

Council Briefing Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, 19 February, 2019
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Location: Council Chamber
Forum North, Rust Avenue
Whangarei

In Attendance

Her Worship the Mayor Sheryl Mai
Cr Stu Bell
Cr Gavin Benney
Cr Crichton Christie
Cr Vince Cocurullo
Cr Tricia Cutforth
Cr Shelley Deeming
Cr Sue Glen
Cr Phil Halse
Cr Cherry Hermon
Cr Greg Innes (Chairperson)
Cr Greg Martin
Cr Sharon Morgan
Cr Anna Murphy

Scribe

Sue Reid (Democracy Adviser)

Cr Innes convened the meeting.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Reports

2.1 Urban and Services Plan Changes (Briefing 1)

A presentation was given on the Urban and Services Plan Changes by the following staff members:

Melissa McGrath (Manager – District Plan, District Plan)
Evan Cook (Senior Planner, District Plan)
Robert Burgoyne (Planner, District Plan)
Sarah Brownie (Planner, District Plan)
Alicia Lawrie (Strategic Planner, Strategy)

A draft booklet (District Plan Changes: Urban and Services) was circulated which was a simple way to read through the zones. This booklet will be included in an information pack every ratepayer will receive and Councillors were asked for feedback.

Melissa McGrath advised there would be two briefings and this one was to give councillors an overview of the Strategic Direction and Urban Zones and Precincts. The second briefing would be held on 5 March 2019 and would be a recap of the first briefing and an opportunity for any follow up discussion. Briefing 2 would also be an overview of:

- Port, Airport and Hospital Zones
- Open Space Zones
- District Wide Chapters

Followed by another opportunity for questions and discussion.

Melissa outlined the Plan Change process, the next steps and confirmed it could be completed in the two-year timeframe.

Evan Cook advised that, for consistency, the government wants all the districts plans standardised under the National Planning Standards. There are mandatory directions that cannot be changed:

- Zone names
- Definitions
- Zone mapping colours/symbols
- Chapter structure/format

All these have to be consistent across the country to align with the National Planning Standards coming out in April this year.

Evan outlined the changes in the National Planning Standards and it was noted that an overview of the Strategic Direction is provided from Pages 7-17 of the briefing agenda. This provides an overview understanding of what is trying to be achieved. It is written in jargon-free language wherever possible. All plans must have strategic objectives and policies and identify significant resource management issues. This strategic direction replaces Chapter 6 – urban form and development, has policies that describe criteria for different zones and rural area objectives and policies.

There was discussion around:

- High growth areas and how development on negative growth is dealt with. Also, the need to monitor and manage growth (including negative

growth) so as soon as there is a dip the management of that can be looked at.

Tony Horton (Manager – Strategy) advised that the main tool used to get a flavour of what is happening in the district is the Growth Strategy (every two or three years) but other tools, for example the Long Term Plan, could also be utilised.

- The involvement of institutes such as property developers and surveyors and that community groups have provided feedback.
- Spatial planning and building on ridge lines and cutting into hills. Evan advised that the Coastal and Landscapes Plan Changes address building on ridge lines.
- Tangata whenua would be involved in the principles and policies.

Robert Burgoyne explained the 13 Proposed Urban Zones, the Amenity Scale (which was a high-level overview of the zones) and the NPS on Urban Development Capacity (which requires us to have sufficient capacity). This identified where there was a shortfall and, after consultation and getting model results, all the shortfalls have been addressed so there is now sufficient capacity for all the sectors.

Robert advised all the zones fit together (similar to a Rubik cube) so there is sufficient capacity and design and nature of activities in one zone to be compatible with other zones. He advised that the pieces within the chapters can be tweaked to a degree, but it does all work together as a package and a shift in one place might change this

It was noted that land ownership needs to be considered when looking at proposed zoning but Robert advised that on the landowner side there is a limited amount the District Plan can do.

Alicia Lawrie took the meeting through the zones, the different rules applied, together with urban design guidelines. She explained that there is a difference between urban design and architecture as urban design is about the surroundings. They are non-statutory documents.

It was felt there could be more guidance about improving services and what we can do. Robert advised this will be covered at the next meeting, including Three Waters and the policies relating to it.

Sarah Brownie covered the slide on Urban Design and Amenity and gave light and ventilation as examples of things that needed to be controlled. There was some discussion around height restrictions and whether the height started from original ground level or the new ground level when the level had been raised.

There was a query around the name 'Nesting Tables' and Robert referred the meeting to Page 161 of the agenda which showed the definitions and clarified where certain activities sit. It was felt that there is a need for it to be more intuitive and a description to understand it.

Melissa McGrath said there has to be one subdivision chapter so the package includes that. Each zone has a minimum or maximum average site area and a site shape and size requirement.

There was discussion around:

- Purchasing more land for reserves as part of the design of a subdivision. This will be discussed under Open Space at the next briefing.
- Work has been done with Parks using land Council owns and particularly for neighbourhood parks and open spaces. This is work in progress. There has also been legal advice sought around this and development contributions.
- Where Council features in footpaths and who has the decision over size, etc. Melissa advised that the engineering standards do not specify in enough detail what size a park should be and the engineering standards around that will be looked at.
- The interpretation between planning staff and consent staff to ensure the mechanisms are in place that the outcome is one for the community as a whole.

Sarah Brownie led the presentation through Special Purpose Zones and explained these were used if we cannot get the outcome we want using the other standard zones.

There was discussion around these zones, covering active open space, maximum height, the possibility of three-storey buildings within ten metres of the waterfront, water quality and ecological concerns. It was noted that the next briefing will cover water quality issues and that the District Plan team would reconsider appropriate building heights near the waterfront.

Further discussion was around whether these descriptions were the same for the whole country, for example some of the shopping centres around New Zealand are open 24/7 and have high noise all the time. It was asked if special zones could be highlighted and identified for Whangarei.

Robert Burgoyne covered the Precincts slide and explained the underlying and overlying rules for the three areas.

3. Closure of Meeting

The meeting concluded at 12:05 p.m.