

SUBMISSION TOPIC: Auckland Future Development Strategy 2023/2053
SUBMISSION FROM: Auckland City Centre Residents' Group
SUBMISSION TO: Auckland Council
CLOSING DATE: 31 July 2023

Overview.

CCRG extend congratulations to all involved in the preparation of this draft strategy. The key points that we note are that it is -

- Fit for purpose to achieve Auckland's housing needs.
- Capable of being operational within the timeframes provided for in the strategy.
- Provides opportunities to rapidly increase affordable housing supply.
- Delivers on both government and Councils climate change obligations.
- Maximises use of existing infrastructure over prohibitively expensive new infrastructure.
- Supports affordable public transport over private vehicle use.
- Accommodates a wide range of housing types to meet resident needs.
- Priorities intensification within existing boundaries rather than property exploitation around perimeter areas.
- Supports community development, as opposed to the community isolation of the past fifty years.
- Allows easy and safe access for children attending various schools.

Strategy 1:

Focus on most of Auckland's growth in existing urban areas, rather than growing more at the edges of the city.

CCRG are totally supportive of this approach.

New Zealand is currently in a social and environmental whirlpool stirred by decades of poorly designed urban expansion, producing inadequate numbers of unaffordable homes in locations that inevitably produce unsustainable levels of transport emissions. While this is not surprising, given most of this growth relies on the rapid international expansion of private motor vehicle transport, we know that this is the worst of all development options available to us today.

Much of the land surrounding the outer edges of our city either have extremely high quality soils needed for food production and/or forest, flood plain or ocean that need permanent protection to support liveable environments.

Strategy 2:

Focus development near local centres giving people easier access to work, services, facilities and shops via walking, cycling and public transport.

CCRG made submissions on the National Policy Statement Urban Development which we have attached. Our key position is to require that the NPSUD make provision for 6-8 story high quality residential developments in ALL urban areas within five kilometres of an urban/metropolitan centre. By ALL areas, we mean ALL areas other than listed or scheduled heritage – and not the proposed SCAs, which are pretend heritage.

Maximising the use of land by facilitating multi-story housing close to metropolitan and city centres facilitates affordable and reliable public transport options. It also supports the provision of healthy transport options such as cycling, micro-mobility vehicles and walking. Cities across the globe that were developed prior to the introduction of private motor vehicles, already have the housing density that supports a range of public transport and personal mobility options. Auckland does not need to reinvent the wheel – quality housing density already exists in hundreds of older cities so let's just utilise the knowledge they have acquired, find out how they have achieved it and just get on with the job.

Strategy 3:

Avoid further growth in areas which are exposed to significant risk of environmental hazards.

From the various damaging weather patterns Auckland has experienced this summer, it has become evident that a lot of the urban areas where housing was developed in Auckland are on flood plains and/or vulnerable cliffs. These of course are a natural part of a natural world where nature always comes first, no matter how hard we try to deny the fact.

CCRG's view is that we should support nature to do the job it does best, which is to look after us. Allowing nature to do its work ensures that our world has healthy forests, flood plains, food, water, wind, sun and sea. To maintain this essential equation, it is us that has to change and the easiest way for this to happen is to ensure that what nature does is respected and protected.

We would suggest that describing the natural world as creating areas 'which are exposed to significant risk of environmental hazards' is inappropriate. They are only hazards if we treat them that way – the reality is that all areas of the globe are made by nature for different purposes. We need to respect those purposes and build in areas that nature has already made safe for us and there is no shortage of these in Aotearoa.

In response to the statement that 'where development is already enabled in potentially vulnerable locations, we will further investigate appropriate actions' is a somewhat meaningless statement. CCRG can see no reason why a stronger, clearer and more certain statement would not be more appropriate given the earlier statement that these hazards are increasingly important.

We would suggest that a more appropriate statement would bepotentially vulnerable areas will be rezoned based on the levels of potential risk....etc, etc. That provides certainty for everyone and further investigation of appropriate actions follows but we would suggest that the rezoning needs to be done first and as quickly as possible.

Strategy 4:

Prioritise nature-based infrastructure that responds to the impacts of climate change.

CCRG support this approach in its entirety. In reference to our comments on Strategy 3, we can imagine that quite a considerable number of areas currently considered marginal for housing development, could be made suitable with appropriate nature-based infrastructure.

We also believe that this approach provides an excellent opportunity to accommodate 'a wide range of housing types to meet resident needs' and within the natural limitations of the area concerned.

We would be pleased to have an opportunity to present/discuss our submission further if that was available.

Nga mihi nui,

Adam Parkinson
Deputy Chair
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