



Hamilton City Council – Staff Feedback

Long Term Insights Briefing 2025 – Opportunities and Impacts Associated with the Trend Towards Residential High-Rise Housing

Ministry of Housing and Urban Development

1 November 2024

Improving the Wellbeing of Hamiltonians

Hamilton City Council is focused on improving the wellbeing of Hamiltonians through delivering to our five priorities of shaping:

- **A city that's easy to live in**
- **A city where our people thrive**
- **A central city where our people love to be**
- **A fun city with lots to do**
- **A green city**

The topic of this staff feedback is aligned to all of Hamilton City Council's five priorities.

Council Approval and Reference

This staff feedback was approved by Hamilton City Council's Chief Executive on 1 November 2024.

Feedback # 777

It should be noted that the following feedback is from staff at Hamilton City Council and does not therefore necessarily represent the views of the Council itself.

Introduction

1. Hamilton City Council staff welcome the opportunity to provide feedback to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development on its **Long Term Insights Briefing 2025 – Opportunities and Impacts Associated with the Trend Towards Residential High-Rise Housing**.
2. This feedback was developed by Hamilton City Council staff from the Urban and Spatial Planning Unit and the Sustainable Communities Unit – Strategy, Growth and Planning Group.
3. High-rise housing is an important issue, and the contents of this briefing will be useful to Hamilton City Council as we move towards greater density residential developments.
4. We support the direction of the briefing topic being focused on the opportunities and impacts associated with residential high-rise housing. Our feedback consists of support for the proposed sub-topics, suggestions for how the sub-topics could be refined, and ideas for new sub-topics.

Key Messages and Recommendations

5. Support for Existing Sub-Topics

6. We have a particular interest in the following sub-topics and support their inclusion in the brief:

- High-rise housing impacts on affordable housing and housing supply. Affordability and housing supply is an important issue for Hamilton City Council to address at a local level. We are interested in understanding how these issues trend across the country.
- High-rise housing impacts and opportunities for intensification and resilience. We are working through two plan changes: Plan Change 12, which enables housing intensification ([refer here](#)), and Plan Change 14, which addresses resilience to flood hazards ([refer here](#)). We are interested to read about national trends for these two topics in the briefing.

7. Suggestions for Refining Sub-Topics

8. Several sub-topics could be of interest to us depending on how the research is framed. We would like to suggest some refinements to the following sub-topics:

- Acceptability to town and city residents – we would like to see research into the features of high-rise buildings that make them acceptable, or not, to residents. Research in Melbourne showed that communities opposed to higher-density housing tend to oppose the architectural style, rather than the typology itself ([refer here](#)). Similar research in New Zealand should be drawn on to understand how to move forward with high-rise housing (for example, Future Intensive: Insights for Auckland's Housing – [refer here](#)).
- Development and operating costs – local developers tell us that residential buildings above three storeys are not currently feasible. Understanding whether this is a trend across the country or internationally, and what makes these developments unfeasible will be useful moving forward. It would also be useful to know if local councils can make practical changes to improve feasibility.
- Meeting the accessibility needs of households – we would like to see this issue addressed in terms of accessibility inside the building for residents, as well as the integration of high-rise residential buildings with surrounding land uses (including parks and open space) and sustainable transport options to promote accessibility.

- Resilience – we would be interested in the impacts of and opportunities to mitigate the urban heat island effect and flooding for high-rise residential. Additionally, we are interested in insights as to how high-rise residential can be designed to be more resilient to future climate change challenges.

9. Ideas for New Sub-Topics

10. Further to the above, we have outlined the following three additional ideas for sub-topics that could be useful to us as a local government organisation:

- Defining ‘residential high-rise’ – New Zealand’s diverse urban areas are starting from different places when it comes to high-rise housing. ‘High-rise’ in Auckland means something different to ‘high-rise’ in Hamilton, where the tallest residential buildings are 6-8 storeys.
- High-rise in the context of fragmented land parcels – this is a key challenge to developing high-rise buildings in the central city. We are interested in a national perspective on this issue.
- Urban design in suburban areas – similar to the above, developing high-rise residential is a challenge in suburban areas where subdivision patterns dictate or inhibit good urban design outcomes. For example, ‘sausage flats’ in areas with long, narrow lots. What levers could be used to promote site amalgamation?

Further Information and Opportunity to Discuss our Feedback

11. Should the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development require clarification of the feedback from Hamilton City Council staff, or additional information, please contact **Mark Davey** (Unit Director Urban and Spatial Planning) on **021 242 8024** or email mark.davey@hcc.govt.nz in the first instance.
12. Hamilton City Council representatives would welcome the opportunity to discuss the content of this feedback in more detail with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.
13. We look forward to seeing the outcome of the research.

Yours faithfully



Lance Vervoort
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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