

Questions and Opinions at the Public Meeting on Development in Ellerslie

(Not formal meeting minutes. Does not constitute professional advice. For reference only)

16 May 2022, War Memorial Hall, 7.30PM

The National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD)

- Resource Management Act (RMA) is at top of planning document hierarchy, NPS next tier down
- NPS-UD brings major changes, and then more major changes on top with the updated RMA
- Very tight timetable – 6,500 submissions to Council, then local board meetings etc all in six months before notification on 20 August, then statutory submission process
 - Special Character overlays reduces housing potential by 1.3% or so
 - But the lack of time means that people proposing removing SCAs don't know how much more housing capacity they will enable
- Only 3 aspects of discretion
 - Walkable catchment from transit stops
 - Town centre catchment
 - What is a qualifying matter?
- Policy 3 – district plans must enable heights of six stories in walkable catchment from transit stops
 - Enable = must make it possible. Not guarantees it will happen
 - Plan and reality can differ e.g. THAB zone experience to date
- Adjacent to town centres enable height and density commensurate with need
- Policy 4 – allows modification of height and density provision by qualifying matter
 - Landscape e.g. viewshafts, cultural heritage, historic heritage, natural hazard risk (e.g. flooding risk on North Shore), other matters e.g. special character
 - Special character must be justified and verified through hearing process. Where to draw the line? It is a subjective view
 - **Anything can be a Qualifying Matter but it must be justified**
- Findlay Street-Hewson Street-Ramsgate Street block
 - Not protected under character overlay
 - But **possibly** under historic heritage overlay – currently being investigated

Resident questions

- What's the difference between character and historic heritage?
 - Historic heritage typically relates to a specific movement, people, period of time, moment of history
 - Character – just cohesive design
- What about carparks? There is now no minimum parking standard (apart from accessible parking) in all residential zones
 - Under the rules, it is over to developers to determine how many carparks they provide
 - Depending on area, price point etc., developers do still perceive need for parking
 - Some developers drive down cost by not providing parking, some not
- Are there minimum section sizes for 2/3/etc stories?
 - Minimum lot size for greenfield, not for brownfield
 - Brownfield – buy multiple properties, develop part, subdivide rest

- What is the new “single dwelling two storey” zone?
 - Replaces old single house zone. Same rules or more density TBC (20 August)
- What is the Ōrākei Local Board’s stance on Special Character Areas?
 - At least get properties assessed as score 4 into SCAs -> enables 66% threshold
 - Findlay-Hewson-Ramsgate block – got a 65% score but need 75% threshold
 - Add score 4 properties, meet threshold. Same in Remuera
 - Trying to encourage risk averse, rolling over current rules
 - Infrastructure as a Qualifying Matter?
 - Possible. Remuera and Hobson Bay – very poor stormwater
 - Ōrākei Local Board is telling Councillors they need more justification or risk losing more character via judicial review
- What if development is enabled but the infrastructure can’t handle it?
 - Council against Plan changes in greenfield areas – not enough infrastructure
 - Built up areas – stormwater an issue (wastewater not so much)
 - Could argue for a Qualifying Matter. \$500,000 damage from one (50 year) downpour in March
- What if my property is flooding now, even before intensification?
 - It is important to advocate for the Eastern Interceptor next, and for it to be brought forward. It is a 10 to 12-year project.
- How many special character areas are there around here?
 - Troy Churton – 3.6% of all of Auckland has SCA overlay. 90% of the Ōrākei Local Board area already has higher density enabled
- Could Findlay-Hewson-Ramsgate block all be THAB?
 - Possibly
- Will Council only consider street-facing properties in Qualifying Matter?
 - Yes. Some rare back lot properties excluded. Don’t get impact from desktop assessment. Double edged sword as back lot houses often new, so not help with heritage score
 - Large parts of Remuera (large sites), St Mary’s Bay, Parnell at risk – latter two especially with transit proximity
- Does new plan suggest a percentage of social housing within catchments?
 - Unlikely in new rules, especially with Kainga Ora now tasked with delivering social housing
 - Special Housing Areas (now finished anyway. Was mainly in developing areas) had a social housing component
- What about the risk of flooding?
 - When building on floodplains, prescriptive rules are placed on developers to stop spill over effects
 - The issues are in broader infrastructure – needs larger budget and plan investment to address