

Summary of Submissions

Newlands Draft District Plan Change

Background:

In 2008, Wellington City Council consulted on the potential for a number of suburban areas being zoned for increased residential density. At the time, it was agreed that Johnsonville and Kilbirnie would be the focus of this work initially. The rezoning in Johnsonville and Kilbirnie has been completed and the planning provisions allowing medium-density housing are in effect in those areas.

In 2015, Tawa, Newlands, Khandallah, Karori and Island Bay were identified to investigate the introduction of further Medium Density Residential Areas (MDRAs). Initial consultation in all five suburbs occurred between March and December 2015.

This summary relates to the latest round of consultation on a draft District Plan Change (DPC), which was undertaken with the Newlands community between the dates, 25 July 2016 to 26 August 2016.

Consultation Objectives:

The following objectives were identified:

1. Raise awareness of the population's changing household needs and motivation behind the Housing Choice & Supply project and its objectives.
2. To understand the views of a variety of people and organisations on the draft DPC in Newlands and Tawa. In particular, the views around the draft building standards and the draft boundary.
3. Ensure a broad range of people and as many people as possible are aware of the consultation on the draft DPC relevant to Newlands and have their say.
4. Ensure it is easy for people to contribute to the discussion.
5. People understand this is the next stage of the broader discussion and know what happens after this.

This summary document provides a high level summary of community views on the draft Newlands and Tawa DPC. A separate summary document provides information on the views of the community relating to the Tawa town centre improvements.

Consultation Process:

The consultation included posting letters to all ratepayers and home occupiers in Newlands and some ratepayers in Paparangi within close proximity to the draft MDRA boundary.

The mail-out:

- Informed the community that a draft DPC had been prepared for Newlands and Tawa and that the Council was interested in hearing the views of the community in relation to this.
- Made people aware of the new website and the two drop-in sessions which were scheduled in Newlands.
- Included an information leaflet on the draft DPC, which outlined the draft building standards and the location of the draft MDRA boundary.
- Included a hardcopy feedback form.

Five Council planners attended the drop-in sessions at the Newlands Community Centre on Wednesday 10 August from 4pm to 7pm and on Saturday 13 August from 10am to 4pm.

Approximately 70 people attended the sessions across the two days. During these sessions, officers explained details regarding the draft DPC and the wider plan change process and answered questions from the community. Explanatory posters provided information and interactive activities were set up to encourage active participation in the process.

The other activities undertaken during this consultation were:

- A communications strategy was setup aimed at advertising the consultation in Newlands. This included updates on Council Facebook, Neighbourly, Twitter, local newspapers, email alerts, enewsletters, etc.
- Information posters were put up around the Newlands town centre, in bus stops, the supermarket and medical centre.
- Information was included in school newsletters.
- A new website was created (planningoursuburbs.org.nz). This was aimed at providing specific, up-to-date information and allowed people to post their feedback online. Live results were displayed for the community to view, which also showed the Council was being transparent.
- Council officers had a number of informal discussions with various members of the community.

Feedback on the draft District Plan Change:

We received 221 responses from individuals and organisations in the Newlands community. This is more than triple the amount received in the previous consultation. The responses were:

- 213 received from individuals via the feedback forms either, posted, completed online, or emailed to us.
- 8 received from organisations (the Architectural Centre Inc.; Wellington Electricity Lines Limited; Newlands School; Marrich Residential Limited; Woodridge Homes Limited; Tirangi Trust; Tazbed Limited; and DMN limited).

Of these responses:

- 151 were posted;
- 62 were made online; and
- 8 were e-mailed.

Feedback – Overview

The main messages from the latest round of consultation are:

- Majority of respondents agree that as Wellington's population grows and people's housing needs change, the City needs more variety of homes near existing shops, services, public transport and public spaces.
- Majority of respondents think that the size of the area covered by the draft MDRA boundary is 'about right'.
- A slight majority think the standards should be 'more restrictive'. However, the difference in numbers between those who think the standards should be 'more restrictive' and those who think the standards are 'about right' is minor.
- The majority of respondents think that providing more homes is more important than preserving the existing character of neighbourhoods.

- Many respondents are concerned about the potential impacts introducing an MDRA could have on the road network. In particular, respondents were concerned about congestion and safety around Newlands at peak times, an increase of cars parking on the street and the impacts on the public transport system.
- Building standards – The main messages relating to the draft building standards were: standards should require at least 2 off street car parks per dwelling; houses should be of high quality; standards should not allow more than two storeys; and the standards should not allow for natural light to be blocked.
- Some respondents commented that open green spaces should be retained and, in some cases, expanded.
- There are some concerns about the capacity of schools and the safety around schools regarding increased traffic flows.
- Some respondents were concerned about the perceived unfairness in relation to MDRA plan changes being on hold in Khandallah, Karori and Island Bay.

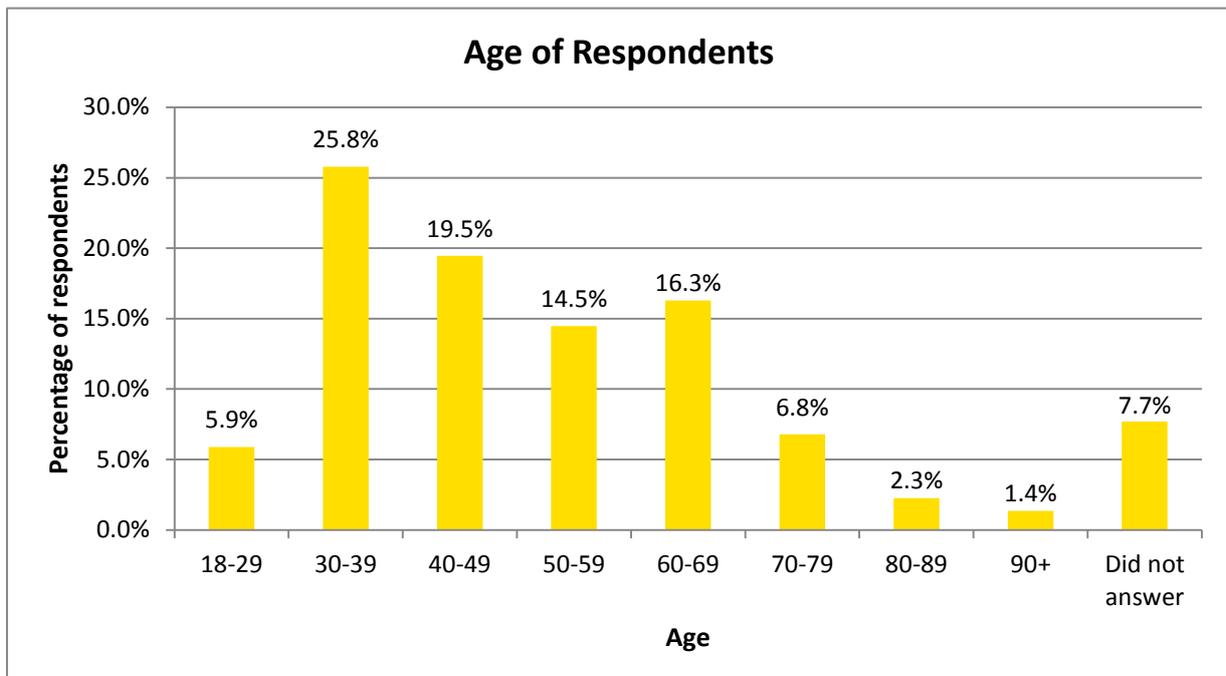
The Respondents:

Age

The majority of responses were received from people between 30 – 69 years of age:

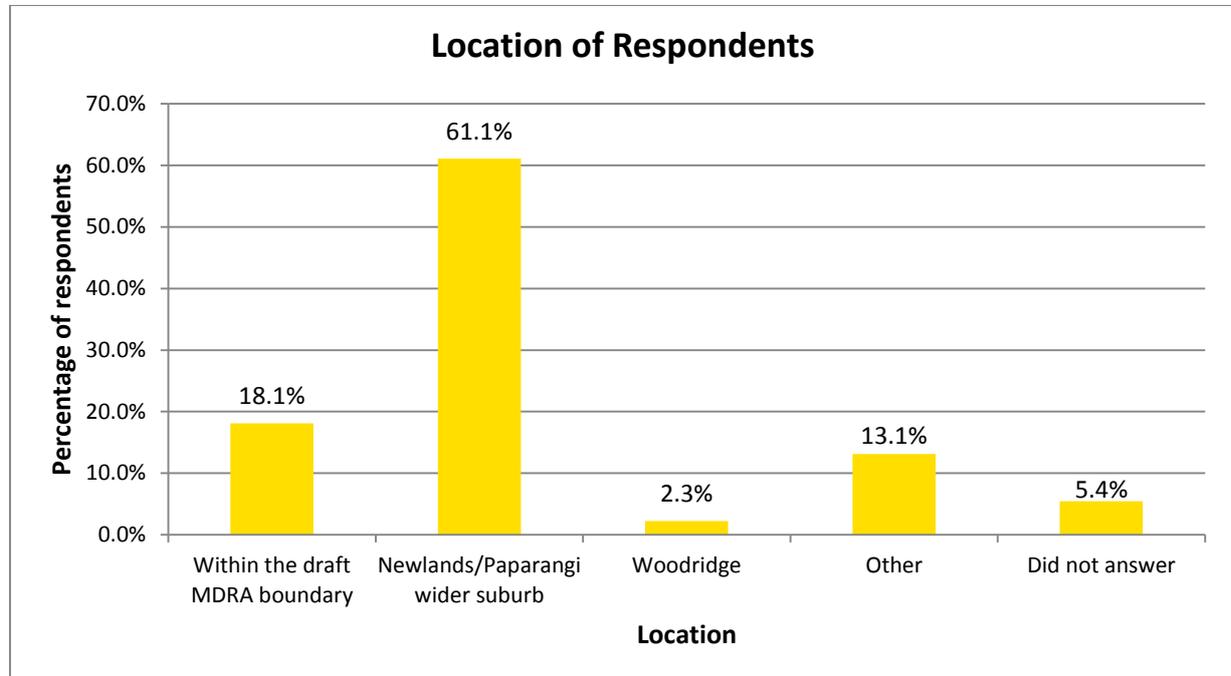
- 76.1% of respondents answered that they were aged 30 – 69;
- 10.5% of respondents answered that they were aged 70 and above;
- 5.9% of respondents answered that they were aged 18 – 29; and
- 7.7% did not provide their age.

A breakdown of the age of respondents is shown below:



Location

Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of respondents (79.2%) were located within the Newlands or Paparangi wider suburb. Only 15.4% of respondents were located outside of Newlands¹. A breakdown of the location of respondents is shown below.



Housing Tenure

87.3% of respondents answered that they own their house. Only 8.1% of respondents answered that they rented and 4.5% did not answer. This has resulted in the consultation results being in favour of the views of people who already own houses.

Housing Needs

- 62.4% of respondents think they will be living in Newlands in 10 years' time;
- 21.3% think they will be living in a different Wellington suburb;
- 6.8% think they will be living outside of Wellington; and
- 9.5% did not respond to the question.

Of those who think they will be living in Wellington:

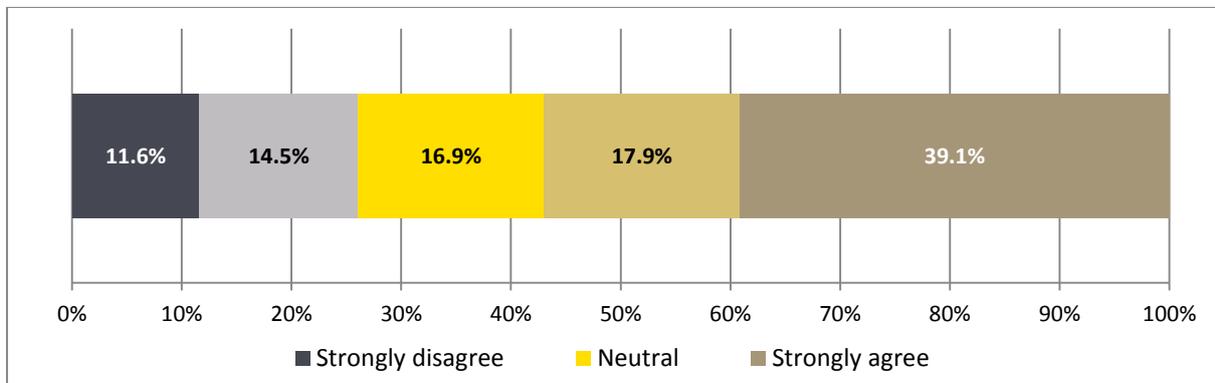
- 49.8% think they will be living in either their current home or a home of similar size;
- 18.6% think they will be living in a larger home;
- 12.7% think they will be living in a smaller, low maintenance home;
- 1.8% think they will be living in a retirement home/aged care facility;
- 0.5% stated 'other'; and
- 16.7% did not respond to the question.

¹ Many of these respondents indicated that they owned property in Newlands, but lived in a different suburb.

Responses to the questions:

As Wellington's population grows and people's housing needs change, we need more variety of homes near existing shops, services, public transport and public spaces.

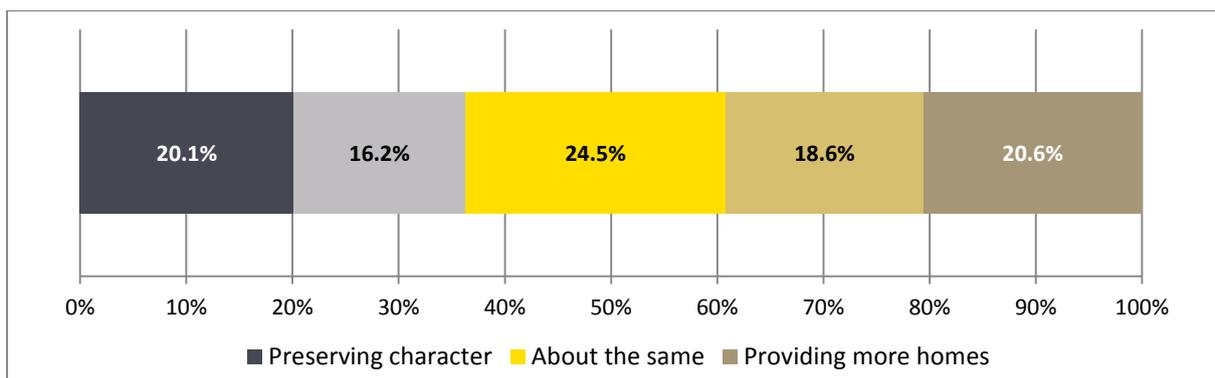
Number of question respondents: 207



- **57%** of respondents **agree** with the above statement:
 - 39.1% strongly agree; and
 - 17.9% agree.
- **26.1%** of respondents **disagree** with the above statement:
 - 11.6% strongly disagree; and
 - 14.5% disagree.
- **16.9%** of respondents remain **neutral** in their views.

What is more important: preserving the existing character of neighbourhoods, or providing additional homes to accommodate growth and changing household needs?

Number of question respondents: 204

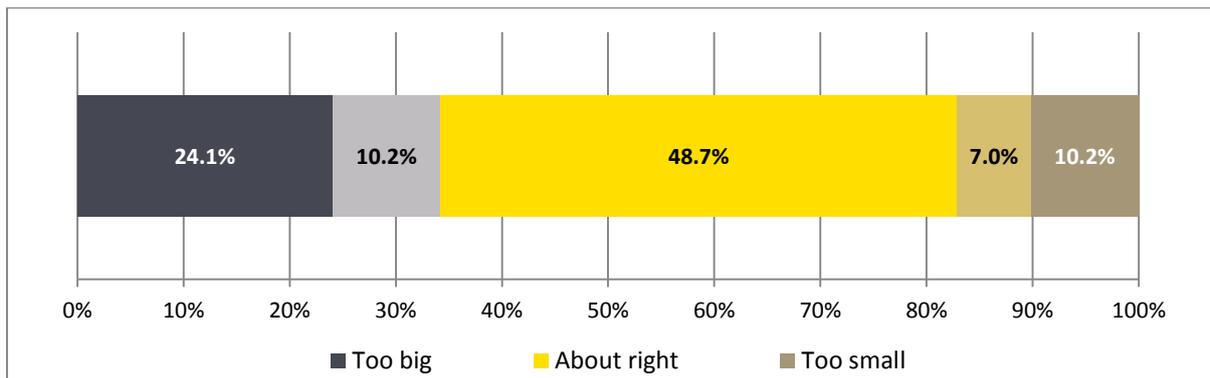


- **39.2%** of respondents think that **providing homes** is more important than preserving character:
 - 20.6% strongly agree; and
 - 18.6% agree.

- **36.3%** of respondents think that **preserving character** is more important than providing homes:
 - 20.1% strongly agree; and
 - 16.2% agree.
- **24.5%** of respondents think that the importance of providing homes and preserving character are **about the same**.

What do you think about the size of the area covered by the draft MDRA boundary?

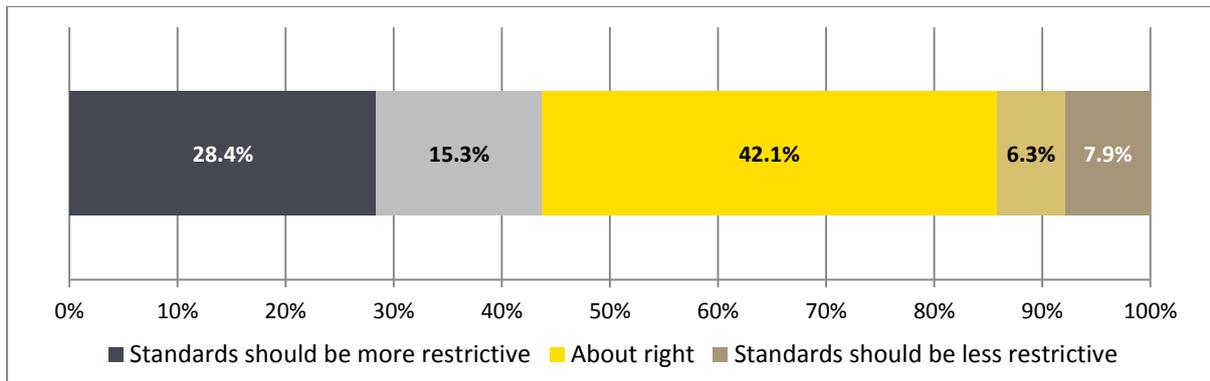
Number of question respondents: 187



- **48.7%** of respondents think the size of the draft MDRA boundary is **about right**.
- **34.2%** of respondents think the size of the area covered by the draft MDRA boundary is **too big**:
 - 24.1% strongly agree; and
 - 10.2% agree.
- **17.1%** of respondents think the draft MDRA boundary is **too small**:
 - 10.2% strongly agree; and
 - 7% agree.

Have the draft building standards struck the right balance between providing more homes while helping to manage the effects of development on existing properties?

Number of question respondents: 190



- **43.7%** of respondents think that the **standards should be more restrictive**:
 - 28.4% strongly agree; and
 - 15.3% agree.
- **42.1%** of respondents think that the standards **are about right**.
- **14.2%** of respondents think that the **standards should be less restrictive**:
 - 7.9% strongly agree; and
 - 6.3% agree.

Main Themes

The feedback forms also included qualitative (open-ended) questions, which were aimed at encouraging people to elaborate on the responses they provided in the quantitative (Likert scale) questions. The main themes that arose out of these questions are outlined below.

Road Network and Public Transport

Out of the 221 respondents, 79 (35.7%) commented that they had concerns about the road network, including car parking, traffic congestion and the public transport system:

- 46 (20.9%) stated that on street car parking needs to be better managed.
- 30 respondents (13.6%) asked for traffic network/safety improvements.
- 23 (10.4%) specifically stated that the public transport system needs upgrading or that the public transport system will not cope with the increased population from the MDRA.
- 8 specifically asked for a park and ride facility².

Draft MDRA Boundary

- The main reasons respondents regarded the draft boundary as being 'too big' are:
 - Traffic congestion within the draft boundary.
 - The town centre needs to be upgraded to support the increase in population that would result from the draft boundary being the size it currently is.

² Many people who visited the drop-in sessions also expressed an interest in a park and ride facility to assist with improving patronage on public transport.

- 5 respondents indicated that the boundary could be extended beyond the 10 minute walking catchment from the town centre because:
 - There is good access to public transport anywhere in the suburb.
 - A 15 minute walk to the town centre would be an acceptable distance.
 - There are potential sites for re-development outside of the boundary.

Draft Building Standards

- 28 (12.7%) respondents commented that the draft building standards should require at least two car parks per dwelling.
 - Households in Newlands generally own at least two vehicles and these are often parked on the road due to a lack of off-street car parking. This makes the streets narrow and hence contributes to peak time congestion and the streets becoming unsafe.
 - Increasing the amount of households in Newlands will exacerbate this issue.
- 17 (7.7%) respondents commented that the houses should be of high quality design and built with high quality materials.
- 14 (6.4%) respondents commented that the standards should not allow any more than two storeys.
- 10 (4.5%) respondents commented that the building standards should not allow for natural light to be blocked.
 - 7 respondents specifically commented that the draft building recession plane standard should be revised.
- 8 (3.6%) respondents commented that the site coverage standard should be increased.
 - Where this was noted, respondents generally felt that the standards were not allowing the density required to build Medium Density Housing.

Other Comments

- 17 (7.7%) respondents commented that open, green areas in and around Newlands should be retained and/or expanded.
 - Three respondents noted that there is active birdlife in the area which should be retained.
- 16 (7.2%) respondents noted that this project should also include other parts of Wellington and that it seemed unfair Newlands and Tawa were being targeted.
- 14 (6.3%) respondents commented that they were concerned about either the capacity of schools or safety around schools regarding increased traffic flows.
- 12 (5.4%) respondents commented that medium density housing should only be built in new subdivisions/greenfield areas.
- 8 (3.6%) respondents commented that the Newlands Town Centre is inadequate to meet the needs of an increased population and needs improvements.
- Wellington Electricity Lines Limited and the Architectural Centre provided detailed submissions on specific provisions and objectives in the draft plan change document. These responses will be analysed and considered separately.

Summary

The main findings from the **July – August 2016** consultation period are:

- Majority of respondents think that as Wellington's population grows and people's housing needs change, the City needs more variety of homes near existing shops, services, public transport and public spaces.
- Majority of respondents think that providing homes is more important than preserving character in neighbourhoods.
- Majority of respondents think that the size of the area covered by the draft MDRA boundary is 'about right'.
- There is similarity between the number of respondents who think the draft building standards should be more restrictive and those who think the standards are 'about right'.
- Common responses included the impact an increased population could have on the road network, parking and public transport.
- Building standards:
 - Increase the car parking standard to require at least 2 off-street car parks per dwelling.
 - The design of medium density housing and the building materials need to be of high quality.
 - Some people specifically commented that standards should not allow housing in excess of two storeys and that natural light should not be blocked by buildings.
- Other comments included concerns about loss of greenery and open space areas, concern about Newlands and Tawa being unfairly targeted, concern about the capacity of schools and safety around them regarding increased traffic flows, and comments suggesting that medium density housing should only be built in new subdivisions/greenfield areas.