

City Form and Design

The “form” of a city is the way in which landscape features, buildings, green spaces and the roading network link together to make up the unique picture that is an individual city. But City Form is not a static picture; the mix, location and intensity of land uses is constantly changing in response to pressures such as population and business growth, and constraints including the need to preserve environmental quality. The more detailed aspects of City Design affect the range and quality of choices we have for living, doing business, socialising, recreation and leisure, and in the appreciation of art and culture.

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Waitakere City is a mix of urban, rural and coastal areas. The City grew up around the established urban settlements of Glen Eden, New Lynn and Henderson, and also includes the rural areas like Oratia, Hobsonville and Whenuapai, and the coastal villages like Piha and Whatipu. Set against the backdrop of the Waitakere Ranges, an area of outstanding landscape and native bush, the urban area is framed by a rural hinterland that extends from the Foothills of the Waitakere Ranges to Whenuapai in the north.

This chapter outlines the growth pressures affecting the City, and Council's approach to achieving a sustainable city form and design. The following issues are discussed:

1. CITY FORM
2. PRESSURES ON THE CITY'S FORM AND DESIGN
3. VIBRANT TOWN CENTRES
4. WORKING ENVIRONMENTS
5. RESIDENTIAL AREAS
6. LIVEABILITY

As the form of the city and the development of its town centres is the result of a complex web of interactions, there are many linkages to other chapters.

KEY INDICATOR

Development densities in the “Urban Living” and “Community” environments in the District Plan – 19.9 dwellings/units per hectare in Urban Living environment and 16.6 dwellings/units per hectare in Community environment at 30 June 2001.

As the intensification proposals set out in the Regional Growth Strategy are implemented, it is expected that the property density of the Living Environments (the residential parts of the Urban Area) and the Community Environments (which include the town centres) will increase, with the development of medium density dwellings and mixed-use developments.

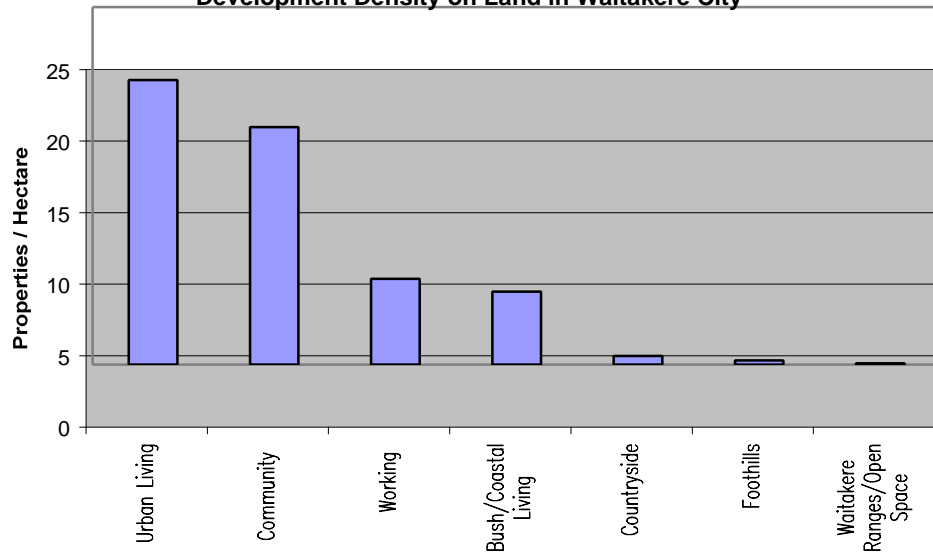
The density of development is measured by calculating the number of buildings or premises in different parts of the city. The density ratio illustrated below is the average number of dwellings/units per hectare at 30 June 2001.

The residential areas of the city labelled “Urban Living” (Living Environments in the District Plan) have the highest property density of 19.9 dwellings/units per hectare.

In the Working Environment which is where the majority of industrial properties are located, the development density is lower. This is because industrial activities require larger building footprints, occupy larger sites and require more space for parking and circulation.

The lower densities of the Foothills and Countryside Living areas reflect the more spacious rural character of these areas. Bush Living and Coastal living includes Piha and other Coastal villages, as well as settlements such as Titirangi and Laingholm. These are fragile environments. If the City’s Urban Villages strategy is working, these areas should have relatively stable property densities as development is accommodated mainly in the urban area (the Urban Living, Community and Working Environments).

Development Density on Land in Waitakere City



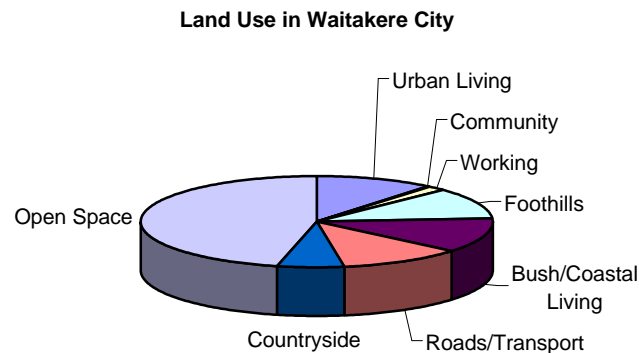
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1. CITY FORM

The land area of Waitakere City is 39,134 hectares, including 17,149 hectares of park areas and the Waitakere Ranges. Much of the expansion of Waitakere City has occurred in the last 20 years, with urban growth expanding outwards from Henderson, Te Atatu and New Lynn and at the urban fringes.

The pie graph below illustrates the diversity of land areas in the City, and clearly indicates that roughly half of the city is open space, including the Waitakere Ranges and other park areas.



(Source: Waitakere City Council records 2001).

The northern area of the City grew rapidly in response to the development of the North Western Motorway in the 1950's, and Waitakere City is again experiencing growth due to population increase, immigration, economic growth, further motorway and public transport developments, and population drift to the Auckland Region from other parts of New Zealand.

The population of Waitakere City could double to approximately 300,000 people by the year 2050 (Regional Growth Forum, Auckland Regional Growth Strategy: 2050 Summary, Nov. 1999). Past population trends are set out in the Chapter "Who Lives in Waitakere".

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The Council set its strategic direction for City development in the mid 1990's. The City's urban strategy envisages intensification of urban development in and around the three town centres of New Lynn, Henderson and Massey North/Westgate, and along major transport corridors such as Lincoln Rd. The strategy has supported a development programme that seeks to preserve the natural environment, while developing town centres that are compact, connected and provide a choice of living and working environments.

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The Urban Development Strategy has been implemented through a range of programmes including the Long Term Financial Strategy, which directed the City's infrastructure investment towards creating attractive town centres with good roading and passenger transport access while protecting and expanding the “green network” of streams, parks and stormwater facilities. The District Plan was an important component of this approach and offered greater opportunities for developers to build medium density and mixed use developments in town centre areas.

The Council's adoption of the international Agenda 21 programme in 1993 has been a significant influence on the policies put in place.

The Council's strategy to encourage a compact city is based on the understanding that continual expansion of the urban boundary does not constitute financially sound management of the environment, nor does it produce cohesive communities. These strategies began the process of shifting Waitakere City from a series of ‘dormitory’ suburbs, to a city with defined town centres, surrounded by suburban and rural lifestyles, with an increase in local employment opportunities.

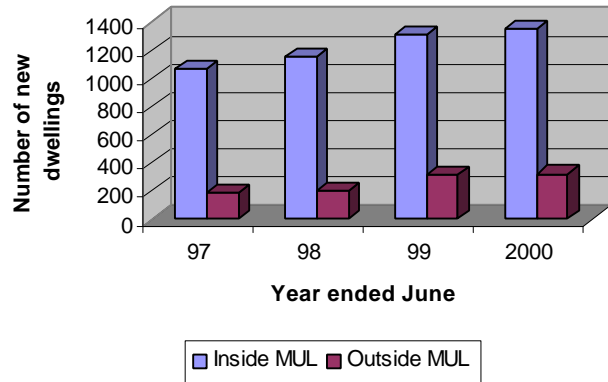
A key point of the strategy, reflecting its origins in Agenda 21, is consultation with communities. Waitakere City has endeavoured to involve its various communities in various ways. The District Plan was developed with extensive consultation over 18 months, and all town centre projects begin with a series of design workshops to develop concept plans, which seek the involvement of all the users of the area. In 1998 and again in 1999/2000, Waitakere City also undertook a major consultation as part of its strategic review, and this strongly supported the development of a network of strong town and retail centres and neighbourhoods. Structure plans guiding subdivision in rural areas are prepared in consultation with residents, developers, environmental groups and others, and aim to retain the rural character of the area and to manage the impact of development on land and waterways.

The Regional Growth Strategy, adopted by all of the Councils in the Auckland Region in 1999, builds on some of these principles to set out a “master plan” for the whole Region. The Growth Strategy makes it more difficult to build urban developments outside the current urban area, defined by the Metropolitan Urban Limit (MUL). The location of the Waitakere City MUL is shown in map on the following page. The Growth Strategy also aims to encourage and support intensification within town centres and along transport corridors.

The Regional Growth Strategy sets a target over the next 50 years of 60% of growth to be inside and 40% outside the current MUL for Waitakere City. This 40% will largely take place in areas which are currently rural i.e. ‘greenfields’ areas. For Waitakere, these greenfield areas are mostly in the north west of the city, around Hobsonville and Massey North.

Currently Waitakere City is well within this target, with around 80% of new homes being built within the urban area.

New dwellings built within and outside the 1999 Metropolitan Urban Limit



Source: Building consent data by mesh block from Statistics NZ, analysis by Waitakere City Council

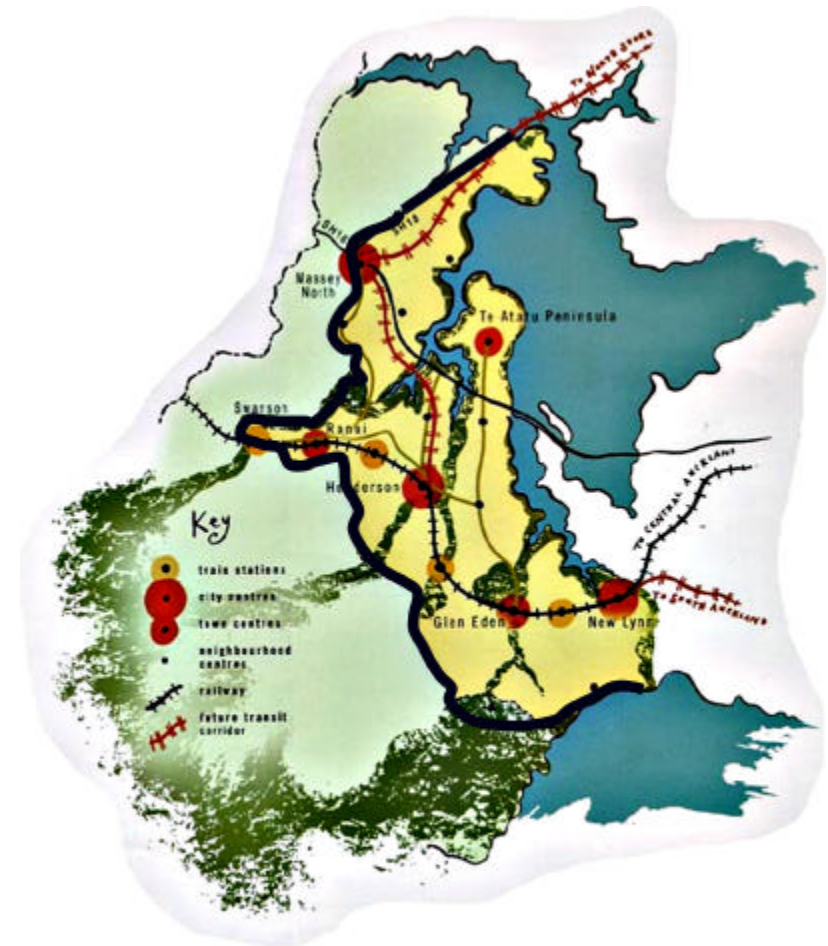
There are a wide range of reasons why the City, and later the region, decided to limit sprawl and to work towards a more compact city form.

Compact cities are more sustainable, because they are more efficient in the use of land, transport and infrastructure.

Living in a compact city makes it easier for communities to access a range of employment opportunities and community facilities with less travel, and also supports the development of passenger transport systems.

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Where communities are able to enjoy improved public transport, there will be less dependency on private car use. This in turn contributes to more energy efficient transport, reduced air emissions and less vehicle pollutants entering waterways from stormwater run-off from roads.



Waitakere City Urban Development Strategy Map

2. PRESSURES ON THE CITY'S FORM AND DESIGN

The Council, other investors and most of the participants in the many planning processes that the Council has undertaken over many years share a vision of a lively, liveable city which meets the needs of its residents and businesses while sustaining the natural environment. However, there continue to be pressures that impact on the town centres as well as most of the urban fabric of the city. These are:

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- Changes in transport e.g.: rapid growth in car numbers, and the growing need to get around the region as opposed to the historical focus on the Central Business District
- Changing demographics of the population e.g.: greater number of single parent households (18% in 1996), people staying longer in the family home, and the increasing proportion of older citizens.
- Changing employment patterns – such as more part time work, more work at home, increasing service industries, more women in work force, more time spent in education.
- Economic changes- e.g.: the shift from industrial to service industries, indicating a need for adaptable building types
- Increased community expectations regarding the quality of the urban environment, as well as increased involvement in consultation processes
- Need to use resources more efficiently e.g.: water, energy for houses and transport, building materials etc.

- Ongoing impact of inherited sprawl pattern based on access to car transport, and land use patterns which separate live, work and play.
- Increased environmental awareness and requirements, impacts on city planning re water management, housing provision and type.

Many of these pressures are also opportunities to do things differently and to create improvements to the City's form and design.

Over the ten years that the Council has been working towards its overall urban strategy, there have been some very significant improvements in town centres. The City now has a more varied housing market and there are some positive trends in how people feel about Waitakere City as a place to live. However some major challenges still remain.

3. VIBRANT TOWN CENTRES

Making a compact city work depends on having interesting, vibrant town centres that people will choose to live and work in.

Waitakere City has three main town centres at New Lynn, Henderson and Massey North/Westgate, and a number of smaller suburban town centres. New Lynn and Henderson are well established, have a wide mix of activities, a variety of employment opportunities and a range of community and leisure facilities. Massey North / Westgate is a rapidly developing area which will grow in importance as the planned motorway link between NW motorway and State Highway 1 is built, and as new developments are built in the area.

From 1994, Council has pursued a staged programme of development in each town centre. This programme has four main components:

- Direct Council investments
- The Council's property company, Waitakere Properties Ltd
- District Plan provisions
- Advice and information

● **DIRECT COUNCIL INVESTMENTS**

Waitakere City implemented a continuous town centre revitalisation programme from 1994 onwards. The intention was to upgrade the physical and social environment roading connections, open space provision, streetscapes and community facilities, and to attract and encourage private investment. The priority has been the main town centres in New Lynn and Henderson. Smaller centres such as Glen Eden, Titirangi, Green Bay, and Te Atatu Peninsula have also been part of the programme of redevelopment. The Council has facilitated public design workshops to develop an overall plan for each area, and has then used the plan to guide the Council's own investment, and to advise and in some cases to require private investors to fit in with the overall plan.

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Titirangi: pre-revitalisation
1994/1995



Titirangi –
Reclaiming the street
August 2000

Council programmes in New Lynn and Henderson have seen extensive investments in roading and streetscape improvements, as well as providing upgrading of community facilities such as the New Lynn Community Centre (which opened in June 2001) and extensions to the facilities at the Henderson Pool complex. Current programmes are focused on strategic projects in New Lynn, Henderson and Massey North, as well as continuing the projects in Ranui and Swanson.

This public spending has catalysed significant private sector investments.

- **WAITAKERE PROPERTIES LTD**

The Council owns a development company, Waitakere Properties Ltd. Its aims include building leading edge developments that show how new concepts can work in practice, such as the EcoHome in Sun Hills. The company has pioneered quality medium-density housing at Harbourview, using environmentally friendly design and building materials.

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The company undertakes a range of developments including Harbourview (Te Atatu Peninsula), Sun Hills (in the Kelston/Sunnyvale area) and is at the planning stage of a housing development on the Corban Estate in Henderson.

- **DISTRICT PLAN PROVISIONS**

Over 1994/1996, Proposed District Plan provisions were developed to support intensification through identifying areas around town centres and major transport routes where higher density residential and mixed use opportunities could be established, subject to strict design criteria, but with the minimum of ‘red tape’. Bringing work and living closer together is a key strategy and the Proposed District Plan supports mixed use (e.g. Offices above shops) and makes it easier to work or run a business from home. Building of medium density housing around town centres has exceeded all expectations. However, market take-up of mixed use developments, for example apartments above shops, has been slower.

- **ADVICE AND INFORMATION**

As well as directly investing in town centres, the Council provides design advice and guidelines for developers and advice on medium density planning, including the Sustainable Building Guidelines and the Medium Density Housing guidelines. For significant developments the Council establishes pre-consent teams to work with developers and investors from the initial stages of a project. The Council holds design workshops for town centres and neighbourhoods.

- **EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENTS**

These four initiatives (the concept and design workshops with subsequent investments, the developments by Waitakere Properties Ltd, Proposed District Plan provisions and non-regulatory work) have contributed to major changes to the City. Investments have been triggered, the streetscapes and pedestrian safety of the town centres have improved enormously, and the strict segregation between living, working and shopping areas has begun to make way for a more mixed-up and lively city.

Monitoring changes in the density of dwellings/units for each town centre (mainly classed as “community environments” in the Proposed District Plan) will help to evaluate the effectiveness of town centre developments. Preliminary density calculations show density levels at 30 June 2001 for the area within a 10-minute walk of the town centre:

- 13.4** dwellings/units per hectare for New Lynn,
- 9.4** dwellings/units per hectare for Henderson,
- 5.0** dwellings/units per hectare for Massey North.

These density levels reflect the current stage of development of each town centre and reflect the amount of land used for large footprint buildings, parks and open spaces. The size of the walkable catchment area is affected by footpaths, walkways and safe road crossings to the town centre.

A key aim of the town centre work has been to encourage employment growth in the city’s town centres. This is consistent with investments worldwide to revitalise cities through mixing work, living and leisure activities to counteract the dispersion of employment to the edge of cities along motorway routes. From 1993 to 1998 there has been significant growth in employment in Waitakere’s town centres, as set out in the following table:

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Table 1: Employment Growth in Waitakere’s Town Centres, 1993-1998

	1993	1998	Change 93-98	% Change
Henderson	2,961	3,689	728	24.6%
New Lynn	2,095	2,658	563	26.9%
Glen Eden	427	541	114	26.7%
Waitakere City	30,370	40,370	10,000	33.0%

Source: Town Centre Employment Prospects, report by Hill Young Cooper for Waitakere City Council

This compares well with Manukau City Centre, which had 12% employment growth over the same period, and with Newmarket and Takapuna, which grew by 24% and 21% respectively.

Pedestrian counts are another way of measuring the use of a town centre. The figures below are from the NZ Institute of Valuers surveys for New Lynn and Henderson only (the method for these is to count at several locations in one town centre, with the average count achieved by dividing the total count by the number of locations). They show fluctuations in pedestrian numbers but to date no clear trends.

Table 2: Pedestrian counts in New Lynn and Henderson, 1994-1998

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
New Lynn	-	305	328	267	318
Henderson	532	527	777	858	638

Retail Patterns and Changes

Over the last fifteen years it has become more expensive to develop at the periphery of the urban limit. Factors such as pricing, attractiveness and transport options have directed investment back into the town centres. Significant mall development has occurred at New Lynn, Henderson and Massey North/Westgate. Some developers/owners have large land holdings and have the potential for further expansion in the long term.

There has been a transformation of town centres in Waitakere City over the last ten years. The malls attract large numbers of shoppers and provide a new place for the community to congregate.

The effects of malls are being felt by suburban shops, which are facing competition on price and attractiveness. ‘Main street’ shops are also affected by the diversion of shoppers to malls.

4. WORKING ENVIRONMENTS

The City’s main areas of industrial and bulk retail developments (defined as “Working” environments in the District Plan) are Central Park / Lincoln, The Concourse, Henderson Valley, New Lynn, McLeod Road (Te Atatu), and Akatea Road (Glendene).

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These centres each have different characteristics and are at different stages in the development cycle. For example Central Park Drive has a large proportion of vacant sites, as it is a relatively new area. A major attraction of the area is its closeness to the motorway, and many developments are bulk retail rather than industrial uses.

In contrast, New Lynn is an established industrial area and is relatively built up; so new developments are taking place on older sites as they become available for redevelopment.

While there is little or no vacant land in some of these areas, all of them have significant areas of under-utilised land that is potentially available for redevelopment.

In the table below the following definitions have been used to specify vacant and potentially vacant industrial land:

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- Vacant Land – Vacant sections of land are empty lots with no existing development. Vacant sections are located in an area that has basic infrastructure (such as roads, footpaths, lighting, cabling, sewage and storm water pipes).
- Potentially Vacant Land – Potentially vacant sections of land are lots that have an existing use which is an under-utilisation of the development potential of the land. Examples of under-utilisation are vineyards or orchards, forestry plantations, open-air car parks or open storage. In some instances potentially vacant sites have existing buildings and structures, constraints or barriers, which may be of a temporary or longer-term nature. For example: glasshouses, electricity pylons, and radio antennae.

Table 3: Summary of Vacant and Potentially Vacant Industrial Land in Waitakere City (April 2001)

Area	Vacant Land (Hectares)	Potentially Vacant Land (Hectares)	Medium Density Housing (Hectares)
Central Park- Lincoln	7.3400	32.087	0
The Concourse	1.4996	16.995	0
Henderson Valley	11.3151	13.0513	0
New Lynn	8.6573	3.3416	5.9073
McLeod Road- Te Atatu	0.3284	6.4067	3.6468
Akatea Road- Glendene	0	6.9679	0
Other Areas	17.0977	20.2745	2.3719
Total	46.2381	99.124	11.926

5. RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Waitakere City's suburbs tell the story of the City's development. From the townships that grew up around the railway stations of New Lynn, Henderson and Glen Eden the urban area has grown northward and westward with each decade. Large areas of state housing built in the post-war years was followed by an era when increasing wealth, availability of housing finance and access to private motor vehicles and the motorway encouraged the development of the traditional stand alone family home on large sections in the suburbs.

Around 10% of Waitakere City's population does not live in the urban area. Some live in the rural areas and in the foothills, which are becoming popular areas for "lifestyle blocks". Meanwhile coastal villages originally established as holiday bach areas are becoming permanent year-round communities.

Just as many people are choosing to live in town centres, an increasing number of people are working or running a business from home. 23% of Waitakere City businesses perform at least a quarter of their business activities from home.

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Table 4: Percentage of businesses that perform some business at home, 1997-2000

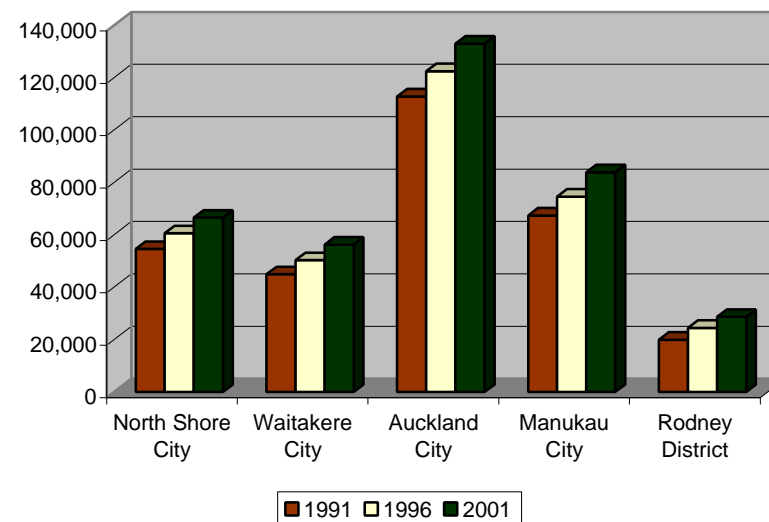
Range of business performed at home	1997	1998	2000
None	56%	55%	45%
Under 25%	28%	28%	33%
25% - 74%	5%	7%	8%
75% - 99%	4%*	3%	4%
100%	7%*	7%	11%

*Estimated.

Source: Survey of a sample of businesses in December 1997 and 2000, with a margin of error of +/- 5%.

Underlying all these changes is a steadily growing demand for housing of all types. The following graph shows the number of private dwellings in Waitakere City and neighbouring areas, based on information from the last 3 censuses.

Number of Residential Dwellings 1991-2001



Source: Statistics New Zealand 2001 Census.

Waitakere City's population is smaller than the other major cities of the Auckland Region. Apart from Rodney District, Waitakere City had the highest rate of growth over the 10-year period to 2001:

Table 5: Growth in Private dwellings, 1991-2001

Percentage of Growth 1991-2001	
North Shore City	22.2%
Waitakere City	25.0%
Auckland City	17.8%
Manukau City	24.5%
Rodney District	43.4%

Each year, around 1000 new households locate in Waitakere City, either from people moving into the City or from people who already live here setting up their own home.

(‘Waitakere City Population Projections 1999-2021, and 2021-2050’, prepared by Hill Young Cooper Ltd and McDermott Fairgray Group Ltd in June 2000. This was a desktop study of land capacities and possible/likely timing of future development through intensification of existing town centres and transport corridor and new growth in greenfield areas).

“ Each year, around 1000 new households locate in Waitakere City ... This rate of household growth creates a significant demand for new housing sites.”

This rate of household growth creates a significant demand for new housing sites. The following table illustrates the approximate number of additional lots that could be developed in each of the Living Environments in the District Plan. (The calculations assume that land is subdivided to the minimum permitted densities of 450m² Living, 400m² Living 1 and 350m² Living 2 and that each lot is served by an additional 60m² of driveway. One additional lot implies capacity for one additional dwelling. In reality a range of situations might occur, and so the calculations reflect an average, or likely scenario.).

Table 6: Potential Additional Lots in the Living Environments

	Total No. Of Sites	Total Land Area (Ha)
Living 2 Environment	3369	601.8375
Living 1 Environment	3129	428.4833
Living Environment	10820	1675.5332
Total	17318	2705.854

Lifestyle is also a factor in determining future housing needs, and people’s housing needs are changing as household types change, and as the population ages.

While there are many different styles of housing being built, three bedroom homes are still the most popular choice, accounting for 62.7% of all dwellings sold in Waitakere City throughout 2000. Two bedroom homes account for 12.4% of sales and four bedroom homes 18.1% of sales.

Source: Bristow Barbor & Walker, Registered Valuers and Property Consultants.

While the traditional suburban home continues to represent the majority of total dwellings in the City, the traditional two parent family is becoming much less common, as documented in the chapter “Who lives in Waitakere”. The Council’s response to the twin challenges of limiting urban sprawl and providing for many different types of households has been to provide for a range of different styles of housing development and residential areas.

The Council has encouraged quality medium density housing around town centres and transport nodes. Medium density housing developments have provided a range of housing types from studio apartments to 4 bedroom homes.

6. LIVEABILITY

The term liveability captures the overall concept of a place being lively, visually attractive, easily accessible and safe. Liveable places are desirable locations for establishing businesses, and for living, as well as leisure activities. Town centres, working environments and residential areas all contribute to creating an overall liveable city. The quality of urban amenities and the availability of open space, parks and reserves contribute significantly to liveability in urban centres.

Liveability is a product of good urban design and planning, and is an important component of an overall sustainable city, a city where protecting the environment and using resources more efficiently are important aspects of building liveable, vibrant, economically productive town centres.

Resident surveys regarding satisfaction about Waitakere City as a place to live have been following an upward trend over the last 10 years. In a survey in May 2002 86% of residents indicated that Waitakere City is a good place to live (with a margin of error of +/- 4%). This has increased from a 73% rating in 1992.

Ratings vary from ward to ward. In May 2000, the survey results were: 88% in Waitakere ward, 82% in New Lynn ward, 81% in Henderson ward, 79% in Massey ward (details of these trends are set out in the Chapter, 'Who Lives in Waitakere City').

The majority of businesses (67%) believe Waitakere City is a good place to have a business (from a postal survey of a sample of businesses in December 1997 and 2000, with a margin of error of +/- 5%).

However, increasing development densities will mean additional strain on existing facilities, like parks, roading and infrastructure. New residential and business developments need to be supported by integrated development of the area's infrastructure and community facilities in order to create attractive "urban villages".

The key principle is to add more people and businesses while protecting, and improving, the things that make the city special. Perhaps the most special thing about Waitakere City is that it is not all urban. Even in the middle of the city there are streams and bush areas that link the urban part of the city to the Waitakere Ranges. Protecting and enhancing this "green network" is an essential component of Waitakere's urban strategy.

“The key principle is to add more people and businesses while protecting, and improving, the things that make the City special.”

The Green Network seeks to link these parks to each other and to the ranges, and to involve people in restoring the unique plant and animal life of Waitakere to our parks but also on private land. Networks of walking and cycling tracks are being built to make these areas more accessible and enjoyable (see the photograph of Henderson Stream and walkway). Improvements to neighbourhood parks and sports fields are also part of this strategy.

The City is fortunate in having some very large areas of park land. The following table shows the ratio of public open space per 1,000 residents in 1999. (Public open space includes neighbourhood and metropolitan parks and reserves, but excludes regional parks and Department of Conservation (DoC) land. These are shown separately in the table.)

Table 7: Ratio of Public Open Space (hectares) per 1,000 Residents in 1999

	Public open space (ha)	Regional Parks (ha)	DoC Land (ha)	Total hectares per TA	Population estimate 1999	Total hectares per 1,000	Public open space (ha) /1,000
Waitakere	1,089	16,259	101	17,449	154,386	113.0	7.1
Auckland	2,179	295	21,864	24,338	354,532	68.6	6.1
Manukau	1,557	3,780	573	5,910	254,603	23.2	6.1
North Shore	1,341	113	52	1,506	171,494	8.8	7.8

Data Sources: Auckland Regional Council State of the Auckland Region Report 1999, Population figures are estimates from Statistics New Zealand.

As part of the development of a liveable city, the Council has helped to facilitate better design by promoting key design principles through leaflets, design guidelines, in public design workshops, in pre-consent meetings with developers, and in the District Plan. These principles support the development of a compact, connected city that offers its residents choices about where to live, work and play.



Henderson Stream and walkway

City Form and Design

CASE STUDY

AMBRICO PLACE

Ambrico Place is located close to the heart of New Lynn, within 500 metres of the train station. By road it is accessed via Rankin Ave, and is bounded on the other sides by Margan Ave, Manawa Wetlands and the rail line. Originally a part of the thriving New Lynn pottery industry (an original kiln is still on site) it was for many years vacant industrial land. It was identified as a suitable location for medium density housing in the New Lynn community design process in 1995. There has been a rapid market uptake of the area, and is seen as a pioneer housing development in Waitakere City.

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As part of regional research on medium density housing (Auckland Regional Council 2000), which included surveys of 5 developments across Auckland as well as an investigation into the Body Corporate role, the Ambrico site was the subject of an in-depth study to complement the regional work with more detailed research. The research was undertaken by Auckland and Massey University researchers. (Ambrico Place Research, Stage Two, 2001). Waitakere City also undertook a design review, and consultation with the children living in the area. It is envisaged that the research would be revisited in 2006.

The following material is drawn from all of the sources previously mentioned. Ambrico Place is examined in relation to the Council's aim of developing a city that is compact, connected and provides its citizens with choices.

1. Compact – There are about 250 units at Ambrico Place. This is a medium-high density development, with over 40 units per hectare. The design incorporates local parks and playgrounds, as well as access to the larger Manawa Wetland, which is still in development. Most units have parking and garage space.

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The most common reasons
for moving into Ambrico Place
included location to facilities
and good design features.”

The research indicated that most people were happy with the level of open space provision, and enjoyed the sense of community in their development. Perceptions of safety were reasonably high, with between 86 and 94% feeling safe in their unit/development or Ambrico Place during the day. This drops to 55% at night outside.

Children live in 35% of households, and consultation with this group revealed that most of them considered that they had enough space to play and had more local friends than in their previous residences.

2. Connected – The location provides easy road and walking access to rail, road, bus, leisure, shops, schools and local services. The interior road network, while not fully connected, provides for residential access as well as servicing truck access to the building depot in the centre of the development. There are well-connected pedestrian walkways to the various reserves and the town centre. While well located to access a wide number of facilities, pedestrian access to these was considered difficult over main roads e.g.: New Lynn Community Centre and Library. The community and children were very involved in the development of the two local parks Ambrico Place and Manawa Wetlands. A public process was followed to assess design options, and the incorporation of tiles in Manawa Wetland using shards found in the area and local children with local artists has been very popular.

Updated as at 1 September 2002
Updates @ www.waitakere.govt.nz

3. Choices – 10% of residents at Ambrico Place work from home. The most common reasons for moving into Ambrico Place included location to facilities and good design features. Most people had not changed their transport methods much, although some reduction in car use was reported. 61% had previously lived in the typical stand-alone NZ house. 63% of residents were born overseas. Tenure was mixed – 47% rented, 45% owned, and 8% following the rent-to-own option.

The research was focused on finding out about the actual experience of living and/or working in a medium density housing environment. The key findings of the research are:

- Main reasons for choosing medium density housing – security, safety, low maintenance
- All respondents had some kind of positive contact with their neighbours, around half spent some time with neighbours
- Main issues are around noise (very or quite noisy 37%), storage space (not enough said two thirds), parking (46% not satisfied)
- Best factor was convenience – location to New Lynn, transport, shops and leisure activities rated consistently highly
- Average income levels above national and city average
- Most people happy with level of privacy of their unit– 82%
- When asked, residents gave a wide range of opinions as to which household types were suited to living in medium density housing e.g. from those with young children, to professional couples to older adults.

WHAT THE COUNCIL IS DOING:

The Council's actions in city form and urban development include the following:

- Inclusive community design processes e.g.: charettes to produce concept plans, workshops, and structure plans.
- Information provision and advice – sustainable building guidelines, advice to strategic sites e.g. Waitakere Hospital, new Sturges School, pre-consent meetings with developers.
- Demonstration projects through Waitakere Properties Limited - e.g.: Harbourview stages 1 and 2.
- Town centre revitalization projects – upgrading town centres completed e.g. Glen Eden, Green Bay, and Titirangi. Still in staged development are New Lynn, Henderson, Te Atatu Peninsula, Ranui, and Swanson.
- Comprehensive planning for the new growth areas in the northern part of the City.
- District Plan – provides for flexibility for developments in community, living, and working environments.
- Medium density housing review in progress 2000/2001 as part of District Plan monitoring.
- Involved in regional initiatives for managing impacts of future growth e.g. Regional Growth Forum, Mayoral and Chief Executives Forum, regional agreements and policies.
- District Plan:
 - * Encourages medium to high-density development around towns and along the rail line.
 - * Places restrictions on land use in sensitive areas.
 - * Encourages better use of urban land to avoid pressures on natural areas, Waitakere Ranges, coastal areas and sensitive areas.

“
Comprehensive planning for
the new growth areas in the
North West of the City.”

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Come and talk with Council staff at the concept stage of your plan.
- Get involved in community planning exercises.
- Pursue appropriate development in accordance with the aim of intensification within the city urban limit.
- Support public transport.
- Use local services where possible.
- Preserve and restore native bush and riparian margins on private land.
- Be involved in local design processes
- Make submissions on Council's Annual Plan.

“
Come and talk with
Council staff at the concept
stage of your plan.”