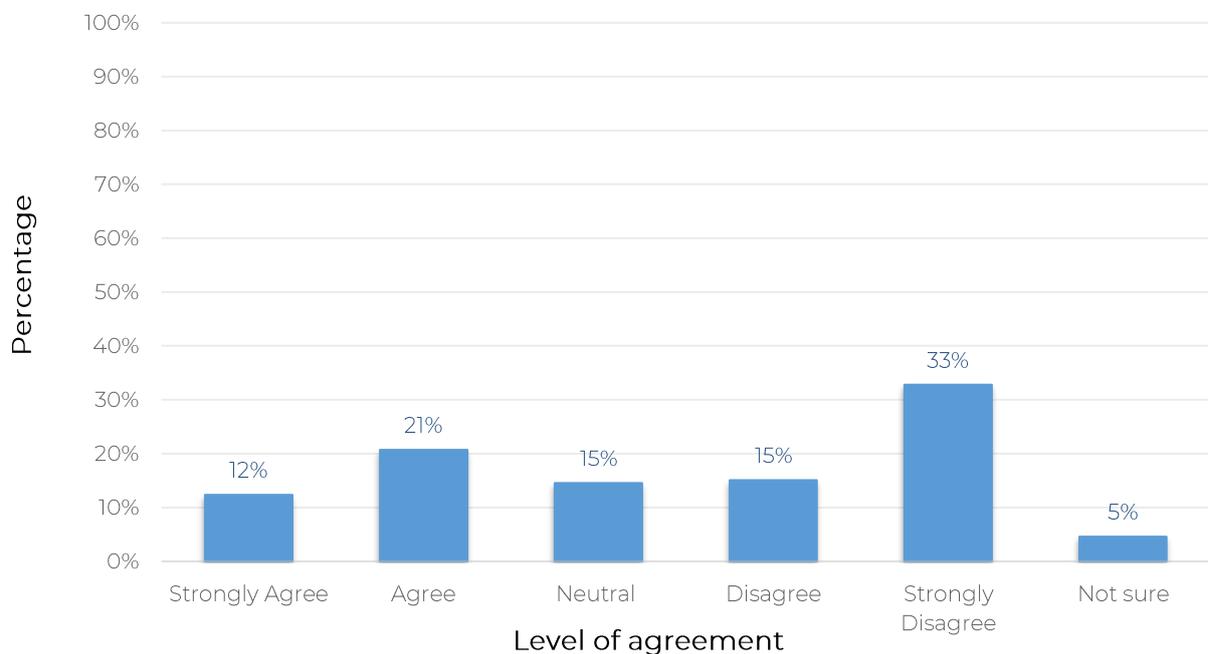
Agreement and disagreement with inner suburb proposals

Respondents were asked: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements considering what is proposed for the inner suburbs:

The refined approach to the pre-1930 character areas offers a good balance between protection and new housing

Statement: The refined approach to the pre-1930 character areas offers a good balance between protecting special character and providing new housing in these areas:

The refined approach to the pre-1930 character areas offers a good balance between protecting special character and providing new housing in these areas



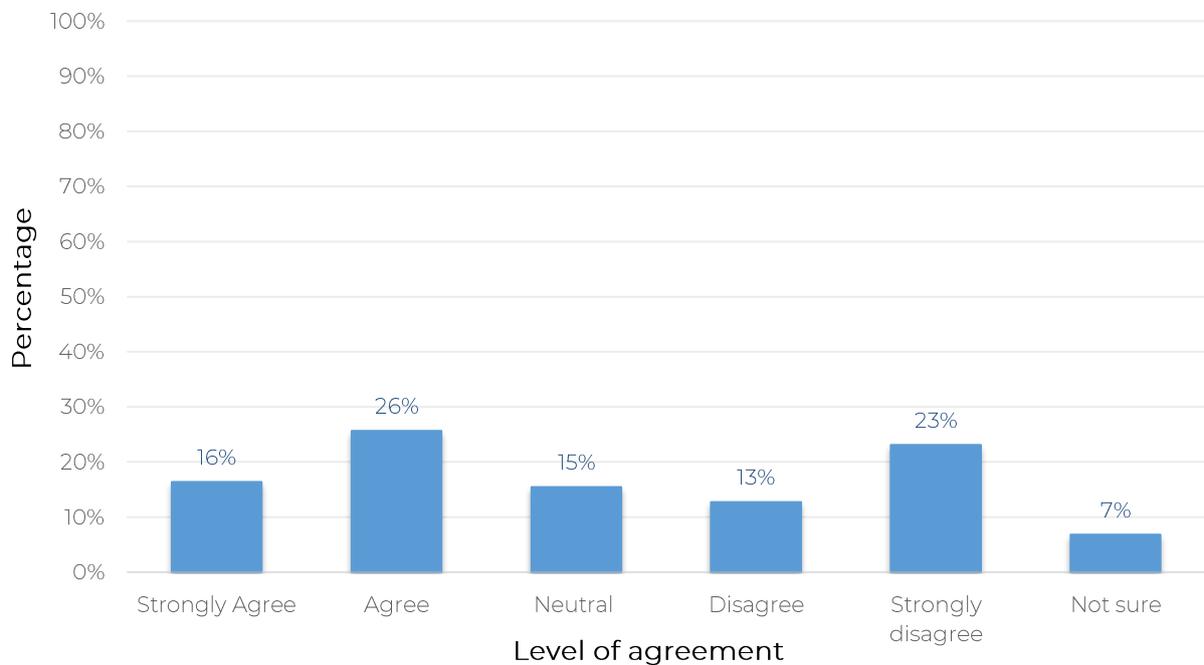
Key findings:

- > 1,956 respondents answered this question
- > Nearly half (48%) of respondents *disagreed* that the refined approach to the pre-1930 character areas offers a good balance between protecting special character and providing new housing in these areas – 33% *strongly disagreed* and 15% *disagreed*
- > A third (33%) of respondents *agreed* – 21% *strongly agreed* and 12% *agreed*
- > Fifteen percent of respondents were *neutral* and 5% were *not sure*

Demolition controls should be targeted to intact areas

Statement: The existing pre-1930 character demolition controls should be targeted to sub-areas within the inner suburbs that are substantially intact and consistent.

The existing pre-1930 character demolition controls should be targeted to sub-areas within the inner suburbs that are substantially intact and consistent



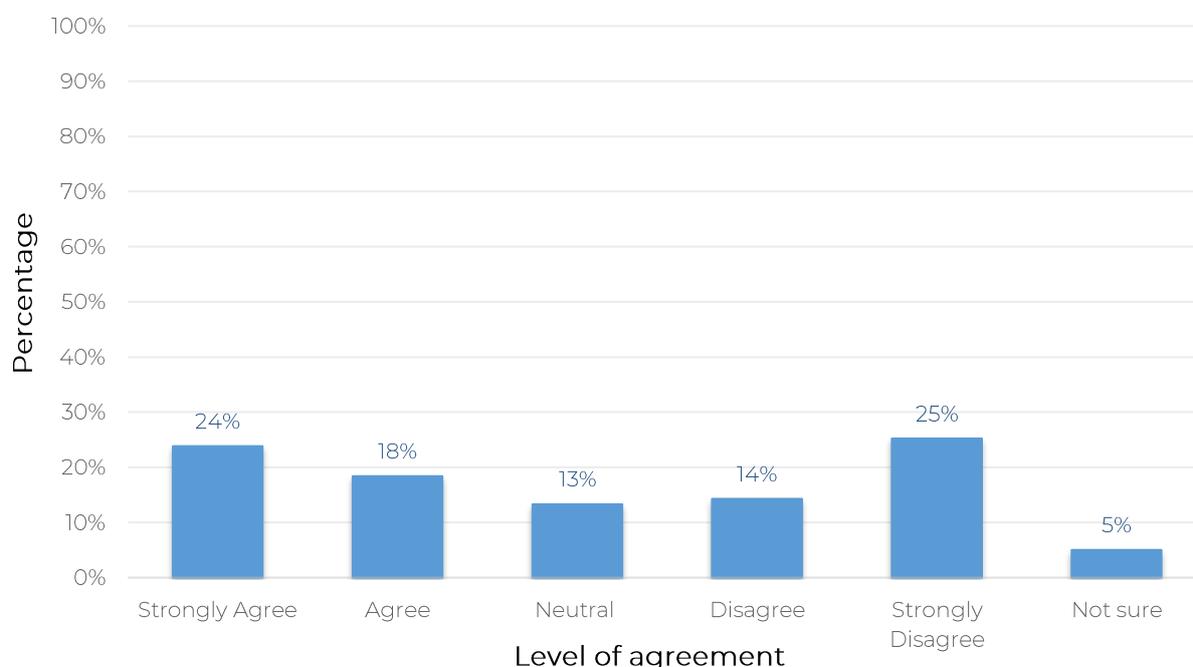
Key findings:

- > 1,932 respondents answered this question
- > Less than half (42%) of respondents *agreed* that the existing pre-1930 character demolition controls should be targeted to sub-areas within the inner suburbs that are substantially intact and consistent – 16% *strongly agreed* and 26% *agreed*
- > Just over a third (36%) of respondents *disagreed* – 23% *strongly disagreed* and 13% *disagreed*
- > Fifteen percent of respondents were *neutral* and 7% were *not sure*

Demolition controls should be removed in areas not intact or with compromised character

Statement: The pre-1930 character demolition controls should be removed in areas that are no longer substantially intact and consistent or where character has been compromised

The pre-1930 character demolition controls should be removed in areas that are no longer substantially intact and consistent or where character has been compromised



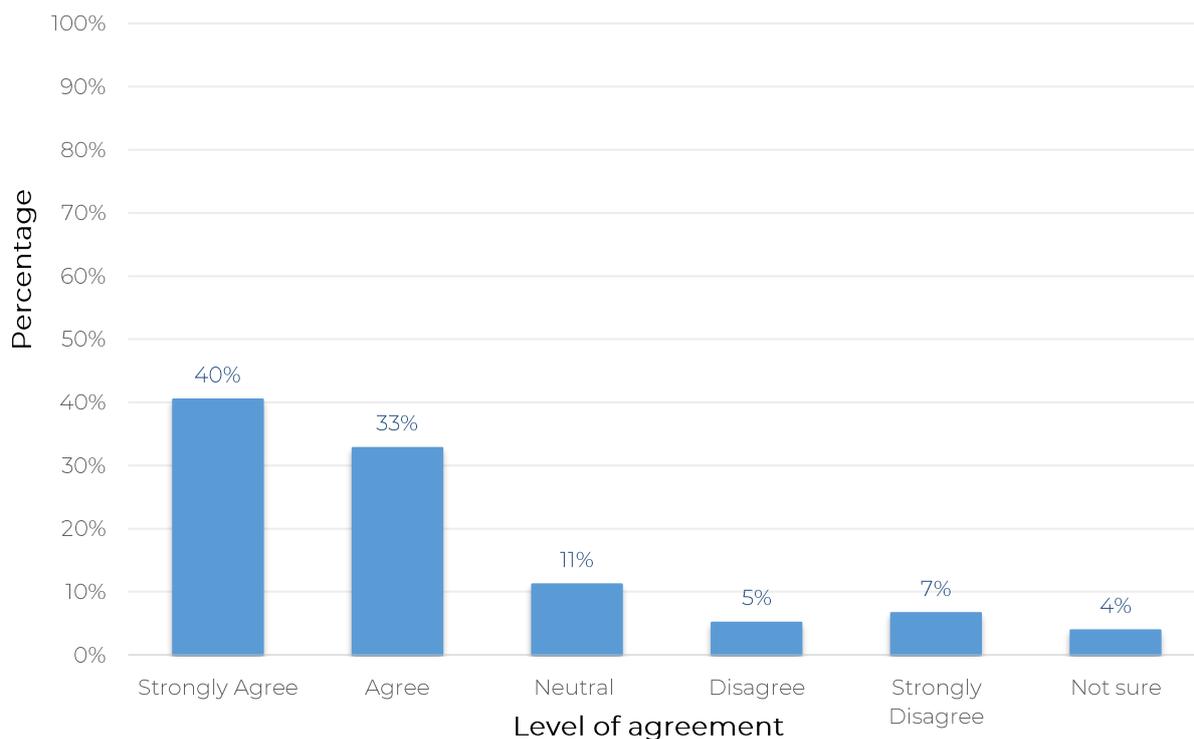
Key findings:

- > 1,936 respondents answered this question
- > Under half (42%) of respondents *agreed* that the pre-1930 character demolition controls should be removed in areas that are no longer substantially intact and consistent or where character has been compromised – 24% *strongly agreed* and 18% *agreed*
- > Over a third (39%) of respondents *disagreed* – 25% *strongly disagreed* and 14% *disagreed*
- > Thirteen percent of respondents were *neutral* and 5% were *not sure*

There should be emphasis on streetscape character

Statement: There should be a continued emphasis on streetscape character in those areas outside of the proposed sub-areas through retention of a general character area to ensure that new development respects the local streetscape and is well-designed.

There should be continued emphasis on streetscape character in areas outside proposed sub-areas through the retention of a general character area ensuring new development respects local streetscape and is well-designed



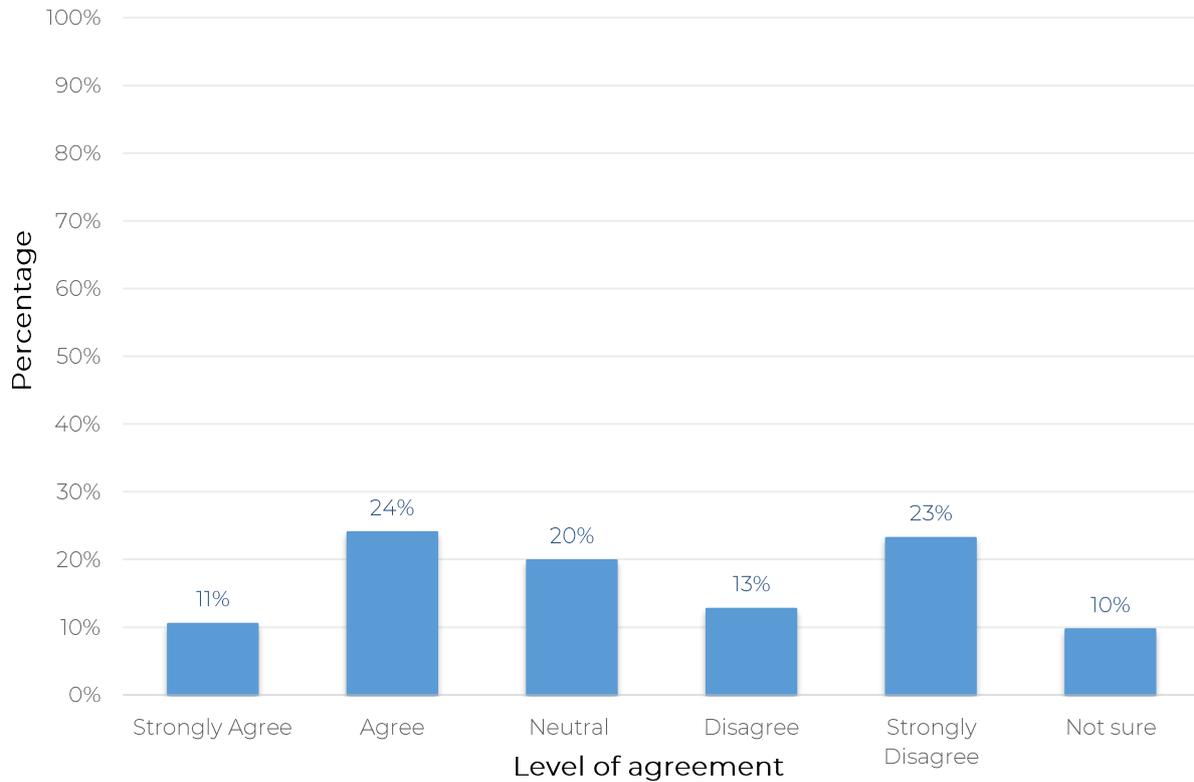
Key findings:

- > 1,935 respondents answered this question
- > Nearly three quarters (73%) of respondents *agreed* that there should be continued emphasis on streetscape character in areas outside proposed sub-areas through the retention of a general character area ensuring new development respects local streetscape and is well-designed – 40% *strongly agreed* and 33% *agreed*
- > Eleven percent of respondents were *neutral* and 4% were *not sure*
- > Twelve percent of respondents *disagreed* – 7% *strongly disagreed* and 5% *disagreed*

Demolition controls remain in areas with intact character

Statement: The refined approach to the pre-1930 character areas retains controls on demolition in the right locations where streetscape character is substantially intact.

The refined approach to the pre-1930 character areas retains controls on demolition in the right locations and where streetscape character is substantially intact



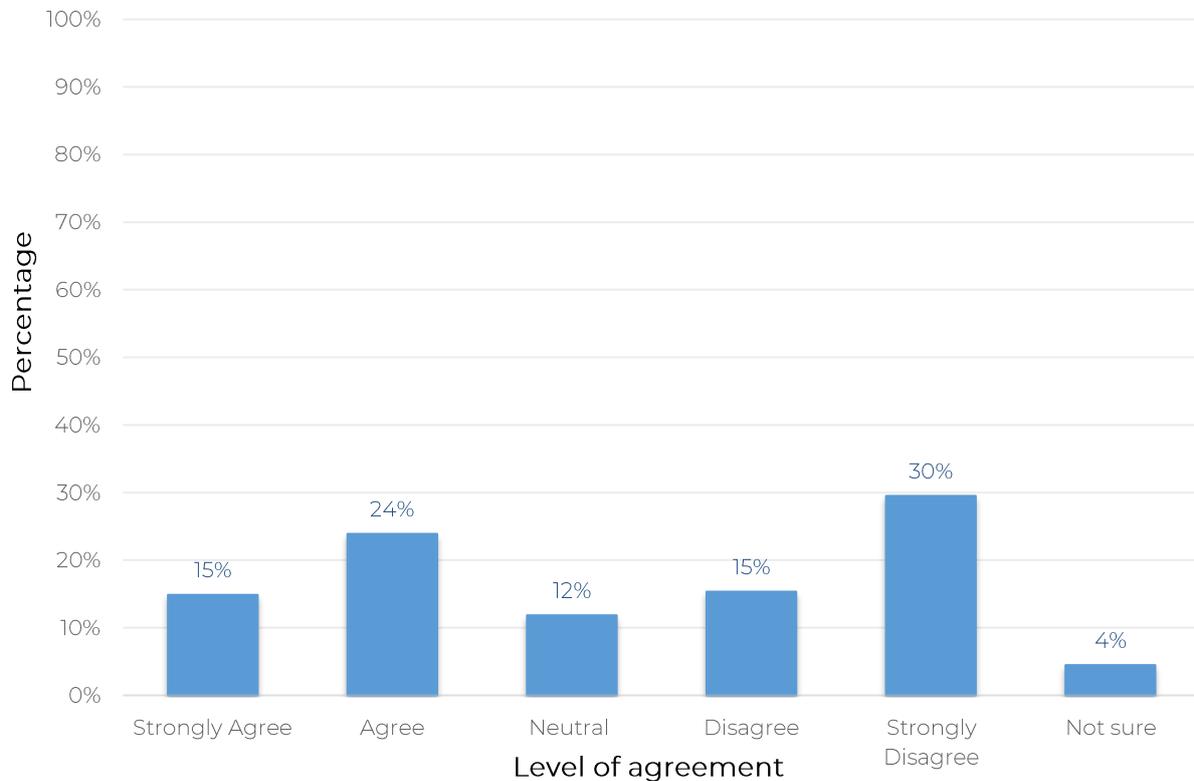
Key findings:

- > 1,902 respondents answered this question
- > Over a third (36%) of respondents *disagreed* that the refined approach to the pre-1930 character areas retains controls on demolition in the right locations and where streetscape character is substantially intact – 23% *strongly disagreed* and 13% *disagreed*
- > Just over a third (35%) of respondents *agreed* – 11% *strongly agreed* and 24% *agreed*
- > Twenty percent of respondents were *neutral* and 10% were *not sure*

There is a good mix of housing types and heights

Statement: There is a good mix of housing types and heights that is suitable for the area given the city's projected population growth and the need for more housing choice.

There is a good mix of housing types and heights that is suitable for the area given the city's projected population growth and the need for more housing choice



Key findings:

- > 1,921 respondents answered this question
- > Just under half (45%) of respondents *disagreed* that there is a good mix of housing types and heights that is suitable for the area given the city's projected population growth and the need for more housing choice – 30% *strongly disagreed* and 15% *disagreed*
- > Over a third (39%) of respondents *agreed* – 15% *strongly agreed* and 24% *agreed*
- > Twelve percent of respondents were *neutral* and 4% were *not sure*

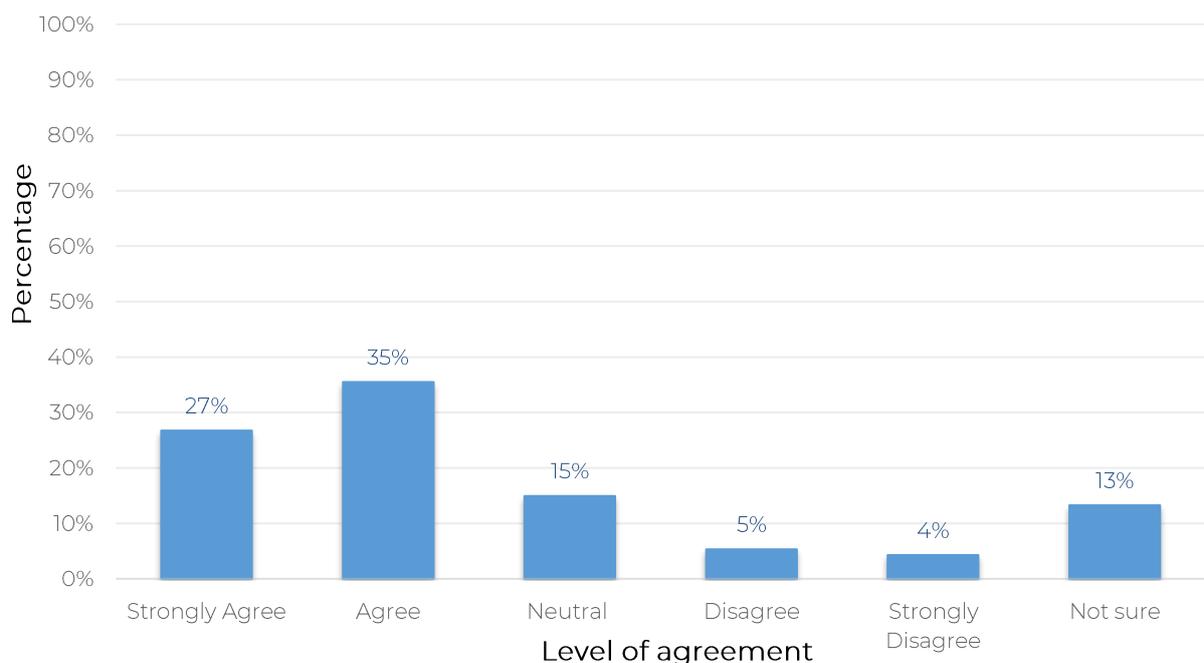
Agreement/disagreement with Upper Stebbings Valley proposals

Respondents were asked: Thinking about Upper Stebbings Valley, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Developing area between Churton Park & Tawa meets ‘compact, resilient, vibrant, prosperous, inclusive, connected, and greener’ city goals

Statement: Developing the area between Churton Park and Tawa to create a new neighbourhood supports our goals of making Wellington a compact, resilient, vibrant and prosperous, inclusive and connected, greener city.

Developing the area between Churton Park and Tawa to create a new neighbourhood supports our goals of making Wellington a compact, resilient, vibrant and prosperous, inclusive and connected, and greener city.



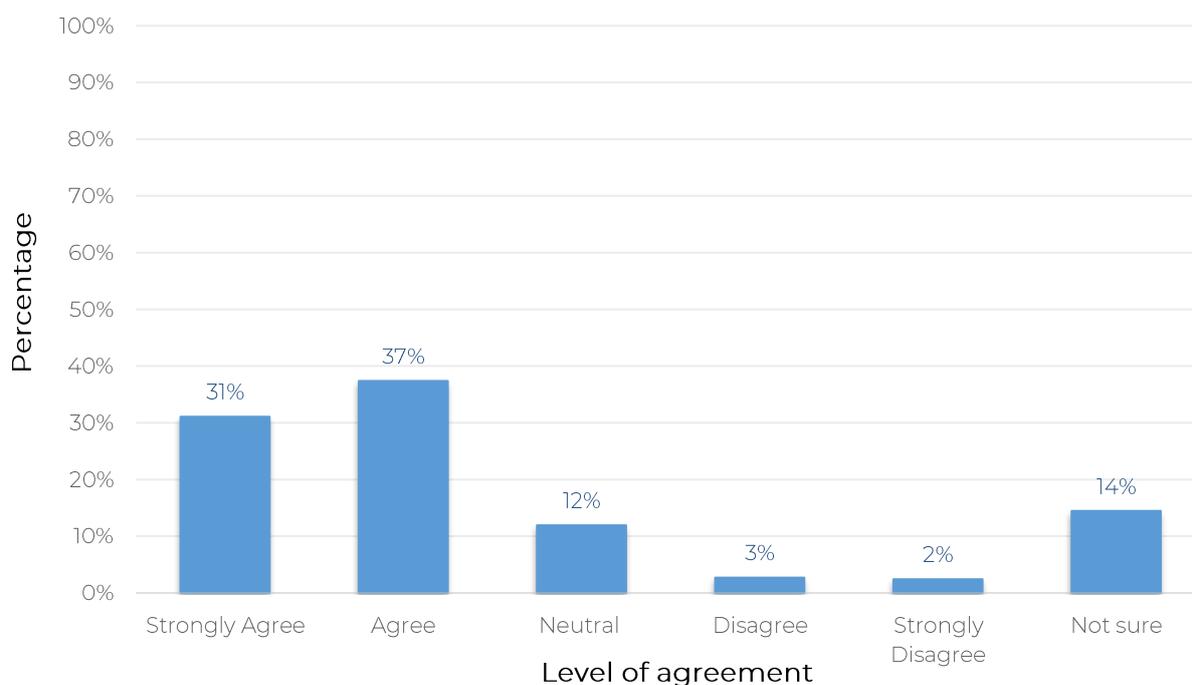
Key findings:

- > 1,821 respondents answered this question
- > Nearly two thirds (62%) of respondents *agreed* with developing the area between Churton Park and Tawa to create a new neighbourhood supports our goals of making Wellington a compact, resilient, vibrant and prosperous, inclusive and connected, and greener city – 27% *strongly agreed* and 35% *agreed*
- > Fifteen percent of respondents were *neutral* and 13% were *not sure*
- > Nine percent of respondents *disagreed* – 5% *strongly disagreed* and 4% *disagreed*

Connecting Upper Stebbings and Glenside with Takapu train station will support PT and economic opportunities

Statement: Connecting a future community in Upper Stebbings and Glenside with Takapu train station and the shops and services in Tawa will support public transport usage and access to economic opportunities.

Connecting a future community in Upper Stebbings and Glenside with Takapu train station and the shops and services in Tawa will support public transport usage and access to economic opportunities



Key findings:

- > 1,808 respondents answered this question
- > Over two thirds (68%) of respondents *agreed* that connecting a future community in Upper Stebbings and Glenside with Takapu train station and the shops and services in Tawa will support public transport usage and access to economic opportunities – 31% *strongly agreed* and 37% *agreed*
- > Twelve percent of respondents were *neutral* and 14% were *not sure*
- > Five percent of respondents *disagreed* – 2% *strongly disagreed* and 3% *disagreed*

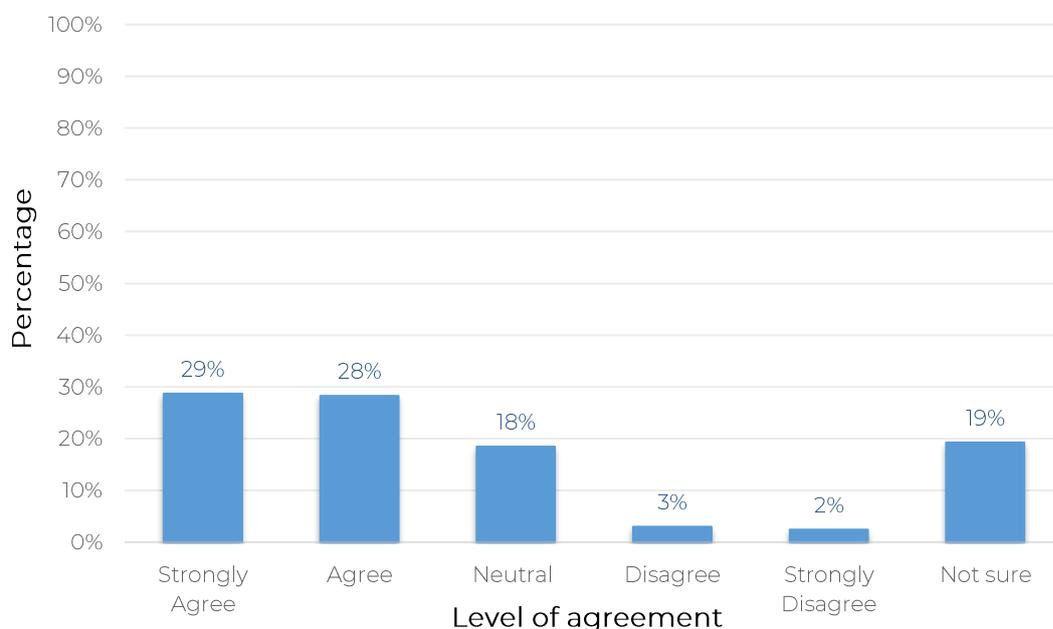
Agreement/disagreement with Lincolnshire Farm Structure Plan

Respondents were asked: Thinking about the Lincolnshire Farm Structure Plan, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Lincolnshire Farm Structure Plan should allow a mix of housing types and more density

Statement: The Lincolnshire Farm Structure Plan should be reviewed to allow for a mix of housing types and to accommodate more dense housing options (such as townhouses and low-rise apartments can be built in this area).

The Lincolnshire Farm Structure Plan should be reviewed to allow for a mix of housing types and to accommodate more dense housing options (such as townhouses and low rise apartments can be built in this area).



Key findings:

- > 1,779 respondents answered this question
- > Over half (57%) of respondents *agreed* that the Lincolnshire Farm Structure Plan should be reviewed to allow for a mix of housing types and to accommodate more dense housing options (such as townhouses and low-rise apartments can be built in this area) – 29% *strongly agreed* and 28% *agreed*
- > Eighteen percent of respondents were *neutral* and 19% were *not sure*
- > Five percent of respondents *disagreed* – 2% *strongly disagreed* and 3% *disagreed*

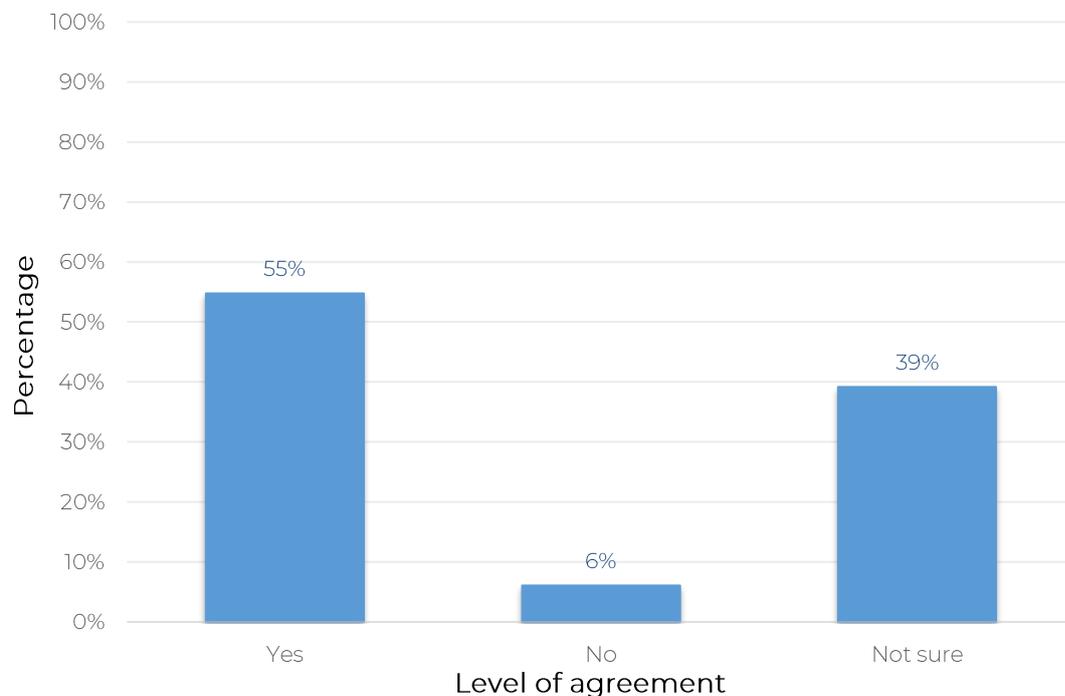
Appetite for community planning processes in Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula and Strathmore Park

Respondents were asked: Do you support the idea of a community planning process for the following areas?

Support for the community planning process for Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula

Statement: This framework could cover matters such as how to maximise the benefits of living in, working in, and visiting the area; investment in social and affordable housing aligned with public transport and greenspace; and, how to ensure better connections to the City particularly with the future mass rapid transit route.

Support for Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula planning process



Key findings:

- > 1,857 respondents answered this question
- > Over half (55%) of respondents showed support for the Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula planning process
- > Thirty nine percent of respondents were *not sure*
- > Six percent of respondents opposed it

What the Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula framework should focus on or cover 1,271 comments

If respondents answered yes to the question above, they were asked to **answer this question**: what should the Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula framework focus on or cover?

Summary of responses to this question: What the Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula framework should focus on

- **Housing** was the issue discussed most frequently in response to this question. Provision of affordable housing, social housing, and more housing generally was supported to ensure all residents of the area are catered for. New housing could be in the form of higher density development, better quality housing, and a range of housing types and options. Respondents also suggested any new development needs to be appropriate in height, and respect the character and heritage of the area. A small number opposed intensification.
- **Transport and accessibility issues** were identified with suggestions that improved public transport needs to better connect Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula to the CBD and central Wellington. Active transport modes (walking and cycling) within the area were supported and better-quality infrastructure was sought to facilitate this. Respondents also proposed new ferry and light rail services, and improved roading infrastructure.
- **Open spaces, public spaces and green spaces** were another commonly discussed topic. Respondents illustrated the value the peninsula has for them by consistently calling to protect and preserve natural environments and public spaces from future developments.
- **The diversity and culture of the people and community** were highly valued. Careful and sensitive future development was identified as critical to retain and strengthen the diversity and vitality of the local community.
- **Future-proofing the environment in the face of climate change and natural hazards** was an issue discussed by respondents. Concern was expressed about the flooding of low-lying areas due to sea level rise or tsunamis. Resilience was sought through the protection of the natural environment from unsuitable development.
- **Māori and iwi input** to planning processes was valued, as was the protection of the cultural heritage of tangata whenua.
- **Facilities, services, and amenities** such as new shops, medical centres, schools, and cafés were welcomed. Support was also expressed for the concept of the “15-minute neighbourhood”, which would reduce reliance on the CBD and also add to Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula’s reputation as a visitor destination.
- **Development** was appraised in a variety of ways. While some respondents supported mixed-use development, more infrastructure and reducing bureaucracy, others questioned the suitability of the area for further development and intensification.
- **More public participation** in planning processes was sought.

Affordable housing (102)

A large number of comments expressed support for the provision of affordable housing on the Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula. While most respondents simply suggested “affordable housing”, a moderate number of comments specifically expressed a desire for “social and affordable housing”. A few respondents offered more detailed suggestions of how they would like affordable housing to be delivered:

Incorporating affordable housing onto the peninsula without destroying the wild and natural feel

Apartment buildings need to be affordable \$250,000 to \$400,000. Single and Studio apartment buildings please!

Affordable housing (warm and dry) which caters for a range of people / family types

Overall, focus on affordable housing, not on housing for those whose resources allow them to build mansions

More housing and higher density development (85)

Support for more housing and higher density housing was expressed by a sizeable number of respondents. A majority used general terms such as “more housing”, “increased housing”, and “infill housing”. Specific support for the intensification proposed in the Plan was articulated through comments in favour of denser development near amenities, public transport, and workplaces, and for denser development to occur on flat land and “underutilised land in the peninsula”.

Provides an opportunity for a future focussed comprehensive development with medium density and a very liveable area where most of people's daily needs can be met within easy walking distance

More of what the plan sets out: dense housing surrounded by natural amenities

More density near the town centre and around the potential light rail route

High quality and appropriate development (50)

The need for “good design”, “liveable” housing, “sympathetic” development, “architect designed” houses, “sustainability”, “quality housing” and designs that incorporated landscape amenities such as parks were discussed by a substantial number of respondents.

Look for great urban design...look at the community... Look at the environment. Plan it well and plan it right! No cookie-cutter-type look and housing. Considers the needs and wants of each community. What will work in that valley, will not work on that hillside.

While higher density housing was generally supported, a range of views were expressed on appropriate building heights, as well as consideration of the topography, sunlight, and wind effects.

low development of 3 to 4 storeys to keep the community feel

no more than 3 storey buildings/apartments and to keep the beauty of the area/peninsula to be available and enjoyed by many, i.e. those who may work in that area and for visitors to the area, windswept as it is at times

A range of housing options (34)

A considerable number of respondents were in favour of a mix of housing styles and developments for a range of community members “from all backgrounds”, not just the affluent.

Creating a community plan that enables a wide range of socio-economic groups to live sustainably and without the need to travel outside of the area for day to day services and activities

“Mixed use”, “mixed tenures” and “mixed density” were also common suggestions offered.

This discussion also overlapped with issues of social housing and affordability. A few respondents made the point that social housing needs to be properly integrated within the area, warning of the negative effects of doing otherwise:

Mixing social housing into regular housing area. avoids areas of social housing which then causes other issues

Mixed housing without ghettoisation

Social housing (33)

The provision, quality and upgrading of social housing was discussed by a considerable number of respondents. The majority sought improved social housing with suggestion for new or upgraded state housing, and investment in high-density social and affordable housing.

Two respondents suggested restricting or limiting the amount of social housing in Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula:

Social and affordable housing confined to the area beside Miramar wharf where it is close to public transport. Restrict other housing to the area where it is close to public transport. Restrict other housing to the area around the former prison

Care must be taken with social housing and limiting it. Too much concentration of social housing risks a degradation of the area with high crime areas. Social housing ideally should be more city focused to lighten the transport load in this region.

Opposition to intensification or new housing (9)

Several respondents voiced opposition to intensification. Some specified locations such as Shelly Bay and the “uninhabited north of the peninsula” but most were generally opposed to any infill or high-density housing, and loss of existing low density. One respondent stated that the Miramar area is unsuitable for further development.

Transport and Accessibility

282 comments

General comments (212)

Transport in and out of the Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula was the second largest topic discussed in response to this question. A very large amount of comments supported transport related solutions in and out of the peninsula and a sizeable number of responses were frequently short statements such as

“transport” or “public transport”. The need for better transport connectivity between the peninsula and Wellington CBD was noted in a sizeable number of comments:

Quality public transport options that would connect this suburb well to the city centre.

Better connections to the city are long overdue. The Eastern Suburbs in general would benefit from more efficient transport access to the other side of our city as well as to the motorway and into the CBD.

This gains even more importance with the explicit support for public transport in a considerable number of comments as the main means of moving people between the city and peninsula. It was noted that the current public transport network will need improving. The sentiment to shift to mainly public transport was made even more explicit in several comments with the suggestion of connecting the peninsula via mass rapid transit connections. On the peninsula itself active transport options were seen to be preferable to car use by several respondents, including the reduction of car numbers on coastal roads. Moving to more sustainable transport options was suggested in several comments while the remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments, and frequently not directly focused on the Draft Spatial Plan or the questions asked.

Active transport (cycle and walkways) (39)

There was support for active transport options around the peninsula in a considerable number of comments and several supported cycling and the creating of more cycle paths. A small number simply said “active transport” while others were more specific in their comments:

Creating spaces where public transport/cycling/walking is the default option.

Improved separation of walking cycling and cars could be given some thought.

The question prompted several respondents to focus on the need to establish an active transport infrastructure, while more walkways were suggested in several comments. The notion to shift people movement off the road and from private cars also seeped through in a few comments proposing more active transport corridors be built that allow for safer commutes. Well-designed neighbourhoods were supported by a few respondents who expressed a desire for 15-minute suburbs. On the other hand, the protection of the waterfront was a topic in several comments and respondents noted that coastal roads should give priority to pedestrians and cyclists, thereby making the coast safer to access. Remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments.

Specific public transport options (20)

Ferries were a popular public transport solution noted in a moderated number of comments. Several of those suggested that a ferry link could be established between the CBD and the airport, stopping along the way to connect the peninsula suburbs to the city. Light rail was a favourite option in a small number of comments, while the remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments, however they all supported public or active transport options.

Roads and tunnels (11)

Support for an improved roading infrastructure network that connects the peninsula to the city was voiced in several comments. Primarily respondents focused on traffic flows and suggestions included a second tunnel and four lane roading corridors. Remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments.

Open, Public, and Green Space

206 comments

In a very large amount of comments, respondents expressed the value the peninsula has for them by showing an overwhelming consensus to protect natural environments from intrusive future developments.

Green space was a popular topic suggested in a sizeable number of comments in response to the question. This was frequently stated in short answers such as “green space” or “preservation of green space”. The accessibility of such space was also a point highlighted in a considerable number of comments, with respondents requesting it remain a public space or open space for all to use. A small number of those comments elaborated on the ratio of residents to open or public space, suggesting that there is a current lack of the amenities. Parks, or a “park feel of area” were suggested in a moderate number of comments, closely followed by space for recreational activity such as walking, cycling, or picnicking. Access and protection of coastal areas were equally important to several respondents, while several respondents went further and proposed that the area should be protected from development and/or be made a public reserve. Remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments, and frequently not directly focused on the Draft Spatial Plan or the questions asked.

The People and Community

83 comments

The people, culture, heritage, and potential of the Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula community were discussed by a sizeable number of respondents, who were generally positive about being able to live, work, and play in the area.

Community was a key topic. Respondents encouraged WCC to support “diverse communities”, “support local businesses”, help “promote and protect the vibrancy” of the area, and allow “for growth in a way that enhances and strengthens the local community”. A wide range of suggestions for achieving this included asking WCC to provide amenities such as community facilities, community hubs, community areas, community spaces, and “good urban design, beautiful and aspirational spaces”. One respondent encouraged WCC to undertake participatory planning to meet “the needs of future residents” and the needs of current residents”.

While not opposing development, respondents also argued for the need to balance any planned intensification with the needs of the community. Suggestions for achieving this included: “maintaining a mixed-use and intimate community feel”, “allowing for growth in a way that enhances and strengthens the local community”; and, WCC was urged to protect “character and community”.

The importance of retaining jobs and employment were discussed by a small number of respondents. One comment requested WCC “support jobs in the area so that people don't have to travel out of the area for work”.

A small number of comments emphasised the contribution that artists and the creative community had made to the neighbourhood, and asked for WCC to support the arts:

The art spaces, the wonderful eclectic people who live in these areas need interesting, bright, and well-designed upgrades. (Unlike the East Berlin look that was common post 1960s.)

Several respondents proposed capitalising on Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula's potential as a destination for tourists and locals alike, citing its heritage and vibrancy.

This is a great location, with sea views and is currently underutilized. Good town planning could make this a destination for people to go and enjoy what Wellington has to offer

Miramar is one of the suburbs that is currently a visitor destination -- for tourists (including domestic), but also for Wellingtonians going to the restaurants & shops, or to the bays or to the parks.

One respondent warned of the need to get the balance right between residents' needs, new housing development, and visitor capacity:

A balance of housing density with great open space for those communities living there and also for those visiting.

Future Proofing and the Environment

94 comments

Topics around future proofing and environmental suggestions about the Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula framework made up a sizeable number of comments. Responses were frequently short statements such as "sea level rises" or "protecting nature".

Climate change was the most frequently represented topic in a considerable number of comments, with the main concern centred around flooding. Protecting the natural environment for future generations and from developments was the next largest point made in a moderate number of comments, with a few expressing the value the peninsula environment offers to Wellington. This was further supported in a moderate number of comments about sustainability, including urban sustainability and composting:

The Para Kai trial in Miramar will start to create a local culture of composting and should be built on to further local organic waste recycling and food growing.

Earthquake resilience was a further topic discussed in several comments, including tsunami risk to low-lying areas, while environmentally related comments were mainly short statements such as "environment" or the suggestion to make the peninsula predator free. Remaining points grouped under other topics were

generally one-off comments.

Māori and Iwi Input

39 comments

A considerable number of respondents discussed issues of the need to consult and work in partnership with Mana Whenua and iwi in any regeneration planning for Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula.

Suggestions for involvement in the planning process included meaningful public participation and "co-design with Mana Whenua and community", "recognising the iwi right to make its own decisions about development of its land", and "genuine and meaningful collaboration with iwi and hapū in accordance with the partnership principles of Te Tiriti."

The cultural heritage of tangata whenua in Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula was commented on by a small number of respondents who noted "iwi places of interest need to be considered first and foremost" and "the multi-layered heritage of the Peninsula, including Māori sites" need to be integrated into any planning. A few comments suggested using Mana Whenua stories as well considering protection of wāhi tapu and taonga species in any development.

A few comments discussed opposition to the Shelly Bay development, with one respondent suggesting:

Consultation with Mau Whenua and other community groups instead of pandering to developers as per the Shelly Bay plan put forward by the Wellington Company.

Facilities, Services, and Amenities

59 comments

Facilities, services, and amenities were commented on by a substantial number of respondents. Around half of the comments were consistent and short suggestions for recreation facilities, schools, utilities, infrastructure, medical facilities, retail spaces, cafés, restaurants, supermarkets, and GPs.

A small number of respondents were in favour of "15-minute neighbourhoods" which were described by one respondent as "a neighbourhood where you can get *everything* you need for a decent life within a 15-minute walk, bike, wheelchair, scooter, or public transport trip (or combination of the above)."

Reducing reliance on the CBD and the travel required if a wide range of facilities and amenities were provided were discussed by a small number of respondents. One comment argued that “building economic diversity” would mean Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula could “rely less on current CBD, and become almost its own functioning city”.

A recognition of the area being a visitor destination was noted by a small number of respondents. One comment made the point that “it makes sense to urbanise the area, attract more entertainment there, e.g. cafes, galleries, etc., so tourists can spend the whole day in the area.”

Development (general)

46 comments

Development within Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula was discussed in a considerable number of comments.

Support was expressed for mixed-use development, reducing bureaucracy, building infrastructure, and developing on available land within the area. A few comments supported development at Shelly Bay.

Some of the support for development was qualified. Respondents argued that any development be “sympathetic to the cultural history and geography of the area”, be part of “a balanced spatial plan backed by good analysis that can be put before citizens for consultation is essential”, and have the confidence of the community.

A moderate number of comments were opposed to development on Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula. Some respondents questioned if land was suitable for intensification or further commercial development and a few questioned whether sufficient undeveloped land was available. A few of these comments were opposed to development at Shelly Bay.

Other comments

251 comments

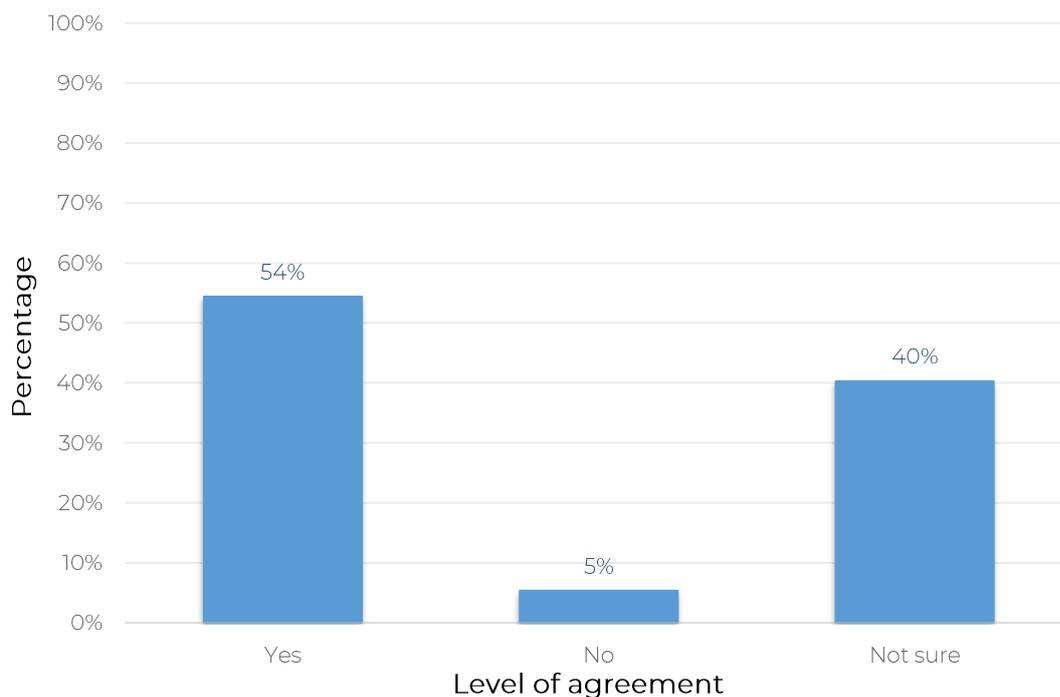
Finally, a very large amount of comments represented a wide variety of suggestions for the Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula framework. Some answers were brief statements “community consultation” or “not sure”. Of the total comments in this group, over half expressed support for consultation with the affected communities or a co-design approach. A substantial number of respondents had nothing further to add, while the consultation process or other WCC processes were the topic in several comments and included a variety of suggestions. A desire for action and urge to move forward and improve Wellington was expressed in a small number of comments, while a few respondents voiced their agreement with the Plan. WCC consultation and cooperation with Mana Whenua and their interests was supported in a few comments. Remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments; they accumulated to a considerable number of comments and were frequently not directly focused on the Draft Spatial Plan or the questions asked.

Support community planning process for Strathmore Park

Respondents were asked: Do you support the idea of a community planning process for the following areas?

Statement: This could be to develop a plan for regenerating this suburb, which could include developing new modern or upgraded state housing with better public transport connections to the rest of the City, along with a range of other initiatives that could benefit the wider area including the neighbourhood centre.

Support for Strathmore Park planning process



Key findings:

- > 1,852 respondents answered this question
- > Over half (54%) of respondents showed support for the Strathmore Park planning process
- > Forty percent of respondents were *not sure*
- > Five percent of respondents opposed it

What the Strathmore Park framework should focus on or cover 1,251 comments

If respondents answered yes to the question above, they were **asked to answer this question**: What should the Strathmore Park framework focus on or cover?

Summary: What the Strathmore Park framework should focus on

- **Housing** was widely discussed with the supply of social housing and affordable housing being the main concerns for respondents. Preferences were expressed for new development to consist of a range of housing types and options, with opposition to and support for apartment buildings to cater for demand. There was also a desire for social housing to be distributed throughout Strathmore Park rather than isolated, though a small number of respondents wanted existing social housing to be replaced with new (non-social) housing.
- **Transport and accessibility issues** were identified, with suggestions that improved public transport needs to better connect Strathmore Park to central Wellington and other suburbs. Active transport (walking and cycling) and associated infrastructure was argued to be essential for regeneration, as were improved roading, parking, and alternative public transport modes such as ferries, light rail, and car-share schemes.
- **The involvement of the local community and tangata whenua** in planning processes was mentioned in a wide range of comments. Respondents called for authentic participatory planning and engagement as a way of retaining the existing social diversity within Strathmore Park. The discussion also included suggestions for an assortment of community facilities to complement new residential development. A small number sought crime reduction.
- **Open, public, and green spaces** were commonly discussed as valuable community assets, with suggestions for more green space, parks, walking tracks, and playgrounds.
- Like Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula, very similar suggestions for **facilities, services, and amenities** in Strathmore Park were received. New cafés, restaurants, supermarkets, a medical centre, schools, and a library were welcomed. Similarly, support was expressed for planning to be based on the concept of the “15-minute neighbourhood”.
- **Future-proofing the environment** consisted of two main themes. Respondents discussed mitigating the effects of flooding and sea level rise in Strathmore Park’s populated low-lying areas by moving future development to higher ground. A desire was also expressed for engaging in sustainable practices to better protect the area’s natural environment during an era of climate change.
- **Development** of Strathmore Park was generally supported with calls for increased residential density, mixed-use, and commercial development. A small number of respondents opposed this. Discussion about development of the adjacent Wellington Airport was also mixed, with respondents concerned about the airport infrastructure, noise, and light intruding further upon the community.
- In the remaining comments, a large number of respondents reiterated **the value of public participation** and advocated participatory planning processes.

Social housing (100)

The provision, quality and upgrading of social housing in Strathmore Park was discussed by a large number of respondents. The majority generally sought new, “upgraded” or “refreshed” social housing with several inviting WCC to invest “in social and affordable housing”.

A moderate number of comments noted a desire for “social and affordable housing”.

Several comments supported better integration of social housing with community facilities and amenities and argued that regeneration of social housing should “include community facilities within walking or cycling distance of every state house.”

A small number of respondents made the point that for social housing development to be successful, the affected communities need to be involved in decision-making and planning:

Don't push out or alienate those already living there in social housing - strong communities there - should be lots of engagement.

Any move to shift the demographics, no matter how well-intentioned, needs to include the people who live there now.

Opposition to social housing was voiced by a small number of respondents, who urged WCC to replace existing social housing stock with new privately developed housing.

Affordable housing (97)

A sizeable number of comments expressed support for the provision of affordable housing in Strathmore Park, with the majority simply suggesting “affordable housing”.

Several respondents elaborated with ideas for how this could be achieved including asking WCC to “consult with developers to determine what type of development is realistic for this area” and for WCC to partner “with Kainga Ora to completely redevelop... a mix of affordable to market, rent to own, and state housing”.

In supporting social housing, one respondent urged it to be “done by the council, not developers - this is never affordable”.

Renters were discussed by a small number of respondents who claimed tenants needed affordable properties too, with one suggestion that “people who are renting there have first option to buying (over time)”.

A range of housing options (67)

A substantial number of respondents were in favour of new housing consisting of a wide range of building types to cater for a diverse community.

A good mix of private housing and social housing typologies were favoured as a way to create community cohesion and “a vivid and vibrant suburb” “so that it does not become concentrated in state housing throughout”. This comment reflected that sentiment:

More, higher quality social housing, along with transitional housing and homes for the more prosperous should be built in the same neighbourhoods, to good standards, and with access to amenities for all.

Opinions on preferred housing types varied, with a moderate number of respondents. Some favoured low-rise (up to three storeys) medium-density housing and a similar number advocated for apartment buildings. While these opinions were consistent with earlier discussion and the recognition of Strathmore

Park residents having a wide range of housing needs, the following comments reflect the opposing positions:

Avoiding high rise living except where suitable sites are available, protecting character

Apartment buildings or semi-detached housing for families

Apartments and building up to give more options to people

More housing and higher density development (63)

General support for more housing and increased density was noted in a substantial number of comments. A majority of respondents expressed this support using simple statements such as “housing”, “more housing”, “more higher density housing” and “increasing housing density”.

A small number of respondents suggested that sufficient space was available in Strathmore Park to achieve this, with one respondent claiming:

This area would enable substantial increase in population without cramming people into already overloaded suburbs, where parking is difficult and houses will be built out by high rises.

In supporting intensification in both Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula and Strathmore Park, one respondent questioned why the community planning process was not being used in other suburbs:

You state in your "Opportunity presented" section that "it is important that this work identifies the key values the community holds about Strathmore and the principles that must underpin future regeneration", and yet it would appear that this same statement is not being applied to such areas as Hataitai, Brooklyn, Kilbirnie, Khandallah and Johnsonville which also have strong communities with key values.

High quality and appropriate development (29)

The need for “good housing”, “density done well”, “healthy homes”, and “quality housing” that is also “warmer”, “healthy” and “safer” than existing housing stock was expressed by a considerable number of respondents.

Addressing issues of intensification, a small number of comments urged WCC to ensure “existing residents are not badly impacted” and to consider implementing “minimum requirements in terms of quality, performance and maximum size limit”. One respondent elaborated on the need to balance quantity and quality in relation to the environment:

Ensuring good quality homes are built and lots of them that don't substantially contribute to environmental emissions, have water sensitive urban design, biodiversity attributes and don't encourage more motor vehicle congestion

Better connections to public transport, amenities, and infrastructure (6)

A small number of comments argued that new housing developments should be designed to effectively integrate with public transport, reduce reliance on private vehicles, and to have sufficient infrastructure in place.

Transport and Accessibility

206 comments

Transport in and out of Strathmore Park was the second largest topic resulting from this question. A very large amount of comments supported transport related solutions in and out of the peninsula and a sizeable number of responses were frequently short statements such as “transport” or “public transport”.

Public transport solutions and improvements received general support in over half of the comments while a considerable number talked about the connectivity of transport solutions, including connecting residential areas to the city and other suburbs.

Connecting first-rate public housing with first-rate public transport.

Improve public transport, which would improve accessibility to the area and make it more desirable for people to both live and work.

Public transport links between Strathmore Park and the city centre was a focus in a moderate number of comments. A small number of respondents expressed that they would like more sustainable transport options implemented in the city, while mass rapid transit was noted to be a desirable and efficient way to move people from Strathmore Park to the CBD and other locations. Remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments.

Active transport solutions were offered as part of a viable regeneration strategy for Strathmore Park in several comments and included walking, cycling and the corresponding development and maintenance of tracks and lanes.

Roading and car parking was noted to be a concern for a small number of respondents while alternative transport suggestions covered more ferry connections, light rail, and EV car sharing schemes in a small number of comments. Remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments, and frequently not directly focused on the Draft Spatial Plan or the questions asked.

The People and Community

119 comments

The people, culture, and heritage of the Strathmore Park community were discussed by a large number of respondents.

A considerable number of comments discussed the need for more community facilities to complement any new housing developments. A range of similar suggestions were made, which included “suburban centre”, “community space”, “neighbourhood centre”, “community gardens”, “better recreation centres” and “community facilities”. This was emphasised by one respondent when they noted the regeneration plan needed to be about more than just housing:

Not only social housing. Making sure good community amenity.

Regeneration of state housing areas to include community facilities within walking or cycling distance of every state house.

While a moderate number of respondents were in favour of more housing, with support shown for “increased housing”, “more housing”, “cheap affordable housing so more people can live there or keep living there”, several also argued for new development to retain and respect the existing culture and heritage of Strathmore Park.

Ensuring that any development builds on the areas existing culture, its heritage; what makes it unique. Not just generic mindless development for development's sake.

The importance of community involvement, “strong, authentic participatory planning” and “community driven solutions” in any regeneration planning was discussed by a small number of respondents. One respondent claimed:

It's particularly important here as there are lots of people who don't normally get heard in planning processes.

Make a space that begins with the people who live there, the people who want to live there and the people who will live there.

Several comments argued for the need to encourage and support a socio-economic mix of people to help retain the current diversity of the Strathmore Park community.

No social ghetto's please. We need to foster inclusive multicultural and multi socio economic communities. Reduce the rich-poor divide.

Reducing crime was discussed by a few respondents who urged WCC to get “rid of gangs and crime” and reduce “poverty and crime spots”.

Māori and iwi input (10)

Several comments discussed the need to consult and work in partnership with Mana Whenua and iwi in any regeneration planning for Strathmore Park. A few comments suggested including Mana Whenua stories as well when considering protection of wāhi tapu and taonga species in any development.

Open, Public, and Green Space

98 comments

When thinking about the regeneration of Strathmore Park, a sizeable number of respondents commented on the topic of open, public, and green spaces. The latter gained the most support for future planning and implementation and frequently comments were short statements such as “green space” or “more green space”. The small number who elaborated put these views into better context:

Development of green space, open spaces and community facilities in the centre, appropriate to the population.

Increasing and/or improving green spaces and providing opportunities for increased biodiversity.

In a moderate number of brief comments, open and public spaces were considered to be valuable assets. Parks were suggested by several respondents, recreational spaces including walking tracks to explore the area were a favoured amenity in several comments while a few argued for more playgrounds. Remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments.

Facilities, Services, and Amenities

84 comments

Facilities, services, and amenities were commented on by a sizeable number of respondents. The majority were consistent and short suggestions for amenities such as cafés, restaurants, supermarkets, shops, medical centre, library, play areas, schools, and childcare facilities in Strathmore Park.

Similar to Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula, several comments were in favour of “15-minute neighbourhoods”, where you can get everything you need for a decent life within a 15-minute walk.

A small number of respondents noted that provision of a wide range of facilities and amenities would help reduce “the need to travel into the city during peak times” and also “enable those living in the area the option of staying locally rather than having to go into town”.

Future Proofing and the Environment

62 comments

Future proofing and environmental topics or concerns for the Strathmore Park development garnered a substantial number of comments. Frequently, responses were short comments merely stating: “climate change” or “environment”.

Flooding and climate change were concerns raised by several respondents and they called for them to be taken into account in future planning and development in Strathmore Park.

Build out of town on high land and above sea level to future proof Wellington for future generations.

Sustainability, making the area more resilient to climate change and utilise its geographic features.

Environmental interests were articulated through several comments and were frequently kept general. However, an equal number of respondents stated a desire to protect the natural environment from disturbance, and regenerative measures were proposed in a few comments. In the same vein, several comments argued for sustainable practices to underpin future development or treatment of the suburb's natural, built, and social environment. This was echoed in several more comments on building development in the suburb, with a few expressing the need for affordable buildings and housing, however not at the cost of quality or character loss in the area. Earthquake resilience was a point mentioned in a few comments, while a further few advocated for measures reducing or eliminating emission. Remaining points grouped under other topics were generally one-off comments, and frequently not directly focused on the Draft Spatial Plan or the questions asked.

Development

28 comments

Development within Strathmore Park was discussed by a considerable number of respondents. The majority expressed general support for development and suggested ways it could include increasing density, mixed-use development, and encourage commercial development. One respondent made the point:

Suburban regeneration of Strathmore Park could be a pilot project to develop a new model for other similar suburbs (in much the way Hobsonville in Auckland has served as an experiment for new greenfields developments).

Several comments were opposed to high-rise developments and more business areas, and questioned the economic viability of further development because the area is “too sprawling and nobody there has money to make the place nicer”.

A few respondents suggested using the golf course for residential development. Two of those comments claimed the golf course was “a waste of good land”.

One comment suggested leaving any rezoning proposals to the District Plan review. Another questioned the need for both Strathmore Park and Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula to have separate planning processes:

Why should these areas have a separate planning process? These are high-amenity accessible parts of Wellington that should be free to develop into urban centres over the coming decades.

Wellington Airport was discussed in a third of the comments. The majority expressed concern about airport noise and light pollution, impacts on local road transport, encroachment on the community through expansion and new airport development, and the effects of a runway extension. One respondent urged WCC to “offer protection from increasing land grabs from Wellington International Airport Ltd” and

another discussed the inappropriate location of the existing airport and noted “developments would have important ramifications for housing.”

A small number of comments suggested capitalising on Strathmore Park’s close proximity to the airport and one respondent suggested that “this area not be developed for housing but be converted for future commercial transport infrastructure and warehousing development consistent with its location near the airport”.

Other comments

292 comments

A third of these comments urged WCC to engage with the community in any planning processes. The following comment summarises the general sentiment:

WCC should work with the communities of these areas to best meet the needs of the community and work out the best way to incorporate high density into the local and natural environment.

A quarter of these comments stated “same as above”, “see above” or duplicated previous comments.

A quarter of these comments stated, “no comment”, “not sure”, “N/A” or similar.

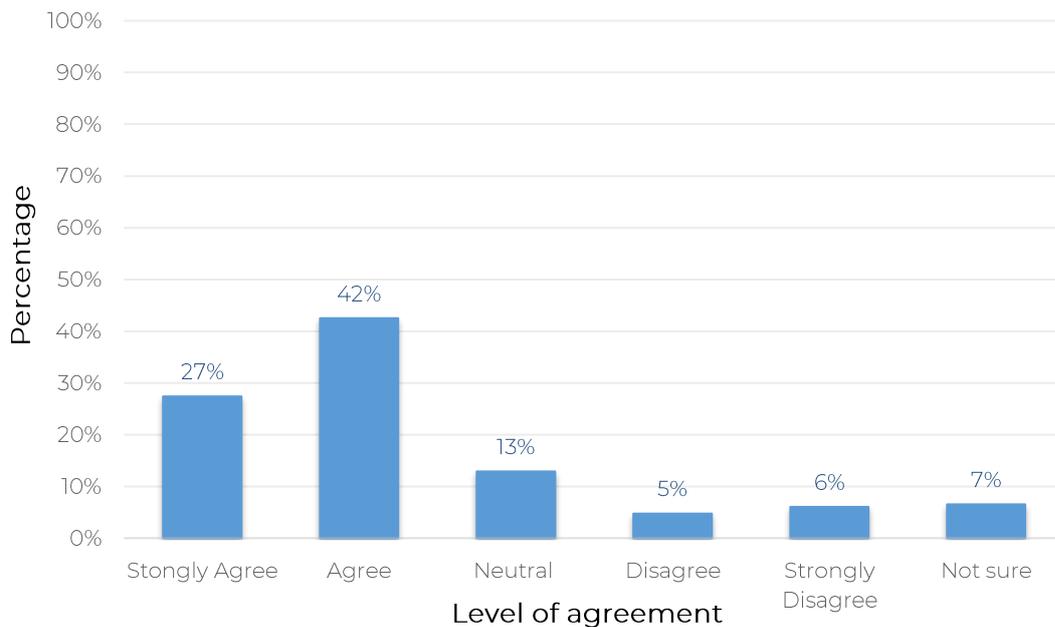
The remaining moderate number of comments expressed general support for the Plan, were opposed to further development within Strathmore Park, noted dissatisfaction with WCC, and a few suggested WCC stop consulting and “get on with it”.

Protecting the natural environment

Respondents were asked: Overall do you agree with our proposed approach to protecting our natural environment and investment in our parks and open spaces?

Agreement/disagreement with environmental protection and parks/ open spaces investment proposals

Overall agreement with WCC proposed approach to protecting our natural environment and investment in our parks and open spaces



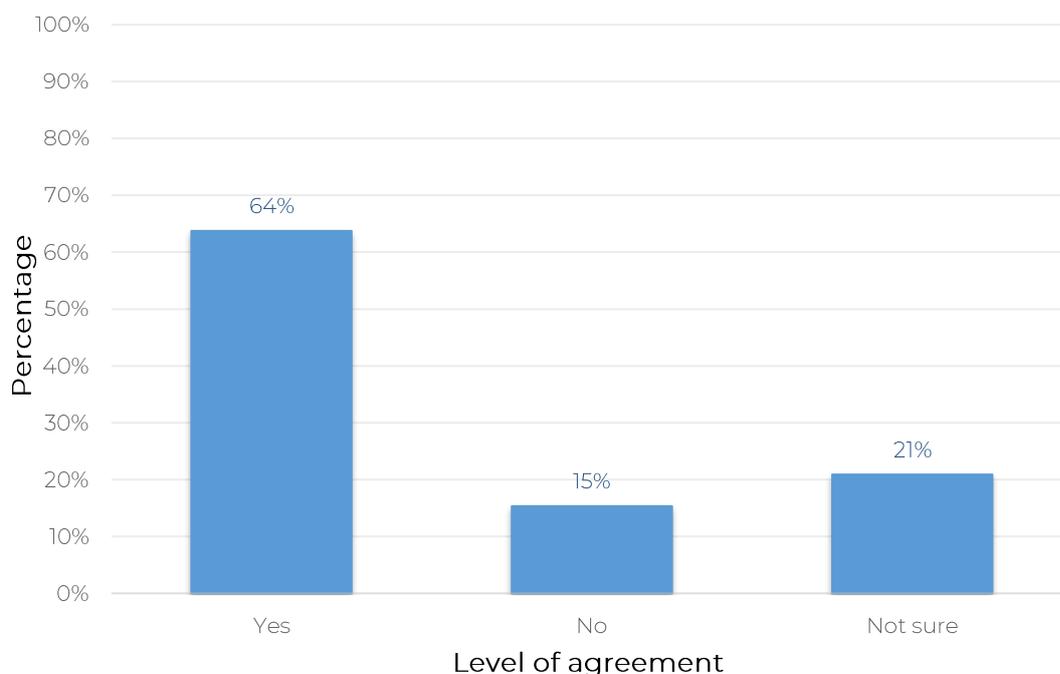
Key findings:

- > 1,864 respondents answered this question
- > Over two thirds (69%) of respondents *agreed* with the WCC proposed approach to protecting our natural environment and investment in our parks and open spaces – 27% *strongly agreed* and 43% *agreed*
- > Thirteen percent of respondents were *neutral* and 7% were *not sure*
- > Eleven percent of respondents *disagreed* – 6% *strongly disagreed* and 5% *disagreed*

Council assistance to landowners to protect Backyard Tāonga on private property

Respondents were asked: Do you think Council should offer assistance to landowners to help them protect their Backyard Tāonga (the natural environment) on their private property?

Should Council offer assistance to landowners to help them protect their Backyard Tāonga (the natural environment) on their private property



Key findings:

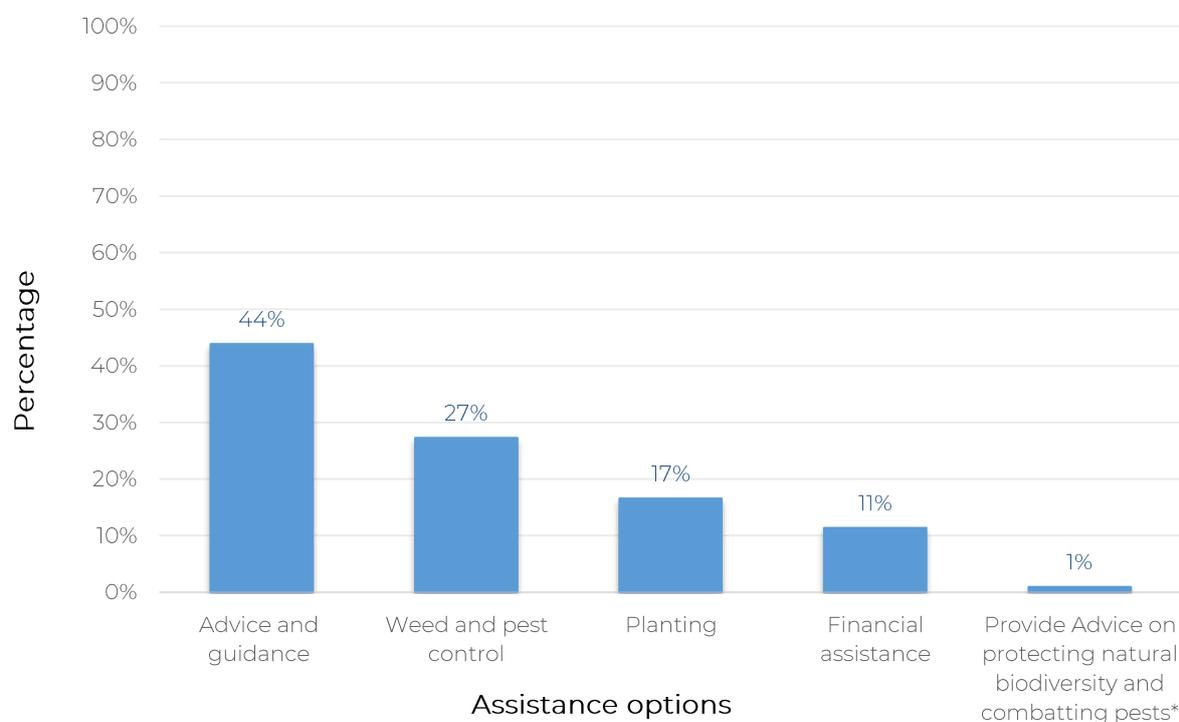
- > 1,889 respondents answered this question
- > Almost two thirds (64%) of respondents showed support for the Council offering assistance to landowners to help them protect their Backyard Tāonga (the natural environment) on their private property
- > Twenty one percent of respondents were *not sure*
- > Fifteen percent of respondents opposed it

What types of assistance would help landowners

Respondents were asked: If you answered yes to the question above, what types of assistance would help landowners?

OPTIONS: Financial assistance; Advice and guidance; Planting; Weed and pest control; Other (please specify).

What types of assistance would help landowners



Key findings:

- > 1,286 respondents answered this question
- > The types of assistance preferred by respondents to help landowners were:
 - > Advice and guidance (44%)
 - > Weed and pest control (27%)
 - > Planting (17%)
 - > Financial assistance (11%)
 - > Provide advice on protecting natural biodiversity and combatting pests (as suggested by respondents) (1%)

Summary: other assistance to help landowners

- With only one option able to be selected, three quarters of respondents used the *Other (please specify)* field to restate the four options that had already been offered (*Financial assistance; Advice and guidance; Planting; and Weed and pest control*) and to also state **"All of the above"**.
- A quarter of respondents offered **other suggestions**. These covered a range of topics including support for covenants and protection, and support for involving existing community and environmental organisations in designing and coordinating planting and plant maintenance work.
- **Concerns** were expressed that a regulatory approach may lead some landowners to clear their land, may conflict with the relevant Regional Policy Statement, and erode private property rights.
- A small number of comments were **outside the scope** of the question.

A very large number of comments were received in the "Other (please specify)" field when respondents were asked "If you answered yes to the question above, what types of assistance would help landowners?". The survey offered four different options: Weed and Pest Control; Planting; Guidance and Advice; and Financial Assistance.

With only one option able to be selected, three quarters of respondents used the "Other (please specify)" field to restate the four options that had already been offered, while a quarter of respondents offered other suggestions. These covered a range of topics including regulation and planning, involving existing community organisations, a reluctance towards council involvement, and a small number were outside the scope of the question.

Answers offered in survey (540)

A very large number of comments repeated the answers already offered in the survey, those options being: Financial assistance; Advice and guidance; Planting; Weed and pest control. These are discussed below.

Weed and pest control (133)

A large amount of comments specified that weed and pest control was important. Most did not go into further detail, though a few respondents noted concerns about "environmentally safe methods" suggesting "natural ways", "control that does not use chemical sprays", and "humane and toxin-free rodent control". A few offered specific suggestions such as "concentrate on feral cats" and "rat controls".

All of the above (options) (124)

A very large number used the "Other (please specify)" option to state "All of the above". Approximately half of these comments stated a range of reasons for this choice: with respondents claiming a single option may be inadequate; landowners may need to take a multi-stage, mixed or holistic approach; and, "one size does not fit all communities". An example of the comments made were:

Not sure why the four options above are mutually exclusive. A mix of Financial assistance, Advice and guidance, Planting and Weed and pest control would yield the best outcomes.

The requirement to select one of the above is extremely surprising, all are required to ensure effective outcomes for biodiversity are achieved, though different solutions may be required for different locations.

All four actually, as a multi-staged approach. I.e. assist with guidance first, and then depending on needs, landowners could look for free planting suitable for their land and/or free weed and pest control solutions in case if their financial situation doesn't allow them take these steps themselves.

Financial (104)

A large number of comments discussed ways landowners could be financially assisted. Half of these supported financial assistance with suggestions for “rates rebate”, a request for the council to “provide incentives for protective actions”, with one respondent noting that “protecting Backyard Tāonga is a public good, and landowners should not be relied on to protect this at their own cost”.

A quarter of respondents were generally opposed to financial assistance for landowners, with several making the point that “private land should be maintained by the owner and not paid for by other rate payers”.

The remaining quarter of respondents suggested items that could be funded and provided by WCC. These suggestions included subsidising plants, providing plants and seedlings from council nurseries, and supplying free traps.

Guidance and advice (94)

A sizeable number of comments supported guidance and advice, with a considerable number making specific suggestions for what guidance they required. These suggestions included “information on exotic/native plants including whether to remove/ignore/plant them”, pruning techniques, appropriate plant species to use, planting design, and maintenance advice.

Planting (85)

Assistance for planting was requested by a sizeable number of respondents, with a small number supporting the use of native plants. Nearly half argued that planting would need to be done in conjunction with weed and pest control, with one respondent claiming that “weed and pest control goes hand-in-hand with planting”. Other suggestions included coordinating volunteer community planting groups, assistance with “street front planting”, and including “private land of significance in planting” initiatives.

Regulation and planning (48)

Protection of the natural environment on private property in the form of regulatory controls such as covenants, resource consents, or protection orders was supported by a moderate number of respondents. Suggestions for ways to achieve this included “clear and easy access to protections” and consulting the QEII National Trust for advice. Some respondents expressed concern about developer intentions not aligning with protection of the natural environment and sought more landowner accountability.

However, a moderate number of comments opposed a regulatory approach, with some respondents stating that protection should be a voluntary activity rather than compulsory. A few suggested that a change of rules may lead to landowners clearing existing vegetation to circumvent future controls, and one argued that if “Council believes the property is special, they should purchase it under the Public Works Act, Reserves Act or similar process”. In supporting a non-regulatory approach, Greater Wellington Regional Council stated that this is consistent with “RPS policy 24 which directs district councils to include policies, rules and methods to protect indigenous ecosystems and habitats”.

Connections and people power (19)

A moderate number of suggestions were in favour of WCC liaising with QEII National Trust for advice, community and conservation groups for pest control and planting assistance, and coordinating garden and plant experts to provide advice for private landowners.

Against council involvement (10)

Several respondents opposed WCC involvement in deciding what natural environment to protect on private land, with one respondent describing the proposal as the “erasing of traditional property rights”. Some suggested instead that WCC focus on community initiatives, supporting neighbourhood projects or dealing with weed issues on council land.

Other (104)

A large number of comments were received relating to a wide range of topics.

WCC was urged by several respondents to undertake better weed control and vegetation management on council land, to support private planting on public grass verges, and to lobby DOC to continue their pest control programmes.

Several respondents noted that education is important to change attitudes and increase people’s appreciation for native biodiversity.

I think it's important to get landowners on board so that they come to their own conclusions about the importance of indigenous biodiversity on their land, it should be seen as a positive, rather than a drawback.

Other comments included general support for the concept of Backyard Tāonga, suggestions for WCC to engage with Mana Whenua and adopt principles of kaitiakitanga, arguments that intensification potentially negates the concept of Backyard Tāonga, and practical help being sought for drainage and fencing.

A few respondents claimed there is already sufficient green space within Wellington “without having to impose on private property”.

The remaining quarter of these comments were unrelated to the protection of the natural environment on private land. Respondents made suggestions for protection and enhancement of existing council parks and reserves, discussed protection of character buildings, and commented on issues such as council spending, public transport, and the survey itself.

Respondents were asked: Are there any final comments you wish to include in your submission? If so, please provide your comments below.

Summary of responses to this question: final comments respondents wish to include in their submission

Note that respondents were asked to share any final thoughts they had on the Draft Spatial Plan. Many of the comments received in response to this question were already discussed elsewhere in this report. Where this has occurred, readers will be directed to the appropriate section for more detailed discussion of certain topics.

- **Comments and criticisms about the consultation process** were common responses to this question. Wider and more inclusive consultation was strongly urged, particularly with people with disabilities, iwi and Mana Whenua, and with marginalised communities. These calls were largely issued by respondents who submitted via *Cities for People*. Respondents also noted issues they had accessing the consultation document or answering survey questions.
- **Proposed height increases** were widely criticised, with respondents expressing concerns over loss of sunlight, decreased property values of existing homes, and general concerns about how this would impact Wellington's aesthetic and streetscapes, particularly in residential areas. A similar number of respondents from this group were both for, and against, density increases. Those in support felt it was a necessary step to making Wellington a more liveable and diverse city, and those who were against densification worried how it would impact the lives of existing residents.
- **Housing** was highly discussed, with respondents calling for efforts to be taken to retain the character of Wellington's homes, as well as noting the need to increase the city's housing stock with high quality, affordable housing of various types to meet the needs of Wellington's diverse population. Some respondents argued that the latter was more important than preserving character.
- **Development and building processes** were commented on in a range of capacities – from suggestions about urban planning and design, to calls for design standards and quality controls on new developments, or questions about zoning changes. Some respondents expressed concerns about the motivations of developers and did not want them to make too many planning decisions on behalf of the city. Other comments discussed how changes to the way we live since the COVID-19 pandemic must be considered in the Plan, and how it must also take into account social issues such as homelessness and cultural awareness.
- **Infrastructure**, particularly the need to upgrade it, was widely discussed. Respondents echoed concerns raised throughout the report about the city's already struggling three waters infrastructure, and social infrastructure such as schools. Respondents noted that this must be considered and addressed before the city can accommodate more people.
- **The Spatial Plan** itself was also addressed, with respondents using this question as an opportunity to state their overall support or opposition to the Plan.
- **Transport** related comments focused on the need to improve public transport and active transport networks in order to move the city away from car ownership and towards lower emission transport options. However, calls for the retention of car parks and the requirement of off-street parking for all new developments were made, with some respondents arguing that cars are a necessity for many people, and that reducing car parking will only create or exacerbate existing problems with parking and access.
- **Parks, green spaces, waterways, and biodiversity** were mentioned by respondents who valued Wellington's natural environment. Respondents wanted the Plan to include provisions of more

green and open spaces for residents, particularly as the city densifies. Calls were also made for WCC to incorporate more wildlife and biodiversity protection and enhancement into the Plan.

- **Resilience and futureproofing** concerns were raised by respondents who felt the Plan did not go far enough to address risks associated with climate change and natural disasters. Respondents wanted to see more proactive measures taken in the Plan to reduce Wellington's carbon footprint, as well as more robust planning for sea-level rise, earthquakes, or other disasters.

About the process

1,297 comments

Consult more (992)

Almost all comments about consultation were generated from the 'A City for People' website where respondents selected that they:

- > *'strongly support the council meaningfully engaging with disabled people to ensure decisions about Wellington's growth and development provide for a truly accessible city'* (322);
- > *'strongly encourage the council to partner with iwi and Mana Whenua, to ensure their aspirations are met, and the current decision-making process while we plan for growth is decolonised'* (313);
- > and *'strongly support council meaningfully engaging with marginalised communities to ensure they are heard and have input into the ongoing development of the Spatial Plan and related policies'* (312).

A considerable number of additional comments were made expressing a desire for more or continued consultation in order to reach outcomes that are best for the city. Groups that respondents felt should be consulted with more included local residents and communities; tangata whenua; historical associations; and, experts in a range of fields from New Zealand and abroad.

Criticisms of consultation or survey (121)

A large number of respondents made criticisms of the engagement process, including consultation, the Draft Spatial Plan document itself, and the survey.

Over one third of comments discussed the survey questions, describing them as difficult to understand or overly complex. Several respondents made comments suggesting that this may have been intentional, to make it more difficult for members of the public to provide feedback. Several comments also discussed issues with the format of some questions, particularly those where respondents were asked to show the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a statement. These respondents noted that this format did not allow respondents to adequately express their opinions on certain issues and can be misrepresentative of actual views. One respondent commented:

It is worth noting that the questions in this survey are poorly-worded as it is not possible for people to indicate whether they agree or disagree with current proposals because they enable too much growth, or because they don't enable enough growth. I strongly agree that the plan is a step in the right direction, but strongly disagree that it is sufficient.

Criticisms of the engagement process were received from a moderate number of respondents. This group mainly commented on the lack of awareness about the consultation, noting that WCC should have done more to inform residents that they were seeking feedback on the Plan. Several respondents shared that they had only found out about the consultation by chance through talking to a neighbour or attending a community meeting. Several respondents also argued that the consultation was rushed, and did not allow sufficient time for people to consult the document and share their feedback. Several respondents made comments about the consultation document, suggesting that the online format was difficult to use and excluded those who could not access or use the website. A couple of respondents stated that they had obtained paper copies of the document, but noted that it was difficult

to do so. One respondent felt that the document was not user friendly to the “ordinary citizen”, noting that not all ratepayers have access to computers, or the IT skills required to view and understand the document.

A small number of respondents mentioned the maps used on the website, noting that though these were helpful in theory, it was sometimes difficult to understand them. One respondent suggested updating the website to include a search function.

Other criticisms included problems with filling out the survey; not being able to pause the survey and return to complete it later; not enough transparency throughout the process; no mention of iwi consultation; too much detail and information for the average person to digest; and, not enough detail or information for people to make informed comments.

Don't allow privileged minority to dictate terms (38)

Comments in this section expressed concern that a small number of dissenting voices would be heard above the voices of the general public. These comments suggested that the opinions of homeowners concerned about how the Plan would impact their properties or personal circumstances should not be given more weight than comments from regular Wellingtonians who were in less privileged positions. These comments suggested that the Draft Spatial Plan has the potential to provide affordable and/or conveniently located homes for a large number of people who are currently unable to access these, and therefore the Plan should not be thwarted because of impacts to a “privileged few”. Below are a couple of comments that capture the views of this group:

Don't just listen to the NIMBYs, please. It will just mean fewer people have a home to live in. They are the privileged few, and not representative of the entire community at all.

I fear that too many young people will not make submissions as they are less well organised than home owners trying to protect their own interests to the detriment of young people and renters. Please do not let this cloud your vision and be bold in the final plan you approve.

Question population figures (34)

Comments from this group of respondents were very similar in nature to those discussed in section 1.1. Respondents questioned the accuracy of the proposed population growth figures and felt that the Plan needed to be reviewed based on more realistic figures.

Need more information or clarification (34)

A considerable number of respondents made comments noting that the Draft Spatial Plan was lacking detail or that certain points required further clarification. These comments were varied, ranging from questions about zoning changes in specific areas; to calls for more information about “tradeoffs” (economic and human risks, costs and benefits); or suggestions that the document lacked detail on how it was going to achieve the various goals set out in the Plan.

Several respondents argued that more robust research was required to ensure that the Plan had adequately considered and accounted for a range of issues, such as integration with other planning documents like the NPS-UD or other regional plans. This also included a small number of respondents who felt that the Plan should be amended based on more realistic growth figures since the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020.

Other examples of comments received from this group included:

Wellington City Council (WCC) and Councillors have said that they are bound by the National Policy Statement on Urban Design (NPS-UD) and are legally required to implement the NPS-UD. But up until some weeks ago very few citizens had any knowledge of this all-important NPS-UD.

This needs better quality information; more integrated information. Needs experts who can communicate better and help us (citizens) interpret the information better.

The Spatial Plan appears to only cover housing. It seems to be just part of a plan, to look at community needs in their entirety. Too many gaps regarding infrastructure: the three waters, waste disposal, roading, schools, local green areas, provision for big trees, earthquake resilience.

Appeals to be listened to (23)

A considerable number of comments urged WCC to truly listen to and consider the feedback received from Wellington's residents. These respondents wanted genuine consultation where all feedback was considered, rather than consultation for the sake of "box ticking".

Take a considered approach (18)

A moderate number of respondents wanted to see WCC taking a considered approach to implementing the Plan. The main suggestion put forward by this group was to slow the process down and take the time to fully consider potential consequences of the Plan, rather than rushing to implement it.

General suggestions (15)

A moderate number of respondents made broad suggestions about how WCC should proceed with the Draft Spatial Plan. These comments were mainly general or aspirational in nature, making statements such as, "we need to better with our thinking and make brave new decisions", "This needs strong leadership", or "there needs to be a really clear vision for the life we want to offer people in Wellington". Other, more specific suggestions included:

Treat private property, public facilities and the streetscape as parts of the same whole, so district planning takes better account of more than just individual buildings.

A small number of other suggestions were made that were beyond the project scope.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit (12)

Several respondents thanked WCC for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft Spatial Plan.

Specific changes to the plan (10)

Several respondents suggested specific changes to the Draft Spatial Plan. A separate document has been provided to the Council with verbatim comments from this group. These have not been included in this report as such specific comments do not lend themselves to a synthesised discussion.

Density

332 comments

A very large number of comments were made about density and proposed changes to building heights. These comments were similar in nature to those discussed elsewhere in the report.

Against height increases (206)

Comments against increased building heights were made by a very large group of respondents. Concerns raised included loss of sunlight/increased shading of existing homes and public spaces; negative financial impacts on owners of neighbouring properties; wind tunnelling; earthquake risk; and general opposition to the concept of mid-rise or high-rise buildings, particularly in residential areas. For a more detailed discussion of the arguments presented against high-rise developments, see page [121](#).

Against high density (63)

A substantial number of respondents opposed the proposal to increase density in Wellington. These comments generally expressed the view that increasing density would hamper the quality of life of

existing residents, and that other options should be explored. For a more detailed discussion of the arguments against increasing density, see page [104](#).

For high density (63)

A similar number of respondents made comments in support of increased density. These comments generally felt that higher density living was a necessary step in Wellington's progress, and that it would allow more people to find affordable and conveniently located housing in Wellington. For a more detailed discussion of arguments in support of high-density living, see page [84](#).

Housing

300 comments

Housing was discussed by a very large number of respondents, who echoed comments made elsewhere in this report.

Retain character (137)

A large number of comments discussed the need to protect Wellington's character. These comments tended to take the view that increasing density and changing zoning rules would destroy what residents feel makes Wellington special. For a more detailed discussion of comments discussing the importance of character and heritage in Wellington, see pages [50](#) and [51](#).

Housing general (108)

The need for **affordable housing** to be prioritised was raised by a substantial number of respondents. These respondents wanted WCC to ensure that the Plan delivers affordable, high quality housing for more people, and discussed current issues with sub-standard housing and high rental prices. A moderate number of these comments made the point that at present, the plan does not adequately address the issue of the cost of living in Wellington. In particular, respondents felt that the provision of affordable housing should be prioritised over other issues, to ensure that Wellington becomes a truly liveable city and does not exclude less affluent kiwis in the future.

The overall sentiment from this group can be captured by the following comment:

Students and young people are getting priced out of renting and buying property in Wellington and something needs to be done or inequalities will become more and more entrenched. Please provide us with cheaper, safer, healthier housing rather than preserving the "character" of neighbourhoods that only the few can afford to live in. Thank you

One of these respondents called for the Council to utilise more of its own land and properties to provide affordable housing, and to develop regulations to ensure that developers provide affordable housing options.

A substantial number of comments were also made about housing more generally, calling for **increased housing stock**, and a greater **variety of housing types**. These comments discussed the current housing crisis currently facing Wellington, and argued the importance of creating a variety of housing options to meet the needs of the city's diverse populations. This includes affordable homes of varying sizes to suit families, students, single people, and couples; social housing; and, other alternative housing options such as co-housing or tiny homes.

Suburban character not as important (55)

A substantial number of respondents argued that providing affordable, warm, dry, and healthy homes is more important than preserving the character of Wellington's suburbs. These comments can be captured by the following quote:

Would say that it is more important that we can provide quality, affordable housing stock to Wellingtonians over an unbending focus on maintaining heritage and character. Times change and Wellington needs to continue to change with them in order to do what is best for everyone.

For a more detailed discussion of this topic, see page [53](#).

Development and building process

261 comments

Planning, development, and zoning (136)

A large number of comments were received that related to planning, development, distribution of density, and zoning. These comments were varied and ranged from discussions about where population growth should be distributed, to more general urban planning comments relating to zoning and building design.

A considerable number of comments offered suggestions about which areas should be developed to accommodate population growth. Several suggestions included calls to redevelop existing buildings that were unused or underutilised such as “run down” buildings, ex-commercial sites and car yards. Several respondents also called for WCC to develop areas already zoned for taller buildings such as Taranaki Street and Adelaide Road.

Several respondents wanted urban planning to consider the need for human-scale design, the importance of which a couple of comments argued was highlighted during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Quality was discussed by a small number of respondents who suggested that quality controls needed to be incorporated into the Plan to ensure adequate design, both internal and external.

Other ideas put forward included: that the Plan should apply internationally recognised best practice approaches to intensification; that “character” and “heritage” areas should be excluded as areas designated for intensification; and that council-owned land should be developed.

Below are some examples of other comments made about planning, development, and zoning:

We would like to see some assessment of whether there is opportunity for some different models of development to be investigated and more collaboration between Council, government, the private sector and communities in delivering projects with a mix of private and social housing options.

Council should rationalize (sell) some of its land. Not every park or pocket of bush is worth retaining. It is absurd to focus only on densifying privately owned areas without Council also taking the same approach to its own estate

A Design Authority or design governance group should be established, so new housing development is quality and done well and proposed development in heritage areas can be done well and in balance with the surrounding character areas. Similar models exist in London.

Several respondents made comments about zoning, often making suggestions about zoning changes or requirements for specific areas. These comments have been provided directly to the Council and have not been included in this report as such specific comments do not lend themselves to a synthesised discussion.

Anti-developer sentiment (51)

A sizeable number of respondents were concerned about the motivations and behaviour of developers. These respondents felt that developers did not have Wellington's best interest in mind and were therefore unlikely to provide positive outcomes for the people of Wellington unless compelled to by law or incentives. A more in-depth discussion of this topic and the opinions expressed by this group can be found on page [42](#).

Ways of living changing, COVID (38)

A considerable number of respondents made comments about how the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way that people live and work since the Draft Spatial Plan was first developed, and that these

changes need to be considered in the Plan before it is implemented. A more detailed discussion of these views can be found on page [152](#).

Social issues (16)

Social issues were mentioned by a moderate number of respondents, who discussed issues ranging from homelessness, to cultural awareness and consideration of the elderly and those with disabilities. Around half of these comments were very general in nature, simply questioning where these considerations of social issues were in the Plan. Other, more detailed comments offered specific suggestions, including: that design considerations should be made to prevent sexual violence in public spaces; that the Plan as it stands neglects the way that Māori people and those from other countries and cultures live; and, a need to consider accessibility when designing new developments to ensure that everyone can access housing, including those with disabilities and the ageing population of Wellington. One submission that discussed the importance of intentional public space design stated:

Design of public spaces should be created so that they remove opportunities for sexual harm to occur. Natural and built environment should both prioritise this. Te Aro Park, between Dixon and Manners St, is an example of poor design creating potentially unsafe situations. The roads, and the positioning of the public toilets mean that there is poor lighting, and certain areas act as chokepoints, where it is easy to corner someone. The current water features and stairs mean that it is difficult to move quickly across the open space. It is critical to mitigate, or at bare minimum, discourage such situations through design of public spaces.

Commercial activity (15)

A moderate number of respondents discussed the needs of businesses and commercial operators. These comments were similar in nature to those discussed on page [146](#), calling for the Plan to include information on how it would provide for businesses and commercial operators.

Construction development fatigue (5)

A small number of respondents expressed concern about the risk of “construction fatigue” – the issues associated with constant construction work over a long period of time. These respondents didn't want their lives to be disrupted with ongoing road works and development in their areas, which they foresaw as a result of the Plan.

Infrastructure

133 comments

Issues with existing infrastructure and the need to upgrade this before Wellington can accommodate projected growth were discussed by a large number of respondents. Around half of these comments were about the 3 waters, power and other service infrastructure. Remaining comments were about the need to improve infrastructure generally. These comments were similar in nature to those discussed on pages [143](#) and [144](#).

A moderate number of respondents made comments about the need for roading upgrades prior to development. These comments discussed the issues with congestion, parking, and general transport links around Wellington. These comments were similar in nature to those discussed on page [136](#).

Schools and education facilities were also discussed by a moderate number of respondents, who stressed the need to properly resource and improve existing schools and/or build new ones to accommodate the number of new pupils predicted over the next 30 years. A small number of these comments note that many schools in Wellington are already at or over capacity and struggling with growing rolls.

Spatial plan comments

125 comments

General opposition to Spatial Plan (70)

A substantial number of comments expressed general opposition to the Draft Spatial Plan. These comments were varied, but were often general in nature, expressing broad opposition. They included statements such as, “please rethink this plan”, “this plan will destroy everything that is great about Wellington” or “please reassess your position”. Other, more specific, comments included criticisms of the Plan’s blanket approach to zoning and comments from respondents unhappy with plans for their suburb. Remaining comments were broad and expressed overall dissatisfaction with the Plan.

General support (55)

Generally supportive comments were made by a substantial number of respondents. Again, this feedback was often general in nature, including comments such as “great work!”, “this is urgent”, or “appreciate your work”. Other comments that were more specific included:

I think the plan is generally good and moves Wellington in the right direction of providing more and better housing and protecting the environment.

I'm very happy to see this draft spatial plan being done and strongly support the general direction.

Modes of transport

122 comments

Public transport (61)

Public transport was discussed by a substantial number of respondents. The overall sentiment from this group was that public transport needs to be improved if Wellington is to grow as predicted. These comments were very similar in nature to those discussed on page [135](#).

Car parking (36)

A considerable number of comments were made about car parking. In general, these comments argued that parking is a necessary reality and that the Plan should account for this. Respondents felt that the proposal to remove the requirement to provide parking in new developments would exacerbate existing problems with on-street parking in Wellington’s suburbs. For a more detailed discussion of this issue, see page [137](#).

Active transport (18)

A moderate number of respondents discussed cycling and walking in Wellington. All of these comments called for a more pedestrian and cycle-friendly city. A more detailed discussion of these opinions can be found on page [138](#).

Cars (7)

A small number of comments suggested that the Plan does not adequately acknowledge the need to accommodate cars. These comments suggest that people, particularly those with children or who are less mobile, require cars and therefore also need somewhere to park it, and space to drive.

Parks, green/natural spaces, waterways, and biodiversity

106 comments

Parks, green/natural spaces (58 comments)

A large number of respondents wanted to see more trees, plants, open spaces, and parks around Wellington. The majority of these comments were similar in nature to those already discussed on page [151](#), simply calling for more green and natural spaces generally, noting the physical and mental benefits these have, and the positive environmental impact of green spaces and vegetation. People wanted green space to be provided through parks, community gardens, and plantings in other public spaces. Several

respondents also discussed the idea of regenerative **food production**, suggesting that community gardens and urban farms could play a key role in making Wellington a more resilient, prosperous, and inclusive city. Suggestions also included footpath or rooftop gardens and seaweed farms.

Wildlife and biodiversity (23)

Several respondents discussed wildlife and biodiversity, making calls for the Plan to have a greater focus on protecting native birds, insects, bees, and their habitats. Comments included concerns that **six- to eight-storey** buildings could disrupt bird corridors; that a large number of backyards will be destroyed, reducing habitats for birds and other wildlife; and, general concerns that the Draft Spatial Plan does not go far enough to provide additional greenspace to protect and enhance Wellington's biodiversity.

Waterways (14)

Wellington's waterways were discussed by several respondents, who wanted to see more water management infrastructure put in place to protect the city's streams and waterways from further damage. A few respondents wanted efforts to be made to 'daylight' or uncover more of Wellington's streams, while others expressed concerns that intensifying near the city's waterways would cause problems in the future for water quality and biodiversity. One of the more detailed comments stated:

The reason I do not agree with the proposed approach to protecting our natural environment is not that I am against what is planned but that it fails to identify protecting and enhancing significant streams. If you are going to meet the whaitua obligations you need to be thinking now, how to retreat back from the streams rather than intensifying next to them. If you zone intensification zones next to streams it raises the land value which makes it more difficult to purchase and retire the riparian zones.

Playgrounds and sport and rec facilities (11)

Several comments were made about playgrounds and other sports or recreation facilities. This group of respondents felt that having these spaces available for recreation is important for residents, and that they must be accounted for in the Draft Spatial Plan to ensure that all residents are able to access such facilities. A few comments also called for existing playgrounds to be retained and/or upgraded.

Resilience and future planning

74 comments

Be greener, more resilient (47)

A considerable number of respondents made comments that suggested the Draft Spatial Plan does not go far enough in preparing for the future. These comments tended to focus on the issues facing the world that relate to climate change and sustainability, and argued that WCC needs to take a more proactive approach in managing these risks. These comments were similar in nature to those discussed on page [147](#). Examples of some suggestions made include:

Please look at more futuristic design such as in Singapore that includes a greener approach to the urban environment.

I would like to see climate change addressed more directly in things like this. For example, showing which parts of the city are likely to be affected by sea level rise when and if / how the plans described have taken that into account.

Basically I am fully supportive of this new plan, but really want to focus heavily on the natural environment being maintained. More native tree planting in all new areas (subdivisions should have a legal Clause that native trees must be planted, and other trees/shrubs, wetlands

included), landowner accountability should be monitored to ensure that this new legal requirement occurs.

You want to encourage self-reliance of local communities everywhere. No one should have to walk more than 20 minutes to get anything, ever. If they need to take a long bus to get access to something, that "something" should be built in their own neighbourhood...This is what saves the planet. This is what grows businesses. This is what makes people happy. Do this sort of planning, before it becomes the default due to poor planning

De-prioritise cars (14)

Several respondents wanted to see more of a shift away from car-centric planning. These comments called for greater emphasis on active transport networks for walking and cycling, and improvements to public transport to discourage the use of cars.

Earthquakes, tsunamis, hazards (13)

Earthquake and other natural hazard risks were discussed by several respondents. The main issues discussed by this group were the safety risks of high-rise buildings, and the need to prepare detailed disaster plans to ensure that respondents are able to evacuate the city effectively, and access food, water and other essential supplies, services and infrastructure in the event of a big earthquake or other disaster.

Other

[66 comments](#)

Wellington is great (12)

Several comments made simple statements in support of Wellington as a city. These comments expressed the general sentiment that Wellington is a great city and a great place to live. Most of these comments made general positive statements about living in Wellington, such as:

I love living in Wellington, we have a fantastic city and fantastic warm and friendly vibe. The eateries and culture is simply fantastic and second to none elsewhere in New Zealand.

Theirs plenty of employment and career opportunities in Wellington. Whatever character personality Wellington has will be maintained as long as there continues to be cultural diversity, youth culture, and great restaurants and venues.

Public health (4)

A few comments were received that related to public health. The general consensus among these respondents was that the Plan should better recognise the importance of providing ample and adequate healthcare facilities for a growing population. Two of these responses also acknowledged the increased role that public health services have played during the COVID-19 pandemic, and how this has highlighted the importance of having these services available and able to operate efficiently. Therefore, these comments argue that public health and medical facilities must be considered in the Spatial Plan.

Other (50)

A substantial number of other comments were made that were beyond the project scope or not directly relevant to the consultation or questions asked.

Comments about the engagement process

Across many of the qualitative questions, a very large number of respondents expressed concerns about the engagement process. These concerns have been collated and are summarised below.

The key concerns shared by respondents were:

- > **Perceived lack of consultation**

Respondents felt that consultation on the Draft Spatial Plan was inadequate. These comments tended to be quite general in nature, but indicated that respondents wanted more “meaningful”, “wider”, and “more targeted” consultation, particularly with communities likely to be most impacted by changes. Overall, a common theme throughout the submissions was that people were not inherently opposed to intensification, but that they wanted meaningful engagement and felt this had not been delivered. Respondents called for more certainty and clarity in the information provided, and for a collaborative approach where affected communities or residents’ associations were actively involved in designing solutions that worked for each suburb.

- > **Transparency**

These comments expressed a similar sentiment to those about consultation above, and indicated overall that respondents felt that the engagement process lacked transparency. These comments were mostly general in nature, with people calling for more active community consultation and more complete and comprehensive information about the proposed Plan. A more specific concern shared by a very large number of respondents was the validity of the projected growth figure of 80,000. Comments suggested that this figure was not in line with Statistics New Zealand data, and therefore had doubts about how accurate the figure was. Some respondents argued that the figure was even less likely to be accurate since the COVID-19 pandemic, and therefore called for more clarification on where this figure came from, as well as a revision of the growth predictions post-COVID.

- > **Timing**

Respondents also raised concerns regarding the timing of the Plan and consultation period, calling it “rushed” and noting that during COVID-19 Alert Level 2 it was difficult to hold community meetings. Other comments noted that the stress and economic changes of the pandemic mean people may have found it difficult to prioritise the time-consuming process of submitting on the Plan. People also expressed a sense that the consultation process had been insufficiently advertised, suggesting more communication materials should have been sent to residents and ratepayers, and more/earlier community meetings with councillors should have been arranged. It was also pointed out that media coverage had been taken up with the election and the pandemic, which may have contributed to a lack of awareness that this consultation was occurring.

- > **Issues with survey questions themselves**

Respondents expressed issues with the survey questions themselves, based on their complexity, length, or on the amount of “work” it took to answer them. This was thought to deter segments of the population for whom English is a second language, or those who may find processing complex or technical language difficult. Respondents also commonly felt that the questions did not allow for sufficient nuance in their answers, with many people stating that they agreed with some elements of the Plan and disagreed with others, yet were not able to express this.

- > **Delivery of the survey and information online**

Of the sizeable number of respondents who offered feedback about the website, the survey, or

the consultation documents, the most prevalent points were around the process of accessing all associated information, and of completing the survey online. This process was deemed both restrictive (particularly to those who may lack technological skills) and complex, and at times confusing or overwhelming. Many of these comments inferred, while several directly stated, that print versions of the Plan should have been made available and that this would have enabled a broader spread of people to access it, clearer understanding of the issues in the Plan, and a consistent version on which respondents could base their observations.

> **Aligning it with other plans and infrastructure upgrades**

Respondents felt that the Draft Spatial Plan should be more concretely linked or aligned with other plans, such as Let's Get Wellington Moving or the NPS-UD (National Policy Statement on Urban Development), to ensure that planning for intensification is incorporated sensibly into the overall vision for Wellington's future.

A considerable number of comments made the point that the Draft Spatial Plan needed to be accompanied by clear plans for upgrading public transport and infrastructure, increasing resilience to earthquakes and other hazards, and augmenting parks and areas for biodiversity.

This report has been prepared by:

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