

Where will Auckland Grow?

RESOURCE BOOKLET

Resource A -

Key ideas from the public meeting

Two key viewpoints have emerged over this issue:

- professional urban planners and some of the council, want to encourage development of a more compact city, limiting urban sprawl
- many community groups, individuals and developers want land to be made available on the city edges, allowing for further low-density growth.

Three possible courses of action are:

Action 1	Action 2	Action 3
Plan for a city that continues to grow in area to accommodate the growing population.	Plan for a compact future city with higher density living within existing urban boundaries.	Plan to accommodate the growing population in a satellite city away from the existing urban area.

Resource B – Background information

Arbury, J. 2005. From *Urban sprawl to compact city: an analysis of urban growth management in Auckland*. MA thesis (Geography and Environmental Science), University of Auckland

Urban decentralisation (city growth outwards) was initially a great improvement for millions of city dwellers, who during the early twentieth century were able to move away from the often polluted and crowded downtown areas of industrialising cities to newly created suburbs. These suburbs were serviced initially by trains and trams, and then by the increasingly all-pervading automobile from the 1920s onwards, but most particularly after the Second World War. The relationship between urban decentralisation and an improved standard of living has perhaps been reversed in the past 30 years due to traffic congestion and an increasingly homogeneous suburban landscape, yet decentralisation remains popular and reasonably attractive at the individual level, even though its communal level effects are highly destructive. A challenge for future city planning is that people prefer themselves to live in leafy suburbs on the city edge but want all the services and facilities that the city offers to be within easy reach. People worry about high rates, traffic congestion and the need for the city to be sustainable, but taking personal action and changing their lifestyle to solve these problems is another matter and is resisted.

Features of urban sprawl

Four main characteristics can be associated with the term 'urban sprawl'. These characteristics are leapfrog or scattered development, commercial strip development, low density development, and large expanses of single-use development.

Leapfrog and scattered developments go beyond the urban fringe to create built-up communities that are isolated from the city by areas of undeveloped land. In many ways these can be seen as the most extreme examples of urban sprawl, with a highly inefficient use of the land, and a greater need to build highways and other infrastructure to service the outlying areas. In time these communities get absorbed into the city.

Commercial strip development is characterised by busy main roads lined with shopping centres, gas stations, fast food restaurants, drive-thru banks, office complexes, parking lots, and many large signs. There is little, if any, emphasis placed on the needs of pedestrians.

The third, and perhaps most commonly recognised aspect of urban sprawl, is its low density. Buildings in 'sprawl' developments are generally single-story, widely spaced and with lots of parking spaces and roadways.

The final aspect of urban sprawl, the explosion of single-use development and an almost exclusive reliance on automobiles for transportation, is just as important as density in the identification of urban sprawl, especially the negative environmental, economic and social effects that it contributes to.

The compact city

The compact city design looks to limit peripheral urban development, and instead focuses on using land within the existing city in a more efficient manner, especially in relation to redeveloping unused sites, or to use low-density areas at higher-densities.

The compact city provides as an alternative to urban sprawl. It focuses on limiting the peripheral expansion of urban areas, and instead looks to direct development within the existing urban area by intensifying land use: increasing the densities of existing urban areas and redeveloping underused or abandoned sites within the city. The compact city is designed to make more efficient use of existing land resources and infrastructure, as well as reducing automobile use as public transportation becomes more viable at higher urban densities.

Auckland housing development fast-tracked

07/05/2014 www.stuff.co.nz

A new wave of Auckland housing developments will see 18,000 extra homes built across the city. The Government and Auckland Council today announced 41 Special Housing Areas in a bid to fast-track development and ease the city's housing shortage.

Among the areas listed were key growth corridors, as well as some of the city's most exclusive suburbs.

Auckland Mayor Len Brown said it would help create more affordable homes in what was a "hugely challenging market". He said seven strategic areas were chosen for their transport links and access to other infrastructure. The strategic areas included Albany, Takanini, New Lynn, Great North Road, Otahuhu Coast and Flat Bush, which will all yield more than 1000 homes. Flat Bush was the highest forecast growth area with a potential of 4470 new homes.

Mt Eden, Sandringham, Remuera, Takapuna, Helensville, Mt Albert, Pt Chevalier, Parnell, Grey Lynn, and Beach Haven were also listed in the latest batch of Special Housing Areas. Resource and building consents for the new homes could be made as early as June.

Housing minister Nick Smith said the latest batch of Special Housing Areas was the largest yet, and would bring the total homes approved under the scheme to 33,500.

Smith said the first homes consented under the Special Housing Areas would be ready to move into by the end of the year.

The announcement formed part of the Auckland Housing Accord, which was jointly agreed to by the council and the Government last year.

A competition is also set to be launched to allow architects to design medium-density housing prototypes at the Mount Eden Special Housing Area.

BUILD UP NOT OUT

A light manufacturing business in Mt Eden could become the blueprint to Auckland's future housing developments.

Nestled beside a mechanics, in industrial Akepiro Street, the building will be turned into 18 high-density houses under Special Housing Area approval. Its design will be open to a competition, to allow architects to design their own housing block.

Incoming president of the New Zealand Institute of Architects Pip Cheshire said the winning design would be the one that transforms the site into a liveable space.

"I'm particularly interested in how you build more densely without sacrificing value," he said.

"Ultimately in the city fringe area it's about building up rather than out. "How do we get density and have quality of life, and room to move that we've traditionally had?"

Smith said the government were committed to higher density housing, but he said there would need to be a mix.

He said the 18,000 houses would include apartment blocks, town houses, and traditional two and three bedroom homes. "You can't have just 100 per cent one way or the other," he said.

The shape of things to come in Auckland

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Lorraine Tai loves her new house. She and her partner Patrick Rankin, and their 11-month-old son Ollie, moved into their two-bedroom first home in west Auckland just over a month ago. The semi-detached weatherboard building sits on a brand new street in the uncompleted Hobsonville Point subdivision on the old air base. At just



4.4m wide on a 209sqm section, it looks narrow from the street but manages to fit in a spacious kitchen and living area across most of the ground floor, opening on to a small back yard. Upstairs there are two bedrooms with double wardrobes, a bathroom with a separate shower and bath and a laundry tucked into a double cupboard. Lorraine, who was brought up in nearby Kumeu, likes the easy access to the soon-to-be-redeveloped Westgate shopping centre and the fact that she can take Ollie to work with her mother, running a cafe and catering business at a Huapai cafe. Patrick takes the West Harbour ferry to work in town and a service direct from the subdivision is due to start at the end of the year. On the face of it, the family is the ideal advertisement for Auckland Council's "compact city" vision of how we will live in 30 years time. Their house, which measures 98sqm across both storeys, is less than half the size of an average Auckland home. At just under \$400,000, it flies in the face of recent trends towards four- or five-bedroom new homes which cost \$600,000 or more. And the development gets top marks from the council as a model for its master plan to fight urban sprawl and the affordable housing crisis. "Hobsonville Point shows that people are prepared to accept more affordable, attached intensified houses, as long as these houses are well-designed, and the area has high amenity, and a range of housing types and values," says the council's Auckland Plan, approvingly.

If the wording sounds a little defensive, it reflects a long, bitter struggle over the city's future, driven by predictions of huge changes. Auckland planners warn that up to a million extra people will live in the city in the next three decades, requiring an extra 400,000 homes - close to double the current level of 507,000. They aim to put 120,000 of these houses on rural land on Auckland's outskirts and fit the other 280,000 inside the current city limit. That means about four out of 10 Aucklanders will live in smaller homes, generally joined up or much closer to their neighbours. The region's first Auckland Plan admits this will be a huge shift away from the traditional Kiwi detached home with its own section. It sets out ambitious targets; more than 60 per cent of new homes will need to be attached by 2041 and attached houses overall will increase from about 25 per cent to an estimated 40 per cent of all the city's housing. But though the planners believe Aucklanders are increasingly happy to live in terraced homes and apartments, Lorraine doesn't share that long term vision for her family. "I see this as shorter-term for us because as soon as Ollie gets bigger, I don't think I'd like to live in such a high-density area." She says Hobsonville Point was always more about

location and its investment potential as a rental property for her and Patrick, a property manager. Within about five years, once she is back to her original job as a barrister, they want a bigger three- or four-bedroom house with more space outside for Ollie and possibly a brother or sister to play. She agrees in theory with the council's efforts to stop the city sprawling further out and thinks high density living sounds appealing in the inner city - "you're willing to make more compromises in lifestyle to be in the midst of where it's all happening" - but she wonders about its attractions in the outer suburbs.

Others have been more forthright. Property Council member Brady Nixon last year described the council's draft plan as "somewhere between a lucid dream and a near-death hallucination". The public backlash started in January when the Herald published details of a confidential analysis, which showed computer-generated impressions of the amount of high-density development required to meet council targets.

An image of Northcote Point with four-storey apartment blocks stretching round to the Chelsea sugar refinery in Birkenhead - inspired by Cremorne on Sydney's North Shore - drew a stunned reaction from the local board and compact city critic councillor Dick Quax, who said he was "gobsmacked". Board deputy chairman Nick Kearney said the result was partly predictable, given the compact city guidelines, but it would "go down like a bucket of cold sick in my area". The analysis by property developer Patrick Fontein and architects Jasmax also made far-reaching predictions for other suburbs, such as Te Atatu ("the entire peninsula needs up-zoning... could be a great intensification hotspot for the next 20-40 years"), Mt Albert ("a litmus test for political resilience") and a medium and high-rise boom in Panmure and Glen Innes ("the entire Tamaki area is ripe for redevelopment and should be rezoned").

But despite its enthusiasm for some development opportunities, the report's wider conclusion - shared to varying degrees by the Property Council, the Productivity Commission and the Government - is that the council's plan is unworkable, even in its toned-down final version. Critics predict the zoning changes and housing action plans on offer will come nowhere near close to providing the extra 280,000 homes required within city boundaries. If the council goes for broke and allows waves of terraced housing and low- to medium-rise apartments to wash across whole suburbs (the only way to achieve its aims, according to the Jasmax report) there will be a huge community and political backlash. More likely, say developers, the outcry will never happen because there is not enough buyer demand, building industry capacity or vacant land for this kind of housing and the planners will have to go back to the drawing board.

Nixon says community reaction to current high-density developments shows what a tough sell the compact city strategy will be. For instance, he says, a plan to extend Milford's shopping mall and add three luxury apartment blocks up to 16 storeys high has attracted about 3800 submissions, mainly from bitterly opposed local residents. "It'll be interesting to see how the politicians deal with it because they tend to say in one breath; 'We want intensification' but then in the next breath; 'As long as it happens somewhere else'."

Mayor Len Brown says he understands many Aucklanders have become wary of high-density housing after a rash of poor quality "shoebox" developments, especially in the inner city, but believes they will come round if they are shown well-designed projects where they can imagine themselves living. "I know there's some poor examples. We want to use those as motivating factors to ensure that in the new united Auckland we put a high focus on quality. We will... celebrate

where we've done well and really lean on those who are not building to the quality that we would expect."

AUCKLAND TAKES up a lot of room for a city of only 1.5 million people. It stretches 74km from Waiwera to Drury, covering 55,000ha but is relatively sparsely populated, with only 10 homes on every hectare.

At this rate of growth, it could gobble up another 32,000ha by 2041 and, as deputy mayor Penny Hulse put it last month, Aucklanders don't want to see their city "sprawling from Northland to Hamilton". Local politicians and planners have been battling to stop this sprawl since 1999, when the compact city concept was born. The former Auckland Regional Council agreed with local councils that three-quarters of all new housing would be confined to city limits, with only a quarter outside them. Crucially the new housing would be herded into "high-density centres", close to public transport. The plan partly worked - as apartments boomed in the next decade the proportion of multi-unit homes jumped to 25 per cent - but most developments were in coastal suburbs like Orewa and Takapuna, well away from the planners' favoured railway lines. When the new Super City, headed by Brown, cemented the 75/25 split in its September draft plan, worried property developers launched a charm counter-offensive.

Property Council chief executive officer Connal Townsend headed a group which met senior planners, arguing the council had to base its intensification target on evidence but the land it required to build 300,000 extra houses within city limits did not exist. The meetings led to the Jasmx-D4 analysis, which pointed out in deliberately provocative terms how many multi-storey buildings would be needed across the city skyline for the plan to succeed. The council commissioned an independent review of the findings by property development consultant Martin Udale, which confirmed the problem and threw in some extra dire warnings for good measure. Udale predicted the plan would require the building industry to quadruple the average supply of attached housing it had delivered in the past 20 years, which was not credible and could create further pressure to build on greenfields sites in the countryside.

Assuming four new houses could be developed for each existing house, 100,000 homes would have to be demolished and replaced with 400,000 new ones. And if the council intensified to an optimistic 35 homes per hectare, it would need to find 8000 to 10,000 hectares - about half to two thirds the area of the Auckland isthmus - for the extra housing. "Put another way, a land area requiring more than 300 Wynyard Quarters or more than 30 Tamakis within the existing urban area."

The council responded with some concessions in March. The intensification target dropped to 70 per cent, with provision to fall to 60 per cent if necessary. More significantly from the developers' point of view, large chunks of most suburbs were made available for the first time and the timeframe also slipped back. Under the revised plan, the council still aims to more than double the current house building rate to 10,000 homes a year in the next decade, then almost double it again to 18,000 homes a year from 2022 to 2031 - which the plan admits is "very challenging" - before levelling off slightly to 12,000 a year in the final decade. In other words the target looks as far-fetched as ever, yet Townsend is full of praise for the council, describing the plan as pretty good with a reasonable chance of success. "We don't know about the ratios - 75/25 or 60/40 - they're not important. The priority is to get denser housing off the ground and to do it in places where you're actually going to be able to sell it."

So are the developers happy because the delayed timeframe and five-yearly progress reviews means the targets could fall to more realistic numbers if intensification is slower than forecast? Absolutely, says Townsend. The Property Council also agreed with council officials that intensification still has a bad image with many home buyers and it would be better to start with fewer well-designed projects in the first decade to work up demand slowly. "Let's start off gently and get those good examples in place first, rather than try to do it all on day one, which we thought would be quite impractical and quite self-destructive because it would alienate people and destroy the market."

AUCKLAND COUNCIL chief planning officer Roger Blakeley acknowledges the plan requires "radical change" but says the council is already working hard with building companies to revive the industry and produce smaller, more affordable homes like those at Hobsonville Point.

He talks enthusiastically of smaller, mass-produced housing by large companies, which could knock \$150,000 off house prices. The council is also working with developers to get the most out of its own property and is considering faster consent times, cheaper fees and more flexible zoning rules, which may allow developers to put more units on a site in exchange for more open space.

Nixon applauds the intention but believes it won't have much effect. He says most local builders are one-man operators, who won't touch apartments or most multi-unit housing because the building materials and add-ons (such as stairwells, lifts and carparks) made them too expensive. "You can build an apartment building for around \$3500 a metre in construction costs, you can build a really top-end signature home for \$1500 a metre. It's just not rocket science that you're going to get more for your money from a house." From the buyer's point of view, he says, a two-bedroom apartment costs as much as a three-bedroom house, yet banks demand a 30 per cent deposit for apartments or unit-title terrace housing because the land is not owned freehold. As a result, virtually all apartment buyers have been investors using their own homes as security and this market has dried up in the economic downturn. He predicts a modest increase in high-density housing in the foreseeable future, mainly through more subdivision of back sections and freehold terrace housing, and continuing pressure to free up land outside the urban limit. Udale is slightly more optimistic. He says intensification in bigger Australian cities over the past 20 to 40 years suggests market forces will eventually achieve what Auckland planners and politicians cannot. "As the city grows the trade-off between living on the periphery and closer to the middle will become more obvious in terms of the time it takes to get there, congestion and so on. At 1.5 million people we are just getting to the start point... Once we get to 2 million people, I think those choices will become that much more obvious again."

My Auckland: Flat Bush

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Alana Hiddink tells Catherine Smith why she and her husband Geoff love living in one of Auckland's newest suburbs with their boys Ashton (8) and Harry (3)



We bought a property here after three years in Cockle Bay, and before that in Tauranga and Titirangi. It's called Mission Heights. We loved that it was brand new, we saw it as a chance to start something new, be in the hub of a new community. I like new housing. When we first arrived we could see up Whitford Rd to the farms, but now the development has moved in - though there are still the lifestyle blocks. There is farmland for sale all around, but people are still friendly and wave and chat over the fence.

We love the Fo Guang Shan Temple, it is a favourite of ours for lunch, with its massive buddha and a great vegetarian food. I've never been to Asia, but this is good food, fresh ingredients and really family friendly.

We don't have any local shops yet - we've been told there'll be eight shops and a cafe on the Jeffs and Murphys Rd corner soon. But in the meantime, there's a cafe based inside Ormiston Hospital - I have found my new local until one is built in Mission Heights. Excellent coffee and service.

The school is the hub of the community, that and our Gateway faith-based community. The school runs from primary to junior college, it's a massive complex and now that the native plantings are all up, it's looking good. Harry goes to the newly opened kindergarten, we love it.

This area has gone from a predominantly farming community to about 35 per cent Indian and Asian - Japanese, Malaysian. So we get all the food, Harry comes home with henna painting on his hand, and we've embraced teachers from all over the world.

There are no athletics clubs yet - the Rongomai club will be opening soon on Te Irirangi Drive - but we border Barry Curtis Park. It's massive and really cool, we love it. It's fantastic and close to school.

To train for the half-marathon I can walk to Point View Reserve and the reservoir, so that's good. There are running tracks up to the water tower, cycleways, a playground and more cycle tracks through the green belt. It's so safe for kids.

Botany Downs shopping is only five minutes away, but we're also close to Whitford and we can go to Clevedon for the markets. Weekends for us are attending Gateway, taking the boys to Barry Curtis Park on the bikes or meeting up with friends. We have a very good Japanese restaurant, Taka, and my favourite spas for massage and beauty.

My latest project is for a community garden here - there are lots of elderly people around, and lots of business owners for sponsorship and seedlings. Stephanie Alexander from the Garden to Table project is my hero, I'm so impressed with what they're doing at East Tamaki Primary.

I think it's great for older people to be involved with the kids in a garden like that, it all makes us part of a community together.

Auckland mayor stands firm against urban sprawl

Auckland's mayor is standing firm against urban sprawl in the face of calls for development outwards to help cope with population growth.

Auckland Council's Draft Unitary Plan emphasises creating high density housing with apartments, rather than building new suburbs in outer areas.

The plan has been driven by projections that 2.5 million people will be living in New Zealand's biggest city by 2040.

An urban planning consultant, Phil McDermott, says developing more land away from the CBD is a sensible alternative to the council's high density plan.

"We have to expand north and south," McDermott told ONE News.

"Expanding upwards will put a lot of pressure on ageing infrastructure, it will be very expensive and of course it's not what Aucklanders want," he said.

The Government also maintains there is room for some outward spread.

But the mayor, Len Brown, has no time for 'urban sprawl'.

"We have got best analysis, both internally and externally, from the international global marketplace who say to us 'You've got your plan right. Drive it through'," Brown said.

McDermott says the council's approach limits the opportunities for Aucklanders.

"A relatively small group of people are telling a very large group of people how they should live, or at least limiting their opportunities," he said.

Another longtime campaigner says spreading Auckland out is possible, through a rapid rail line built along State Highway 1.

David Thornton of the No More Rates lobby group says this would give speedy access to outlying suburbs and towns, and viable satellite cities could be created.

"State Highway 1 is the spine along which Auckland is developed anyway. It's already there and it's a logical strip to follow north to south," Thornton said.

Supporters of the case for a rail line say it goes beyond politics and substantial cost. They say it is about giving Aucklanders a real choice about where and how they live.

They point to the development of Pokeno, 60 kilometres south of Auckland as a concept that could ease pressure on the crowded city. Homes are going up and a milk processing plant that is yet to be built will provide local jobs.

"To my mind, we don't know enough about the future to be able to lock it down in the way the Unitary Plan does," McDermott said.

But the mayor maintains the council's plan is the best way forward for Auckland.

"All of the global data suggests that the way that we're proposing to go forward is the best way, best practice and best in terms of outcomes for our city," Brown said.

Orewa watches with interest

At Orewa, north of Auckland, much of the talk on the bowling club green these days - apart from the game - is about what the council's Unitary Plan means for the players.

"I don't want to see it another Gold Coast," one bowler said.

Another said: "You've got to be progressive otherwise places like even the bowling club would die." They are happy about more people sharing their slice of coastal paradise and there are plenty of new homes at Orewa.

The bowlers also quite like the idea of taking a train instead of the car.

"I imagine it would be good. But financially I don't know that it would be viable," one said.

Another noted: "You're going to spend millions on motorways, where the train line would take a lot of those people off the motorway."

And while they are waiting to see the rollout of the final Unitary Plan, the Orewa bowlers want more talk about all options for Auckland's future

Source: www.tvnz.co.nz May 26th, 2013.

Resource G - Concepts in geography

Environments

Environments can be natural and/or cultural. They have particular characteristics and features that can be the result of natural and/or cultural processes. The particular characteristics of an environment may be similar to and/or different from another.

Perspectives

The way people view and interpret environments. Perspectives and values may be influenced by culture, environment, social systems, technology, economic and political ideology. They may influence how people interact with environments and the decisions and responses that they make.

Processes

A sequence of actions, natural and/or cultural, that shape and change environments, places and societies. Some examples of geographic processes include erosion, migration, desertification, and globalisation.

Patterns

Patterns can be spatial, such as the arrangement of features on the earth's surface, or temporal, such as how characteristics differ over time in recognisable ways.

Interaction

Interaction involves elements of an environment affecting each other and being linked together. Interaction incorporates movement, flows, connections, links, and interrelationships. Landscapes are the visible outcome of interactions. Interaction can bring about environmental change.

Change

Change involves any alteration to the natural or cultural environment. Change can be spatial and/or temporal. Change is a normal process in both natural and cultural environments. It occurs at varying rates, at different times, and in different places. Some changes are predictable, recurrent, or cyclic, while others are unpredictable or erratic. Change can bring about further change.

Sustainability

Sustainability involves adopting ways of thinking and behaving that allow individuals, groups, and societies to meet their needs and aspirations without preventing future generations from meeting theirs. Sustainable interaction with the environment may be achieved by preventing, limiting, minimizing, or correcting environmental damage to water, air, and soil, as well as considering ecosystems and problems related to waste, noise, and visual pollution.

Other concepts relevant to planning for Auckland's future include:

- Location
- Region
- Accessibility
- Cumulative causation
- Perception.