

Hutt City Proposed District Plan

Hearing 2 – Business

27 May

14:15 - 14:30

Strategic Direction – Urban Form (Business) and Commercial Zone, Industrial Zone, Hazardous Substances and Contaminated Land chapters.

1. My name is Laura Skilton. I have 35 years transport experience and am familiar with District Plans.
2. My submission is a personal submission and I am not representing anyone. I do not own any commercial property
3. I assume that my statement of evidence has been read so I just want to talk today about three key issues.
4. I am happy to answer questions on other issues in my submission and evidence.

Commercial Sprawl

5. Despite NPS-UD I consider that Lower Hutt does not need all the additional commercial land that is being rezoned, particularly with the increase in height standards.
6. Our society is changing. There are more people working from home, more online shopping and less people entering the workforce as a proportion of total population.
7. Previous trends can not be extrapolated.
8. The number of employees in Hutt CBD has increased at a slower rate than total employment in the Hutt. This is due to employment sprawl into areas that are traditionally non commercial.
9. I believe the Proposed District Plan will actively encourage more employment spread at the detriment of the CBD.
10. If there is more commercial land than required, businesses will move away from the CBD to areas with cheaper rent and free parking. The CBD will have less activity and potentially feel like a ghost town.
11. *There are empty shops in Jackson Street and have been told in Hutt CBD.*

12. My submission and evidence explains why dispersed activities increases car usage. This could result in the Council needing to invest in additional transport upgrades and less people using public transport.
13. The allowance of commercial areas to spread therefore contradicts the Proposed Transport Policies
14. **As a Transport Planner, I recommend keeping similar activities together with clear boundaries and not allow commercial sprawl.**

Mixed Use Zones

15. Thinking about Petone, the Mixed Use Zones are on both sides of Cuba Street, an arterial road.
16. Arterial roads are to get people efficiently between destinations. Vehicle orientated activities such as supermarkets with off street carparks, and service stations are best suited here.
17. Integrated retail developments generally have off street parking areas and therefore are vehicle orientated activities.
18. Commercial activities that attract visitors and rely on on-street parking should not be on arterial roads. The additional parking movements create "side friction" and transport delays. I refer to Appendix C in my evidence.
19. I note also that the Mixed Use Zones discourages visitor parking, therefore further increasing side friction.
20. Commercial activities that attract visitors also increase pedestrian movements both on adjacent footpaths and crossing the road. This is not compatible with the purpose of an arterial road.
21. *I remind the commissioners of my evidence that says the average NZ business employs 4.3 people and 97% employ less than 20. With an average office worker using 10-15m², then this means 97% of businesses can be in neighbourhood zones.*
22. Mixed Use Zones can have retail businesses up to 200m². This is larger than many shops in the CBD and on Jackson Street. It is not small scale as stated in the Officers Report.

23. I consider that allowing Mixed Use Zones on arterial roads contradicts the GPS and the Proposed Transport Policies.
24. As a Transport Planner, I recommend that the only commercial activities on arterial roads should be vehicle orientated activities, with well designed accesses.
25. As a Transport Planner, I strongly oppose visitor orientated businesses being able to front arterial roads, especially if they have no off-street parking.

Number of Zone Types

26. I disagree with the Officers report with respect to the differences with the commercial zone types.
27. The “purpose” definition of the City Centre Zone and Metropolitan Central Zone differ only because the former definition includes “primary location of choice” and the latter is simply “location of choice”.
28. The “purpose” definition of Local Centre Zone and Neighbourhood Centre zone differ only because the former includes “heart of” while the latter includes “important focus”. Other than that, the remaining 88 words in each definition are identical.
29. The “purpose” of Mixed Use Zone includes the words “locations that are appropriate”. As mentioned previously, I consider that the locations chosen are not appropriate, particularly in terms of transport.
30. In terms of rules, you will see in Appendix A and B of my evidence that there is generally no significant difference in the types of activities for the 5 proposed zones. *(note there is an error as parking in Mixed se Zones is only permitted for residential activities. They are discretionary for non-residential visitor parking.)*
31. The only real difference between the commercial zones is where are Active Street Front Overlays are.
32. Reducing the number of commercial zones will also be more consistent with the RMA reform being done by the Government.
33. I recommend reducing the number of commercial zones into vehicle orientated commercial businesses and other commercial businesses.
34. I recommend that the “purpose” definition of each zone is improved and reflect the rules within the zone.