

# Growing up

---

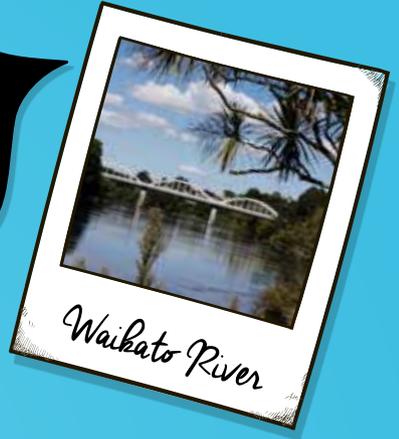
Plan Change 12 - Hamilton's response to government direction for growth and the changes we must make to the District Plan (our rule book for development).

August 2022



**Hamilton  
City Council**  
Te kaunihera o Kirikiriroa

Protecting  
the health and  
WELLBEING  
OF THE RIVER!



## GROWING UP

We're making some changes to Hamilton's District Plan, the 'rule book' that guides development in our city. These changes will provide for more housing, and higher density housing, across the city. This is called Plan Change 12.

This means there will be changes to the rules around how you can develop your property. But it also means more homes can be closer to all the things we need like shops, jobs and public transport. It also provides for more homes, and a greater variety of homes, for the people that call Hamilton Kirikiriroa home.

You can have your say on these changes until 30 September 2022.

### Why are we making these changes?

Since 2020, central government has reset the rules for how big cities can grow and introduced two pieces of legislation that tell councils how they must make that happen: the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) and the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2021.

These new rules direct big cities like Hamilton to increase the number of multi-storey homes across our city. They

don't give Council much ability to control things like how they will look, how much backyard they have, the impact on our city's roads and pipes, and how they affect neighbouring properties.

The changes set out by government are not optional; We must change our plan to reflect the new rules. We've proposed to do this in a way that respects our environment and the features of our city that are important to us.

## ECO-DENSITY AND WHAT THAT MEANS FOR HAMILTON

Our research has found that without controls in place, intensification across all our residential areas will have a negative impact on the Waikato River.

We're proposing a bespoke approach to how we manage density across our city that provides homes for people while also considering the needs of our River. We're calling this approach 'eco-density'.

We're supporting the development of higher density housing in the central city and walkable areas around it first. This means we can focus our investment on new infrastructure in one place

to get better outcomes for our river and our community. It also aligns with our long-term strategic planning for both the city and the region.

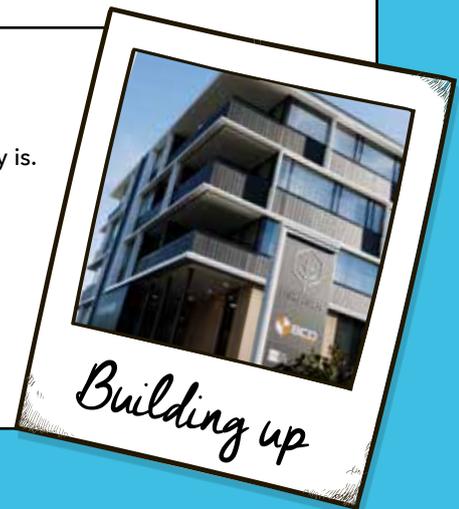
Because we're looking to modify the controls which central government is directing, the new rules will not come into effect until the full plan change process is completed and decisions are made - likely to be late-2023 or early-2024.

### What do we mean by density?

When we talk about density we're talking about how compact the housing in our city is. For example, the size of our sections and how many storeys high we can build.

Low density is typically large sections, for example 800m<sup>2</sup> with a house and a large backyard.

Higher density can be multi-level townhouses and apartments like those already seen in parts of the central city and around the university.



## PROTECTING OUR HERITAGE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

There are some exceptions to the Government's rules called 'qualifying matters'. These allow us to manage intensification in some areas to protect important parts of our city.

### Protecting our river

As a council, we have an obligation to not only protect, but enhance the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River, and other connecting waterways, as we grow.

We're guided by the vision and strategy for the River called Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato which sets the direction for how this should happen.

This is particularly important when we consider the stormwater, wastewater and drinking water requirements for new development and how this impacts the River.

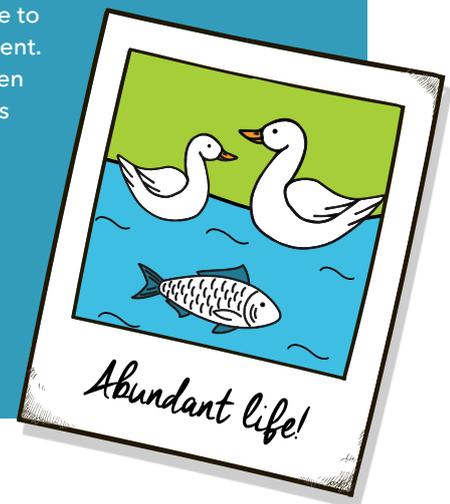
We know housing intensification will impact our environment, so we're proposing:

- to restrict development in some areas based on the infrastructure we need to support more homes. This means developers wanting to build four or more units on a site will need to make

sure the infrastructure (like pipes and roads) can cope with the extra homes. This doesn't apply in the central city where we're supporting higher densities, in line with our efforts and investment to revitalise the area. These restrictions will be reassessed as more infrastructure is upgraded that can support higher densities.

- to put more requirements on developments in place to support our environment. Read more in the 'green policies' section of this booklet.

Read the detail here:  
Chapter 4 and 25.13.  
Appendix 1.1 and 1.2



### Protecting our heritage

Council plays a critical role in identifying and protecting Hamilton's heritage and natural environment, in all its forms.

Through the recent Plan Change 9 we re-looked at what we are protecting in the District Plan including Historic Heritage Areas (HHA), built heritage, Significant Natural Areas (SNA), and archaeological sites, and reassessed these elements against the most up-to-date criteria. You can read more about this at [hamilton.govt.nz/planchange9](http://hamilton.govt.nz/planchange9).

Following on from this work, through Plan Change 12 we're proposing:

- to remove the special character zones from the District Plan
- properties identified in an HHA through Plan Change 9 will have heritage protection through what's called an 'overlay' instead of a special zone in the Plan
- properties in these areas will have a different set of rules to follow for development, including lower densities and building heights
- properties with an SNA, archaeological site or built heritage also have some protection from intensification
- to make sure developments consider design, layout and how it would be compatible with the historic heritage or environmental value of the area.

Read the detail here: Chapter 19



Here's some of the  
**KEY CHANGES WE'RE PROPOSING:**

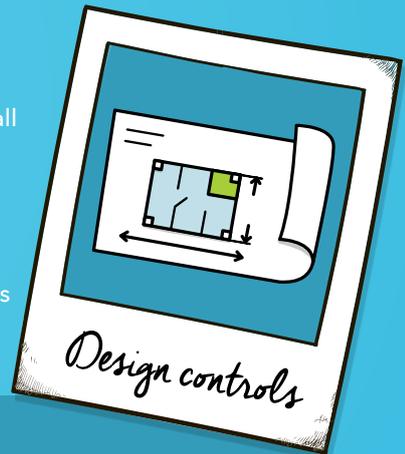
## TYPES OF HOUSES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

### Central city and surrounds

In line with government direction, the central city is where we're enabling the most intensification. We already allow unlimited heights in the central city. We're proposing to extend the area this covers and allow increased densities in a walkable area around the city. This will help promote the revitalisation of our central city, and provide greater access to jobs, parks, restaurants, and other amenities.

#### Our proposed changes include:

- up to three homes, up to three storeys, without a resource consent and no infrastructure assessment required (permitted activity)
- at least six storeys in parts of Whitiora, Te Rapa and Hamilton East (within 800m from the central city), with a resource consent
- unlimited heights across all areas of the central city zone, with a resource consent
- subject to green policies and financial contributions
- new design controls.



### AREAS AROUND OUR SUBURBAN CENTRES

In areas within 400m from our suburban centres, where we can easily access all the things we need, we also want to see more intensification. We're proposing to rezone these areas to medium density.

This includes areas near Chartwell, Thomas Road, Five Cross Roads, Clyde Street east, Hamilton East, Glenview, Frankton, and Dinsdale. It also includes within 200m of Nawton.

However, because of the impact of this type of development on the River, in most areas this will require an infrastructure capacity assessment to make sure the existing network can cope with the extra demand.

#### Our proposed changes include:

- a minimum of 150m<sup>2</sup> sections
- up to three storeys without a resource consent, subject to meeting certain controls
- anything between three and five storeys with a resource consent and full infrastructure assessment
- new requirements around landscaping, permeable surfaces and rainwater tanks.



## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE REST OF THE CITY?

For all other residential areas, we're proposing to keep densities largely what they are now, with duplexes continuing to provide much of our housing in existing urban areas.

In Hamilton, currently around 50% of new houses are built within existing urban areas. This is partly because the current rules in our District Plan already allow duplexes in our residential areas and unlimited heights in our central city. Duplexes and townhouses have been a popular choice of housing in Hamilton for over a decade.

### We're proposing:

- a minimum of 200m2 sections (like duplexes are now)
- up to three homes of up to three storeys per site (similar to the duplex-style we have now)
- no resource consent in some areas, subject to meeting certain controls
- new requirements around landscaping, permeable surfaces and rainwater tanks.

Anything outside of these rules, for example smaller sections or more than three homes per site, would need a resource consent.

In new residential areas like Peacocke or Rotokauri, where we can plan ahead for the infrastructure, we can have higher densities. This will be decided with the developer as part of the consenting process.

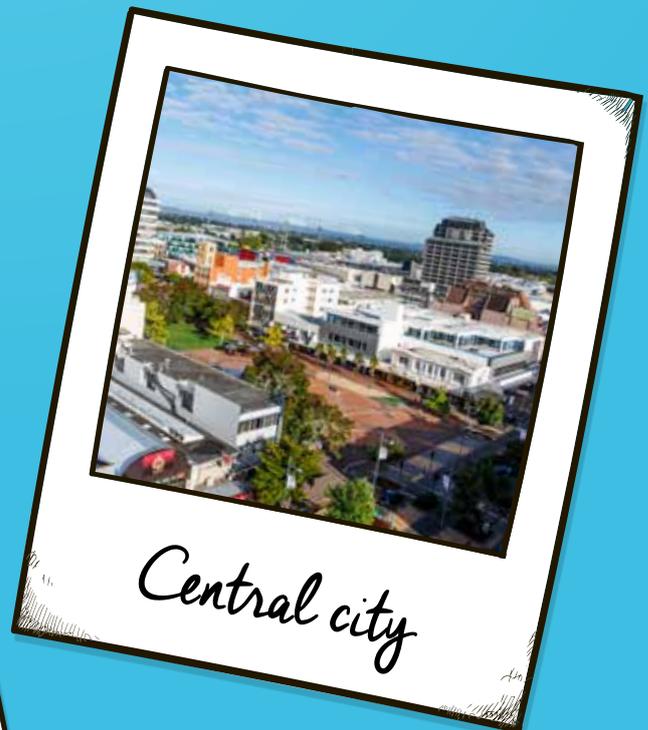
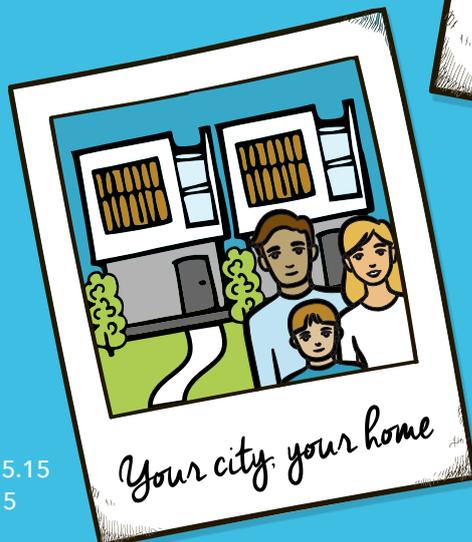
### HOW WILL IT LOOK?

We have an Urban Design Panel which provide developers with advice and direction around the design of their projects. This is an optional service we encourage everyone to use.

Government requirements do not allow us to consider urban design for developments three units or less.

However, where resource consents are required developers will need to consider design in relation to:

- neighbouring properties
- public and open spaces
- the safety and security of residents
- vehicles and pedestrians
- the look and feel of the city.



Read the detail here:  
Chapter 3, 4, 6, 7, 23 and 25.15  
Appendix 1.1, 1.3, 1.4 and 5

## MOVING AROUND OUR CITY

Like with many growing cities, getting around can become harder and harder as the city becomes more populated and denser. We're proposing some changes to provide more transport choice to support higher density housing, including walking, cycling, scootering and public transport.

These changes will begin the process of setting the city up to meet the demands of the future. While it won't suddenly transform the city overnight, over the coming decades it will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve the look, feel and safety of city streets and make it easier to get around the city.

### Proposed changes include:

- making new roads and footpaths wider to fit landscaping, stormwater devices, separated cycle lanes, public transport and parking spaces
- a requirement for developers to implement travel plans. Travel plans prioritise a range of transport options, not just cars
- further assessment on the effects of greenhouse gas emissions when applying for a resource consent
- new requirements for managing the storage and collection of rubbish and recycling for residents' convenience and to protect the look and safety of streets
- cycle and scooter parking, gear lockers and changing facilities as part of developments
- providing recharging points for electric vehicles at home.



*Reduce  
RELIANCE ON  
cars.*

Read the detail here:  
Chapter 18 and 25.14  
Appendix 1.1, 1.2 and 15





## OUR GREEN POLICIES

Hamilton is a beautiful city, with a lush green canopy, extensive gully network and Waikato River at its heart.

As we intensify, the risk is that more and more of our green canopy will be replaced with hard surfaces like concrete driveways and roads. The more hard surfaces we create, the greater the risk that water runoff will get into the River when it rains and the hotter it gets in summer. We also lose the attractive green look and feel that makes Hamilton special.

We're proposing the following green policies to keep our city green:

- Rules around how much of a site can naturally drain rain and stormwater (these are called permeable surfaces).
- A requirement to provide new trees and enhance landscaping on site.
- Each site must have a rainwater re-use tank to help manage water conservation and soakage to help meet stormwater needs.
- Water-saving measures like low-flow taps.

## THREE WATERS

As part of our changes, we need to consider how we manage our drinking water, stormwater and wastewater networks.

The District Plan rules will sit side-by-side with Council's Three Waters Connections Policy which will further help us protect the River.

This means while a development might be allowed under the District Plan, it will still need to get approval to connect to the three waters network. If the residential development does not meet the criteria of the policy, and it creates unacceptable effects on the network or levels of service that can't be addressed, the development may be refused a service connection.



Read the detail here:

Chapter 4 and 25.13. Appendix 1.1 and 1.2

## HOW IT'S PAID FOR

A financial contribution is a method included in our District Plan to help fund the things that off-set some of the negative effects of housing intensification, like pipe renewals, gully and River restoration and making our streets more attractive.

This is different from a development contribution, which helps fund new or expanded infrastructure and community facilities that are needed as a result of increased demand from the development.

We're proposing to charge a financial contribution for new developments to fund activities which provide better outcomes for our community.

It means that developers may need to pay both a financial contribution AND a development contribution for their development. However, these contributions will be used for different things.

Some of these costs may be off-set due to a more streamlined development application process.

Read the detail here:

Chapter 24  
Appendix 18



Other relevant chapters affected by the proposed changes include:

Chapter 1, 2, 3, 13, 25 and 25.12  
Appendix 1, 2, 7 and 13

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

The changes have the potential to affect the character of our neighbourhoods through the increased number and different types of homes that are built.

If you want to develop your property in a way that is more intense than what is currently there, then these rules will impact how you can do that. For example, if you choose to demolish your existing single house and replace it with duplexes or apartments, then there would be rules you need to follow to do that. You would also need to follow the District Plan rules if you're building a new house in a new area.



**19 AUGUST –  
30 SEPTEMBER**

Public notification (and your chance to tell us what you think)



**EARLY TO  
MID-2023**

Hearings (you can speak to your submission in person)



**LATE-2023**

Notification of the decision



**EARLY-2024**

Plan change operative and the new rules come into effect

 HamiltonCityCouncil

 @hamilton\_city\_council

 07 838 6699

[hamilton.govt.nz/planchange12](https://hamilton.govt.nz/planchange12)