

# Community Engagement on Housing Intensification in Lower Hutt (Draft Plan Change 56) May 2022

Following is a summary of the feedback Hutt City Council received from the community on the proposals to implement the Government's legislative changes to enable higher and denser housing.

The engagement period ran for four weeks and the public was invited to complete an online survey through the Council's Have Your Say platform. Alternatively, feedback could be provided in longer formats such as email or letter.

Many of the changes that will be made to the existing planning rules are mandatory requirements through the legislation. However, there are still some matters that the community can influence and this was the focus of this engagement. These matters include the scope of 'walkable catchments' (which will determine the extent of increased building heights and densities around key centres and public transport stops) and design standards that could be introduced to support intensification.

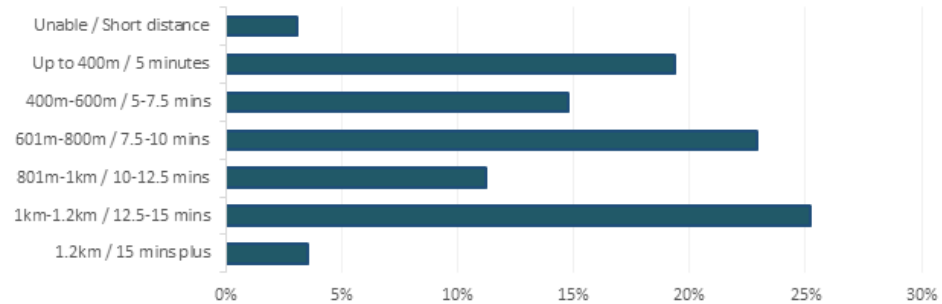
A total of 394 responses were received to the online form.

The feedback received through this engagement will inform the changes to the District Plan via a statutory District Plan change process (Intensification Planning Instrument) in August 2022.

## Walkable Distances

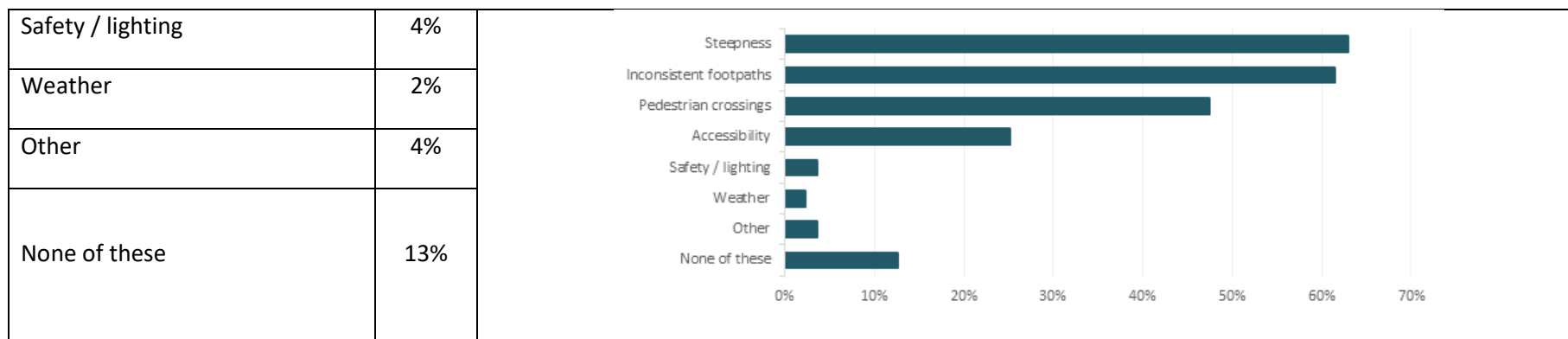
Thinking about when you walk between home, public transport, shops, or work, what distance would you consider walkable?

Unable / short distances	3%
Up to 400m / 5 minutes	19%
400m-600m / 5-7.5 mins	15%
601m-800m / 7.5-10 mins	23%
801m-1km / 10-12.5 mins	11%
1km-1.2km / 12.5-15 mins	25%
1.2km / 15 mins plus	4%



Which of the following, if any, impact on the distance you would walk?

Steepness of journey	63%
Inconsistent footpaths	61%
Lack of pedestrian crossings/traffic lights	47%
Accessibility (ramps on/off footpaths etc.)	25%



### Comments about walking distances in Lower Hutt

Key themes	Footpaths	Safety	Public Transport	Demographic	Suburbs	Topography	Other
Number of comments	21	21	20	10	10	7	21

#### Footpaths

Several respondents stated that footpaths were a problem due to their lack of maintenance, which had impacted their usability for demographics more prone to mobility issues, such as elderly and people with mobility impairments. The presence of intrusive objects on the footpaths, such as bins, tree roots, and cars, were also noted as an issue that impacted respondents' experience on the footpaths.

#### Safety

Safety included lighting, crossings, and accessibility concerns. Respondents noted that having good street lighting and more visible places to cross the road were important to their view of safety in Lower Hutt. The high speed of vehicles near existing pedestrian crossings impacted some respondents' perception of safety, along with lighting at night while walking through their neighbourhood.

### **Public Transport**

Accessibility of public transport and concerns relating to the weather were frequently mentioned. Public transport was also often mentioned in relation to comments about what respondents considered to be walkable distances. Some noted that public transport was unsuitable for certain purposes, such as for carrying shopping or transporting children, which affected their choice on whether to drive or not. Adequate shelter from the weather while walking to the station or waiting for the train also impacted on respondents' choices.

### **Demographics**

Walking distances was a prominent theme related to demographics, as several respondents mentioned the mobility needs of the elderly or people with mobility impairments. It was noted by some that accessibility was not to a high standard on footpaths or for long distances.

### **Suburbs (locations)**

These comments referred to suburbs or geographical areas when discussing walkability and the density of buildings. The central business district and Petone were cited for having more amenities and a flatter terrain that was more suitable to walk on. Some respondents thought that the areas directly surrounding the central business district would be suitable for higher density development given their proximity to amenities.

### **Typography (steepness)**

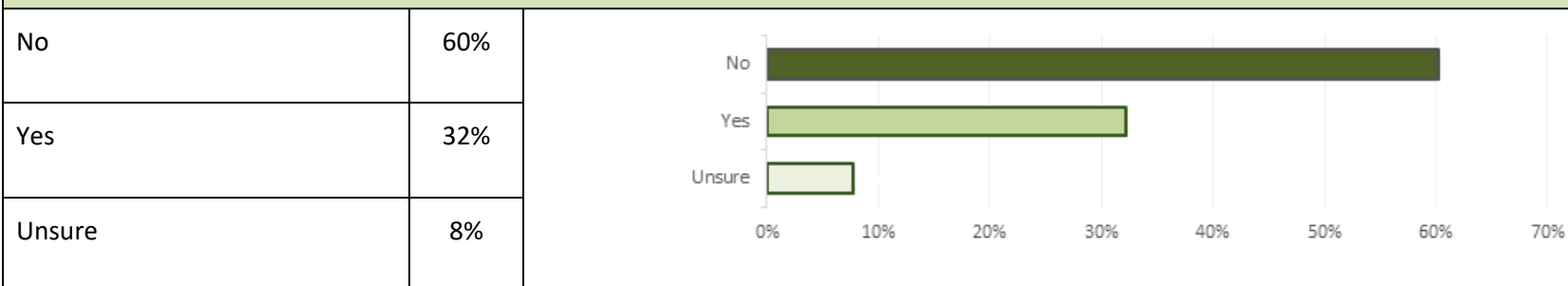
The steep terrain of the western hills was noted as being more difficult to walk on, and thus impacted respondents' decisions to use public transport.

### **Other**

Other comments outside the parameters of the coding above noted "other" issues that respondents faced, including the weather or questioning the definition of what a 'walking distance' was considered to be. Some thought that a practical walking distance was likely to vary from person to person.

### Areas for increased height and density

**Do you think there are areas in Lower Hutt where Council should allow higher housing than what is already being introduced?**

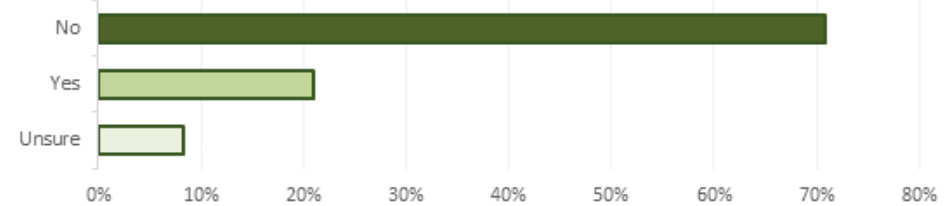


**Where would be suitable for higher housing?**

Area	Number of comments		Area	Number of comments
CBD & Central Hutt	61		Western Hills	2
Petone	20		Eastern Bays	2
Waterloo / Woburn / Waiwhetu	13		Wainuiomata	2
Naenae / Avalon / Epuni	10			
Taita	7		Close to transport &/or amenities	38
Boulcott	4		Everywhere / anywhere	17
Stokes Valley	3		Other	33

**Do you think there are areas in Lower Hutt where Council should allow more dwellings per section than what is already being introduced?**

No	71%
Yes	21%
Don't Know	8%



**Where would be suitable for denser housing?**

Area	Number of comments	Area	Number of comments
CBD & Central Hutt	18	Wainuiomata	6
Petone	16	Boulcott	4
Waterloo / Woburn / Waiwhetu	8	Stokes Valley	2
Naenae / Avalon / Epuni	8	Close to transport &/or amenities	35
Eastern Bays	8	Everywhere / anywhere	14
Taita	6	Other	29

**Further comments on easing height and density restrictions**

Response to closed response question: Are there areas where restrictions could be eased further		Counts of codes used to sort comments			Counts of other thematic codes			
Height	Density	Other	Height / Density	Locational considerations	Parking	Natural hazards	Green space	Aesthetics
Y	Y	13	13	9	0	0	1	1
Y	No or DK	21	15	12	4	2	0	0
N	N	51	68	14	30	11	14	7

Most of the comments reiterated the respondents support for, or opposition to, the easing of either the height or the density restrictions or in some cases both. Those who did not believe there were any areas where these restrictions should be eased were the most likely to add a further comment. These respondents mentioned parking, risks from natural hazards particularly floods, the need for green space and the physical appearance of housing as reasons why the current restrictions should not be eased further.

**Design Standards**

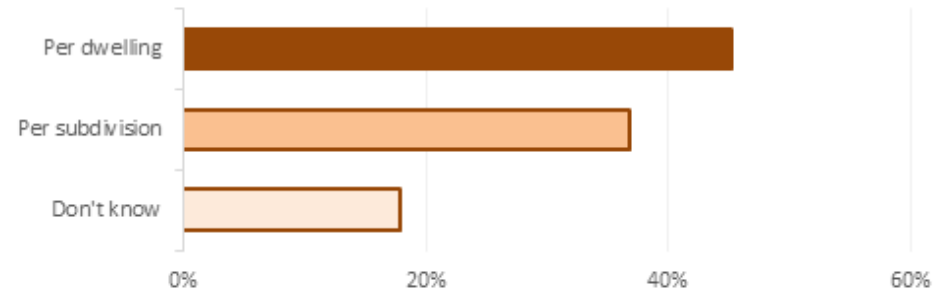
Landscaping standard introduced		Further comments on design standards
Yes	75%	

No	18%		<p>Parking was a significant theme, with several respondents noting that the streets will become increasingly dangerous as more properties will bring in more vehicles. There was concern over a perceived lack of privacy that housing intensification would bring to the existing properties. While some felt that the changes to planning rules were significantly overdue, others pointed out the dangers in monolithic building-scapes and the lack of sunlight that they felt the intensification would bring.</p>
Don't Know	7%		
<b>Street Facing façade standard introduced</b>			
Yes	69%		<p>Over half (56%) of those who responded to this question were in favour of all three standards being introduced. Less than 10% were against the introduction of all three.</p>
No	20%		
Don't Know	11%		
<b>Outlook standard introduced</b>			<p>Outlook standard: Council is able to require a minimum 4m depth and 4m width of outlook space for principal living rooms and a minimum 1m depth and 1m width of outlook space for all other habitable rooms.</p>
Yes	71%		
No	16%		
Don't Know	13%		



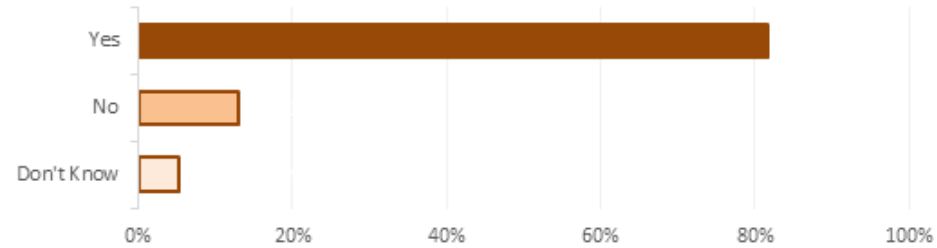
**Should Council charge reserve contributions per dwelling or per subdivision?**

Per dwelling	49%
Per subdivision	35%
Don't Know	17%



**Should Council include a charge to developers that would be used to make public areas more attractive?**

Yes	82%
No	13%
Don't Know	5%



### Character Areas

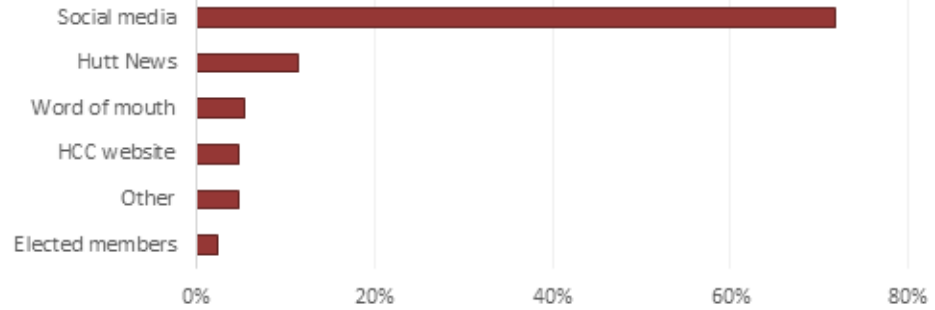
Woburn, Boulcott and Lowry Bay are currently zoned as Special Residential Activity Areas. Respondents were asked to give general comment on how these special character areas should be handled.

Views were mixed - some thought these areas should remain as-is in the District Plan or be expanded while others thought there was no reason to retain a special status for the suburbs. Many respondents who otherwise opposed intensification in general nonetheless thought if it were to happen, that no suburb should be excluded or treated as “special”.

## Who we heard from - Demographics

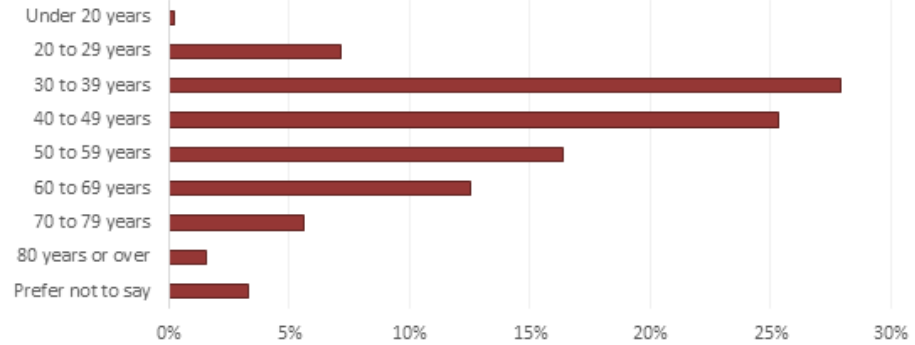
### How did you first hear about this consultation?

Social media	72%
Hutt News	11%
Word of Mouth	5%
HCC Website	5%
Elected members	2%
Other	5%



### Age

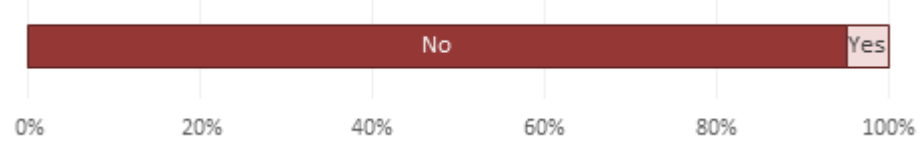
Under 20	0%
20 to 29 Years	7%
30 to 39 years	28%
40 to 49 years	25%
50 to 59 years	16%
60 to 69 years	13%
70 to 79 years	6%
80 years or over	2%



Prefer not to say	3%									
<b>Household Tenure</b>										
Own home	90%	<p>A horizontal bar chart titled 'Household Tenure' showing the distribution of household tenure types. The x-axis represents percentages from 0% to 100% in increments of 20%. The y-axis lists three categories: 'Own', 'Rent', and 'Other'. The 'Own' bar is the longest, extending to 90%. The 'Rent' bar extends to 8%, and the 'Other' bar extends to 2%.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Tenure Type</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Own</td> <td>90%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rent</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>2%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Tenure Type	Percentage	Own	90%	Rent	8%	Other	2%
Tenure Type	Percentage									
Own	90%									
Rent	8%									
Other	2%									
Renting	8%									
Other	2%									

**Are you a developer or involved in the house building industry?**

Yes	5%
No	95%



**Suburb of residence**

Harbour	27%
Eastern	20%
Central	18%
Wainuiomata	10%
Western	9%
Northern	8%
Outside Lower Hutt	1%
Not stated	8%

