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**REPORT 1**  
*(1215/52/IM)*

## **DRAFT PRINCIPLES FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN WELLINGTON CITY**

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

To seek committee endorsement of a set of Draft Principles for Urban Development. The Draft Principles will guide further background work on the Urban Development Strategy, and will be consulted on with the Draft Regional Growth Framework in July.

### **2. Executive Summary**

There are eight Draft Principles. A brief explanation of each principle is included in this report and a more detailed illustrated explanation will be provided in the Committee briefing on 4 May. The Draft Principles are:

1. Sustainable rural uses and protection of natural systems within the urban environment
2. Building on what we treasure –enhancing sense of place
3. Permissive land use approach in the Central Area and suburban centres
4. Urban containment, and growth through intensification in appropriate areas
5. Development focused on appropriate centres and nodes along main transport routes
6. Managed infill development within existing residential areas
7. High accessibility and transport choice
8. High quality urban design -buildings and spaces

A final set of principles for urban development in Wellington City will be informed by:

- Community Outcomes (process underway)
- The results of consultation on the Draft Regional Growth Framework
- Consultation on the Draft Principles (with the Draft Regional Growth Framework)

### **3. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Endorse the Draft Principles for use in further technical work on the Urban Development Strategy*
3. *Agree to the Draft Principles being consulted on with the Draft Regional Growth Framework.*

## **4. Background**

### ***4.1 How have the Draft Principles been developed?***

The Draft Principles derive from, or are informed by the following sources. These are expanded on in the attachment to this report.

- Existing LTCCP outcome statements for the built environment
- Objectives of the District Plan
- Relevant Council strategies and policies
- The Urban Design Protocol
- Trends and issues in Wellington
- Relevant information arising from the first phases of the Wellington Regional Strategy.

The Draft Principles have been the subject of significant cross-council discussion and were also discussed at the Councilor Retreat in March.

### ***4.2 Will the Draft Principles support the Wellington Regional Strategy?***

Draft principles for the Regional Strategy will be presented to the Committee later in May. These will be high level statements about the qualities sought in each of the main subject areas –economy and urban form. Regarding urban form the draft regional principles are expected to address the following themes:

- quality urban design of places and spaces
- accessibility
- protection of natural systems and sense of place
- co-existence of built and natural environment elements
- adaptability

These themes are evident in, and addressed by the Draft Principles for Urban Development and a high degree of fit is anticipated. The degree of fit will be a matter for further consideration with each successive stage of the Regional Strategy.

### ***4.3 How will the Draft Principles be used?***

The Draft Principles provide a basis for further work on the Urban Development Strategy, including a consideration of the sort of spatial outcomes the Principles will lead to, and their feasibility.

Specifically, we will be pursuing the following lines of enquiry:

- Where do we anticipate future development and what form will it take if we apply these principles?
- How much capacity for growth is there in Wellington?

- What sort of transport systems and transport capacity do we want and need, to support our desired urban form?
- To what degree are we constrained by environmental factors?

Answers to these questions will come partly from the various workstreams of the Regional Strategy. However, our own lines of enquiry provide the means to address these questions to the degree of detail needed for Council to fully understand the choices we are making.

Following completion of these lines of enquiry we will hold a workshop with Councillors to explain and discuss the results of this work.

#### **4.4 *When will we consult on the Draft Principles?***

The Draft Principles will be consulted on with the Draft Regional Growth Framework in July. Specific urban form directions and spatial outcomes supporting these Principles will follow further Councillor input and be presented for public consultation in the LTCCP next year. A final Urban Development Strategy will then be completed and will provide a graphic illustration of desired long term urban form for Wellington City consistent with Community Outcomes and the final Regional Strategy.

#### **Indicative timetable for completion of the Urban Development Strategy**

SPC endorsement of Draft Principles	5 May 05
Feasibility analysis (lines of enquiry)	May – June 05
Consult on Draft Principles	July
Define draft urban development goals and directions (spatial / physical outcomes)	August -October
Consult on draft urban development goals and directions (as part of the LTCCP)	March 06
Complete Urban Development Strategy	June 06

## **5. Discussion**

### **5.1 *Explanation of Draft Principles***

These explanations will be supplemented with illustrations and examples in the presentation on 4 May.

#### **Principle 1: Sustainable rural uses and protection of natural systems within the urban environment**

Growth must not diminish our natural capital. In rural and urban areas the natural environment is a key part of our sense of place and also provides a range of

environmental services (eg. natural cycles), and existing and potential economic and social benefits. These values and benefits must be acknowledged and carefully managed as a bottom-line requirement for future urban development.

**Principle 2: Building on what we treasure - enhancing sense of place**

Wellington's success as a city relates closely to its sense of place. Wellington has a dramatic setting, is compact, with good public transport. It is at the centre of the nation and is the national capital. It has high quality public spaces and recognises the legacy of the past through the protection and conservation of its natural and cultural heritage. Future growth and development of the city must protect and enhance these qualities.

**Principle 3: Permissive land use approach in the Central Area and suburban centres**

Commercial, office and industrial uses are encouraged to occur as of right in the Central Area and suburban centres adjacent to main transport routes (subject to appropriate conditions). Opportunities for residential intensification should be encouraged in major centres. Maintaining this permissive approach will allow building owners and developers to respond readily to changing market needs and at the same time maximise compactness and travel choice.

**Principle 4: Urban containment and growth through intensification in appropriate areas**

This principle builds on our current strategy of containing development within the established edges of the city. The Outer Green Belt and rural areas effectively establish clear edges to the city. The resulting compact urban form minimises transport distances, makes public transport more viable and results in better use of existing infrastructure. Greenfields developments provided for in the Northern Growth Management Plan are consistent with the containment principle in terms of scale and location.

**Principle 5: Development focused on appropriate centres and nodes along main transport routes**

The principle of containment must be matched by a development focus on appropriate centres and nodes along main transport routes, particularly for commercial and retail activities. This will strengthen the existing centre hierarchy, provide a focus for investment in public space, reduce transport costs and avoid potential for major retail development to be located away from existing centres and nodes. This principle also ensures that most areas –particularly the existing residential neighbourhoods are areas of relative stability within the wider urban environment.

**Principle 6: Managed infill development within existing residential areas**

This principle goes hand in hand with the containment principle and is necessary to provide housing choice and ensure existing suburban populations do not decline. Infill is the subdivision and development of vacant land and developable sites within existing residential areas. To be sustainable it must be done in a careful and considered manner, taking account of local sense of place values and the potential

effects on neighbouring property owners. A managed approach to infill may result in some areas, particularly where valued suburban character is potentially threatened, having future infill capacity constrained.

**Principle 7: High accessibility and transport choice**

Good access from home to shops, places of work and play and to services is essential in any successful city economy. This is reliant on recognising the roles of all types of transport (car, bus, train, cable car, ferries, commercial vehicles, walking and cycling) and the ‘interconnectedness’ of road, pedestrian and passenger transport systems, locally, city and region-wide.

**Principle 8: High quality urban design –buildings and spaces**

A focus on quality in urban design is critical to successfully applying the other seven principles and achieving sustainable long term urban development. Quality urban design should integrate the planning of buildings and spaces, and the networks that connect them, at all scales across the city.

## **6. Conclusion**

These Draft Principles address the question of what this Council considers the best form of urban development for Wellington City. It is important for the Council to continue to think about this issue as it inputs into the Wellington Regional Strategy. In turn the Draft Principles will be informed by the Regional Strategy and the Community Outcomes and it is appropriate that these are seen as parallel processes with clear linkages and ultimately consistent results.

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Attachment: *Further background information*

# Further Background Information on the Draft Principles for Urban Development

## 1. Existing LTCCP outcome statements for the built environment

Liveable City:	Wellington is a great place to live and offers a variety of places to live, work and play within a high quality public environment
Network City:	Wellington is easy to get around, pedestrian-friendly and has a highly interconnected street system
Memorable City:	Wellington is a memorable, beautiful city, celebrating its distinctive landmarks, defining features and heritage
Compact City:	Wellington is a compact city with mixed land-use, structured around a vibrant city and suburban centres and connected by major transport corridors
Beautiful City:	Wellington's form reflects the unique character and beauty of the harbour and hills.

These outcome statements will be reviewed in light of the new Community Outcomes.

## 2. Objectives of the District Plan

The District Plan objectives are:

- Protect and enhance the natural or 'green' areas of the city. This is chiefly all the land beyond the outer green belt, including the rural and open space zones, and conservation sites.
- Encourage more intensive and mixed-use development within the existing urban area to achieve better use of transport, infrastructure and energy – in other words, a more sustainable city.
- Improve the overall quality of the built environment from an urban design perspective.
- Reduce the risks associated with natural and technological hazards.
- Safeguard the natural environment – land, air and water – from pollution and contamination

### 3. Relevant Council strategies and policies

In addition to the District Plan the key strategies and policies that have informed the Draft Principles are:

- Creative Wellington Vision and the Economic Development Strategy

Reinforces the importance of vibrant centres as an ingredient in a successful city economy. Supports mixed uses in centres and integration of transport and land use planning to increase economic efficiencies.

- Transport Strategy

Defines critical deficiencies in existing transport networks and services. Promotes modal choice and both asset and non-asset based strategies to build efficiency, quality and capacity. Seeks to reduce car dependency.

- Sustainability Framework

Defines 10 sustainability principles including the *De-coupled growth principle* –that economic growth should be fostered in a way that de-couples it from the degradation of environmental and social capital. Also defines priority action areas including sustainable transport solutions, sustainable energy solutions and sustainable living practices.

- Capital Spaces

Defined a strategic network of open space from the Waterfront to the Outer Green Belt. Supports and reinforces the principle of urban containment and ensures the protection of natural areas and a range of open spaces with the urban environment.

- Sense of Place Study

Seeks to enhance compact urban form, preserve CBD intensity, protect ridgelines & coastline, enhance accessibility, and ensure high quality public spaces.

- 1994 Urban Design Strategy

Provided a vision and blue print for development of the Central Area. Has helped shape the Central Area and provided a strategy for investment in public spaces, including the Civic Centre and the Waterfront.

## **4. The Urban Design Protocol**

Prepared by the Ministry for the Environment as part of the Government's Sustainable Development Programme of Action under the Urban Affairs Portfolio. Wellington City Council is a signatory to the Urban Design Protocol. At its core the protocol identifies six essential design qualities:

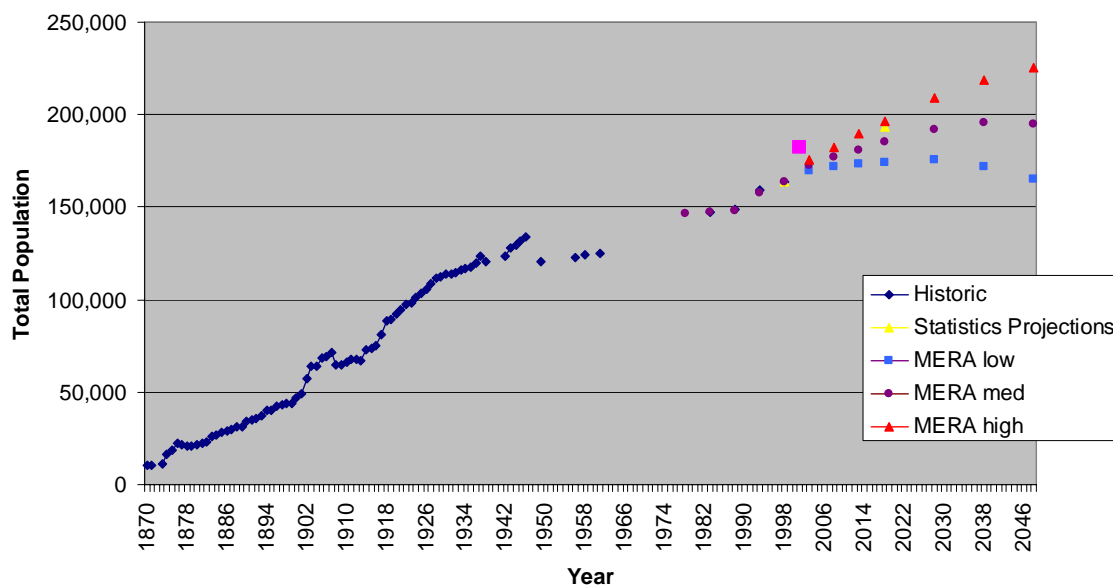
Context:	Seeing that buildings, places and spaces are part of whole towns and cities
Character:	Reflecting and enhancing the distinctive character, heritage and identity of our urban environment
Choice:	Ensuring diversity and choice for people
Connections:	Enhancing how different networks link together for people
Custodianship:	Ensuring design is environmentally sustainable, safe and healthy
Collaboration:	Communicating and sharing knowledge across sectors, professions and with communities.

## **5. City Profile –trends and issues in Wellington -highlights**

### **People and housing**

Wellington City's population is expected to continue to grow at or above historic rates of growth in the short to medium term, with the fastest growth in or around the Central Area and some suburban centres. Eventually this growth may level off in response to global demographic and economic trends.

### Long Term Population Growth for Wellington City

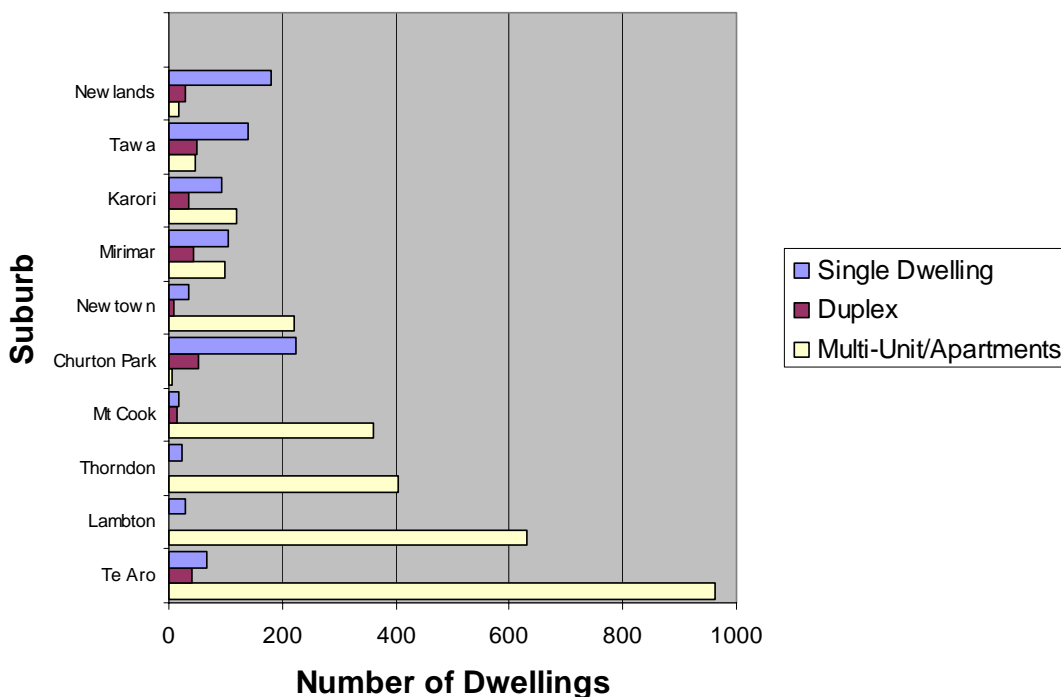


Source: Historic Population, Wellington City Archives, Projections MERA & Statistics NZ

Demand for new households will grow at a faster rate than the population because of declining household size and changing housing choices.

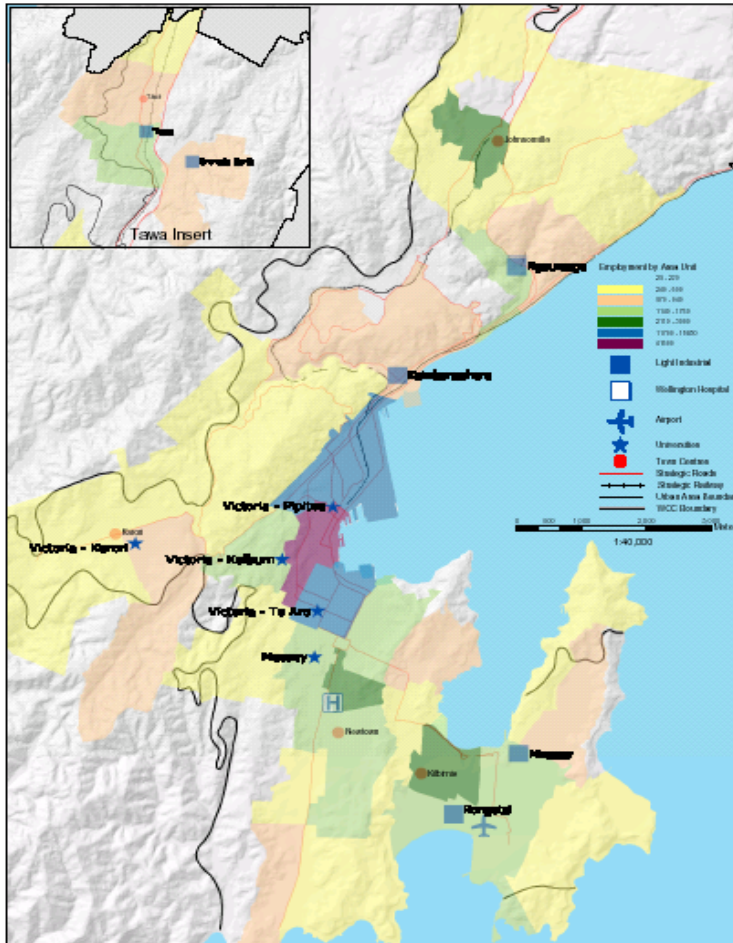
The following chart shows recent past growth in dwellings and the scale of the growth in central Wellington apartments as compared with single dwellings in new suburban areas.

### New Dwellings 2000-2004 Top Ten Suburbs



Source: Wellington City Council Building Consent data 2000-2004

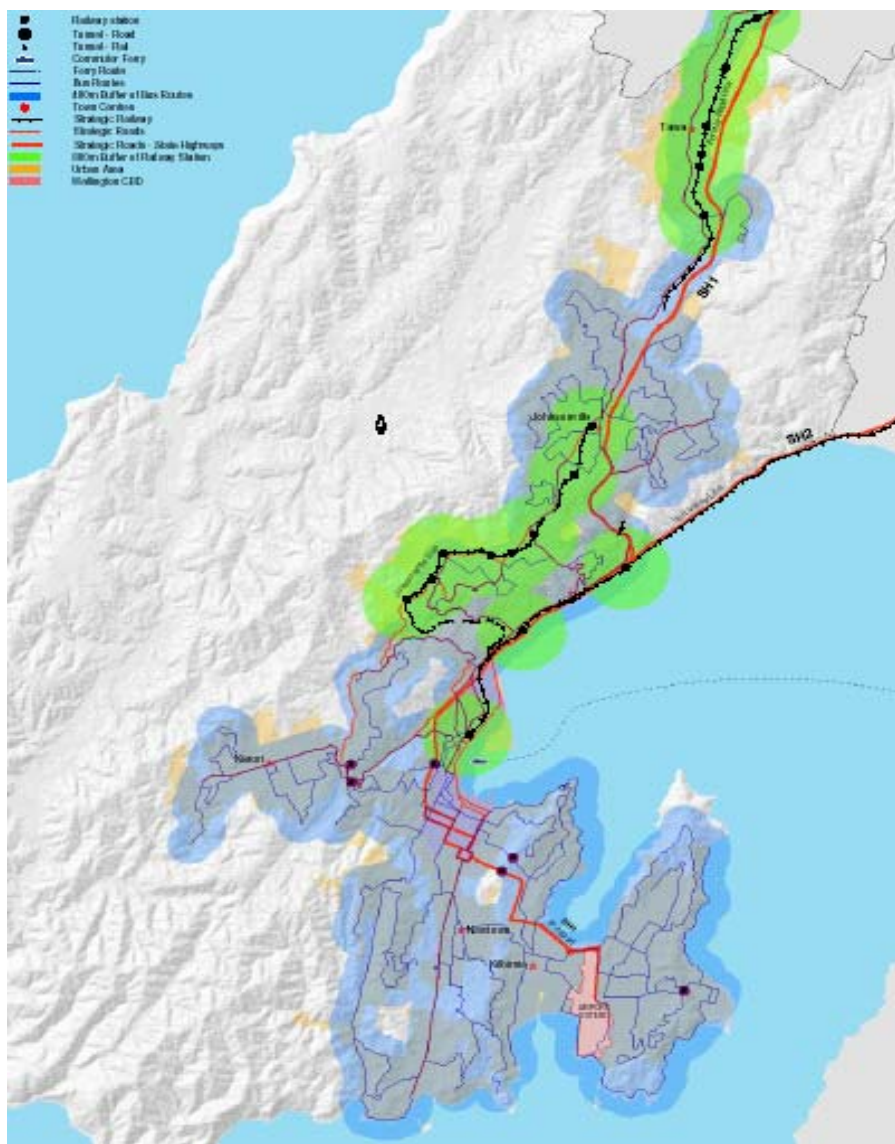
## Employment and economy



Wellington City and much of the region's workforce is located in Central Wellington. However the areas immediately north and south of the CBD and the centres of Johnsonville, Newtown and Kilbirnie are becoming increasingly important as secondary work centres. All these centres are situated along major transport routes.

## Transport

Wellington has a well established transport system comprising the roading network, rail, the airport and sea ports. Public transport is predominantly rail in the northern part of the city and between Wellington and other regional centres. South of the railway station the main mode is buses and between the two modes Wellingtonians enjoy good proximity to these networks. However there are significant quality and capacity issues that are being addressed both regionally and locally. Future urban form will be highly dependant on the quality and capacity of the future transport systems, particularly public transport systems along the CBD corridor (including the Johnsonville rail line).



## **Supporting Information**

### **1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome**

*The Urban Development Strategy is one the Council's seven principal strategies. Linkages with the Community Outcomes and Regional Strategy processes have been considered in this report.*

### **2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact**

*No Annual Plan reference.*

### **3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations**

*None*

### **4) Decision-Making**

*The decision sought provides guidance to officers only. Decisions on actual directions will be sought within and following the LTCCP in 2006*

### **5) Consultation**

#### **a) General Consultation**

*Consultation on the draft principles will take place in July.*

#### **b) Consultation with Maori**

*Maori organisations will be consulted on these draft principles in July.*

### **6) Legal Implications**

*None*

### **7) Consistency with existing policy**

*Highly consistent*