



Implementing national policies for housing intensification in Porirua

- impacts on urban form, sustainability and wellbeing

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The tragedy of intensification?



Or an urban renaissance?



Is it this binary?



Why do we need Housing Intensification?

We need more houses!

- NZ and Porirua has a housing supply and affordability crisis we haven't built enough houses, or the right type of houses, in the right places
- This has led to poor social, economic and general wellbeing outcomes for large parts of our communities
- Our cities are low rise and low density, and don't make efficient use of scarce urban zoned land and expensive infrastructure services
- We are expecting the population to grow by 30K in Porirua over the next 30-years (200,000+ in the Wellington Region)



Porirua races towards \$1m median house ...
stuff.co.nz



Average house prices in Porirua rise ...
stuff.co.nz

The Government's policy response

National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) 2020

- The NPS-UD requires district plans to enable urban growth both 'up' and 'out'
- Overall objective of achieving *well-functioning urban environments*
- Requires 6+ storey buildings within a *walkable catchment* of rapid transit stops and major urban centres

RMA Enabling Housing Supply Amendment Act 2021

- Introduced the Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) allowing three houses up to three stories in residential areas as a permitted activity

Both the NPS-UD and MDRS need to be implemented by the 14 Tier-1 territorial authorities



Well functioning urban environments

Objective and policy from the NPS-UD - sustainability, urban form, well-being and equity at its heart

Objective 1: New Zealand has well-functioning urban environments that enable all people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing, and for their health and safety, now and into the future.

Policy 1: Planning decisions contribute to well-functioning urban environments, which are urban environments that, as a minimum:

- (a) have or enable a variety of homes that:
 - (i) meet the needs, in terms of type, price, and location, of different households; and
 - (ii) enable Māori to express their cultural traditions and norms; and
- (b) have or enable a variety of sites that are suitable for different business sectors in terms of location and site size; and
- (c) have good accessibility for all people between housing, jobs, community services, natural spaces, and open spaces, including by way of public or active transport; and
- (d) support, and limit as much as possible adverse impacts on, the competitive operation of land and development markets; and
- (e) support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions; and
- (f) are resilient to the likely current and future effects of climate change.

Identifying areas for high density housing

- Further refinement and application of the objective and policy through development of primary and secondary assessment criteria (Porirua specific)

Primary Criteria for High Density Resi Zone

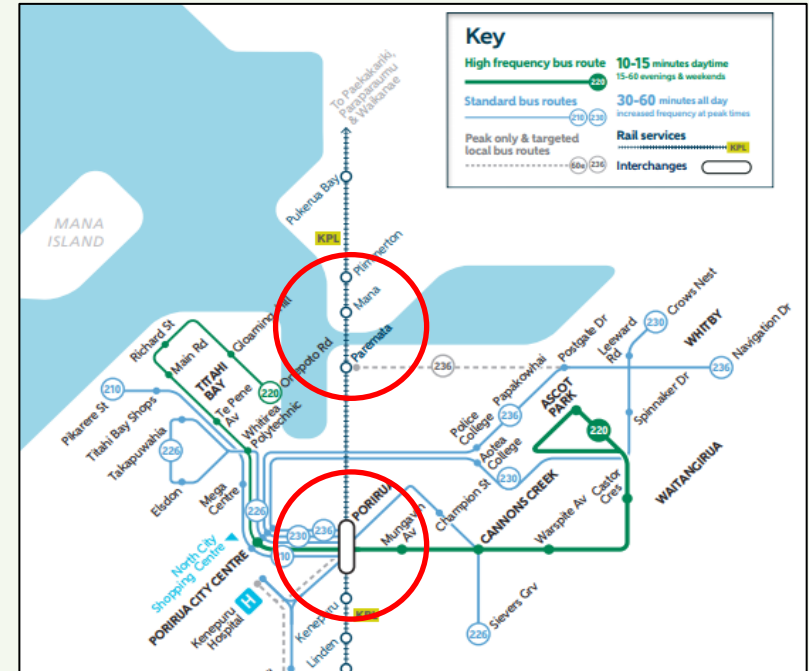
800m walkable catchment to a train station and/or the City Centre

1200m walking distance to a supermarket

800m walking distance to a primary school

800m walking distance to a local centre

400m walking distance to a local park



Porirua public transport network

- Secondary criteria includes: walking distance from early childhood centres, secondary schools, community facilities, libraries, medical centres, marae, natural open spaces (beaches, mountains etc) and sports fields

Spatial application through the District Plan

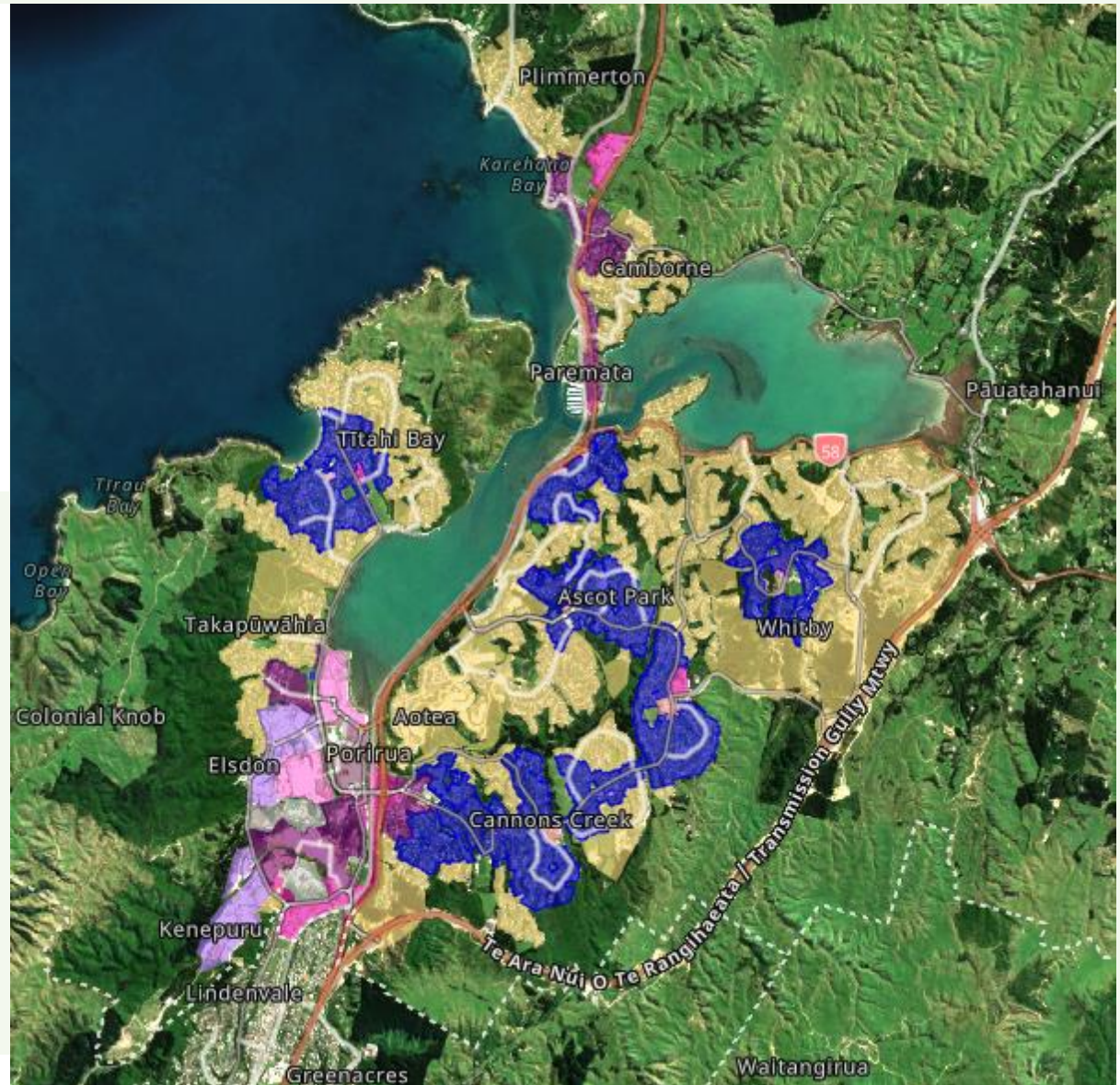
High Density Residential Zone - 22m permitted (6 storeys)



Medium Density Residential Intensification Precincts - 18m permitted (5 storeys)



Medium Density Residential Zone - 12m permitted (3 storeys)



Urban Intensification variation to the District Plan

- The NPS-UD and MDRS need to be incorporated into and implemented through the Proposed District Plan
- This is in the form of a variation (change) to the PDP that introduced new objectives, policies, rules, standards, zones, precincts and qualifying matters
- Supported by extensive evidence and evaluation and assessment reports (s32 RMA)

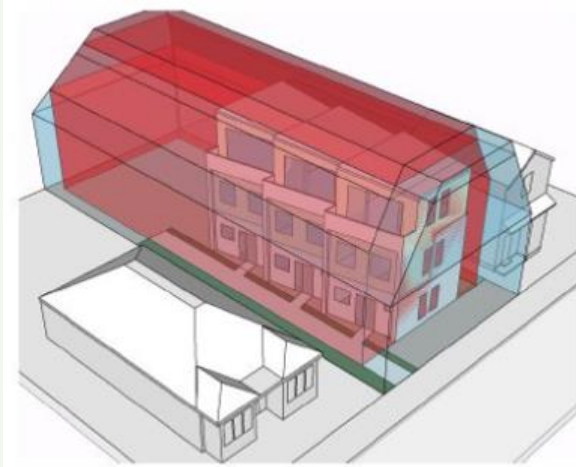


Themes from submissions

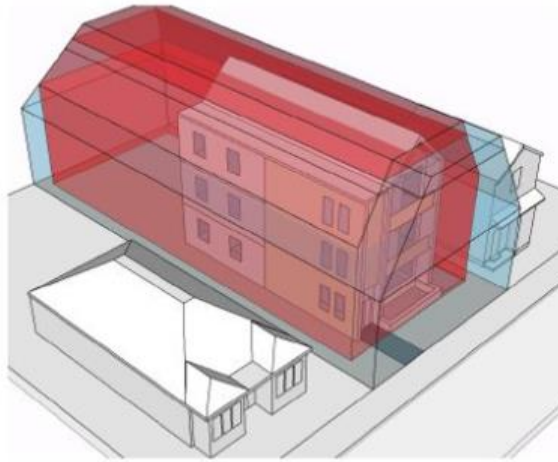
- 118 submissions were received comprising just over 1,300 submission points
- The majority of submissions are opposed to further housing intensification, the Medium Density Residential Standards, or aspects of them
- Many submitters question whether there is adequate infrastructure capacity to support intensification
- conflicting requests from Government agencies and key stakeholders for substantial further up-zoning and de-zoning
- Infrastructure providers are seeking a range of additional 'qualifying matters' to protect assets from the effects of intensification

Medium Density Residential Standards visualised

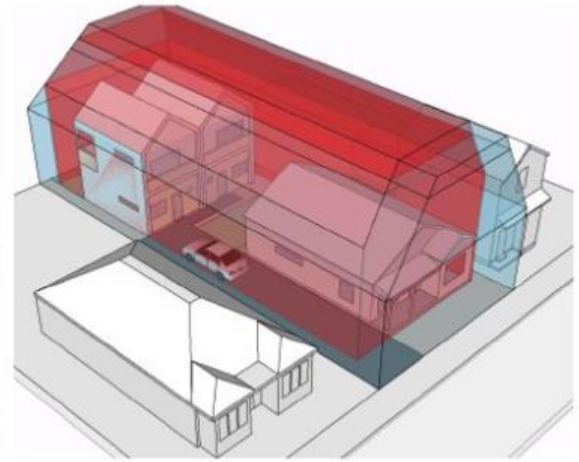
Option 1 - Terraced townhouses



Option 2 - Low-rise apartment block



Option 3 - Existing & duplex townhouses



Potential effects of intensification and mitigation

Potential effects

- Loss of sunlight and daylight for neighbouring properties 'shading'
- Overlooking and loss of privacy for neighbouring properties
- Increased on-street parking
- Servicing and access issues e.g. refuse storage and servicing

Mitigation of effects

- Quality urban design and urban design guidance
- Comprehensive rather than infill development
- Need to accept change in the urban environment!



Shading analysis and wellbeing effects

Cuts to the heart of protecting wellbeing through land use planning rules

- The red shading shows steep south facing slopes
- Potential for complete loss of sunlight during winter months for 'down slope' properties
- Unmitigated effects aren't acceptable
- Daylight more important than sunlight
- Affects warmth, light, serotonin levels, circadian rhythms and mood

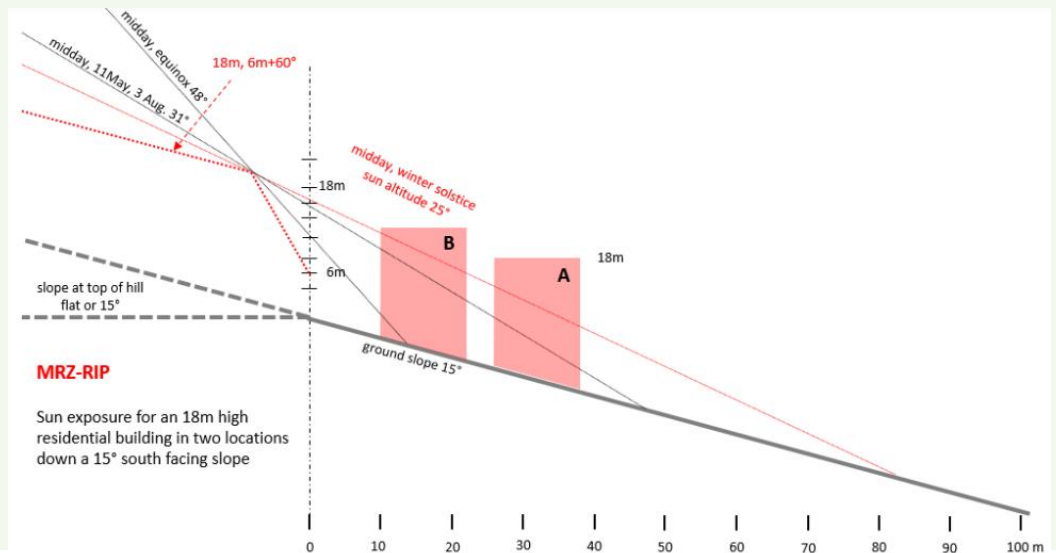
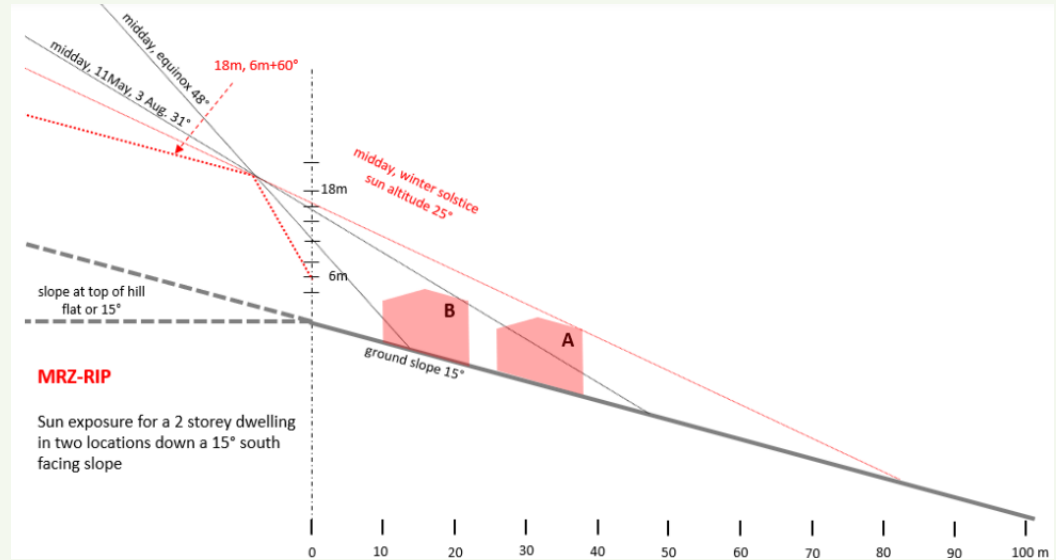
'As a rule of thumb, 70% of living rooms and private outdoor spaces should receive a minimum of three hours direct sunlight between 9am and 3pm in mid-winter'

Motu Public Policy Research Trust & McIndoe Urban

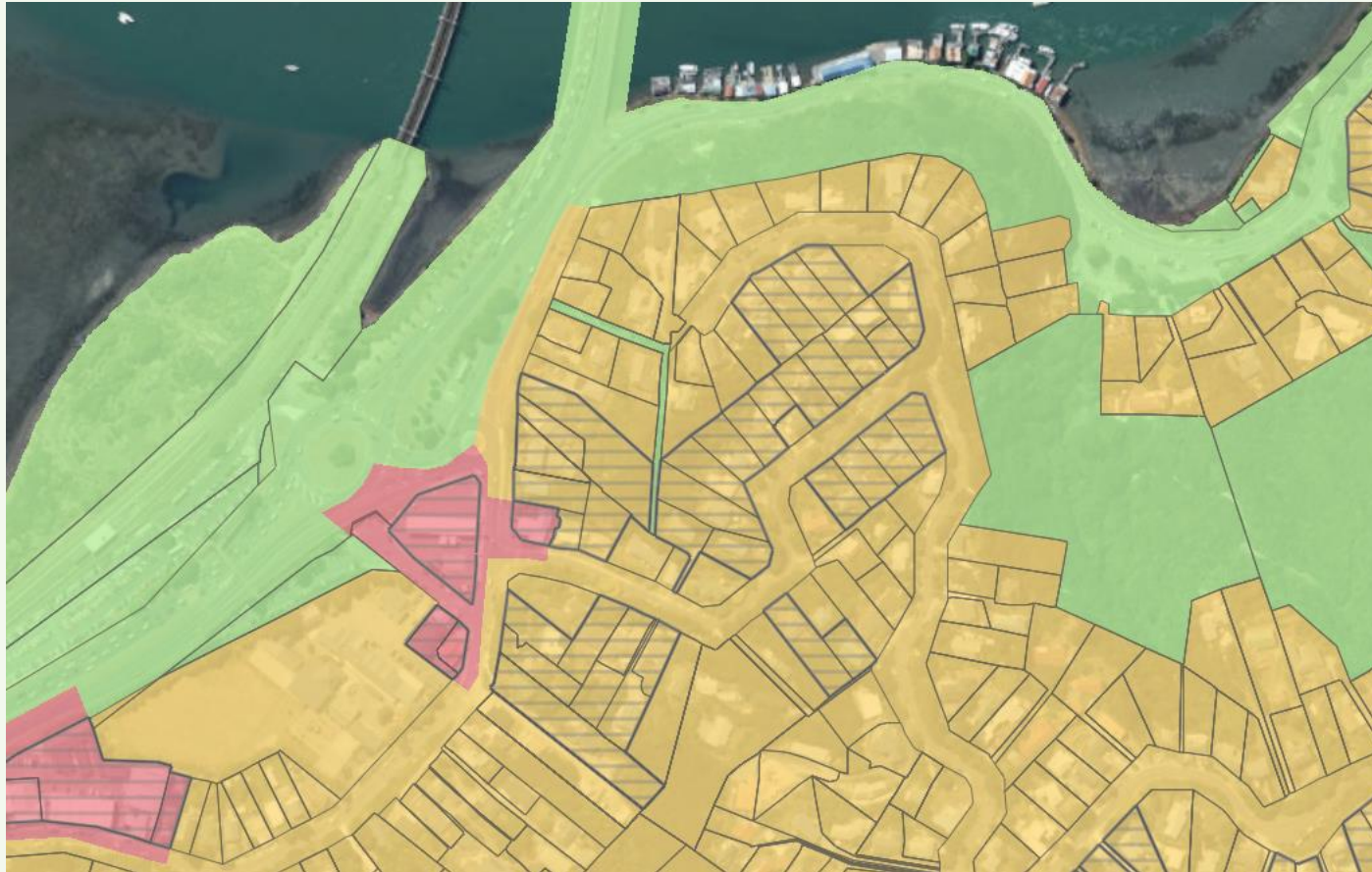


Shading analysis and wellbeing effects (cont.)

- Large areas within residential zones feature steep south facing slopes
- Makes for a 'patchwork' of height control areas that requires careful justification
- Community largely oblivious although some strong opposition from developers and key stakeholders



Shading analysis and wellbeing effects

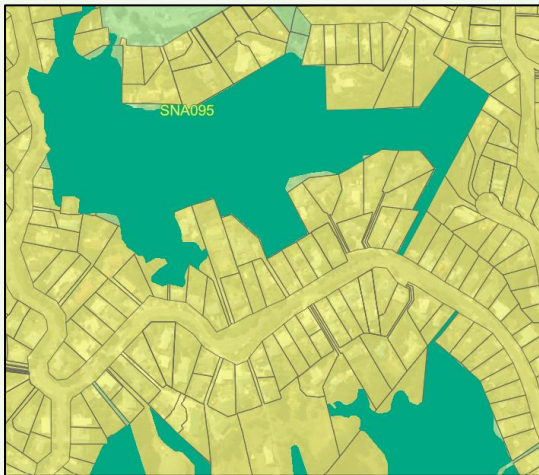


Height Control (Variation 1)

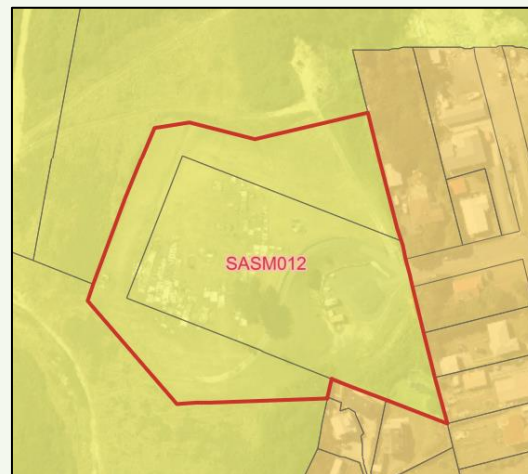


Areas we need to protect from development

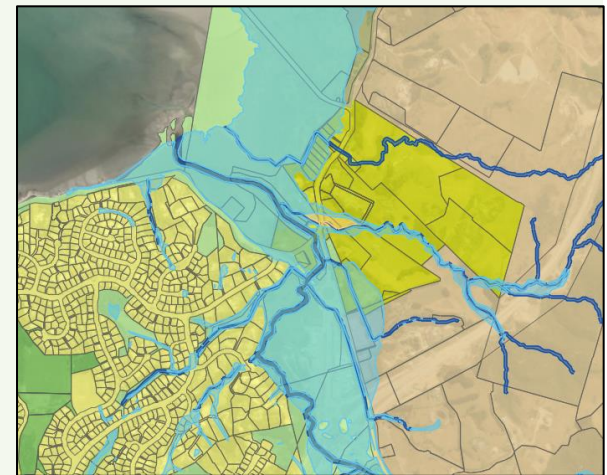
- Natural and physical resources that we want to protect in Porirua are generally mapped and shown as **overlays** in the PDP
- These include Significant Natural Areas (SNA), Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes, Historic Heritage and Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori (SASM) - all key to maintaining wellbeing in a broad sense
- Areas at risk from Natural Hazards like flooding, and set backs from key infrastructure like the National Grid, are also shown as overlays
- Generally housing development within overlays is to be avoided



SNA Overlay

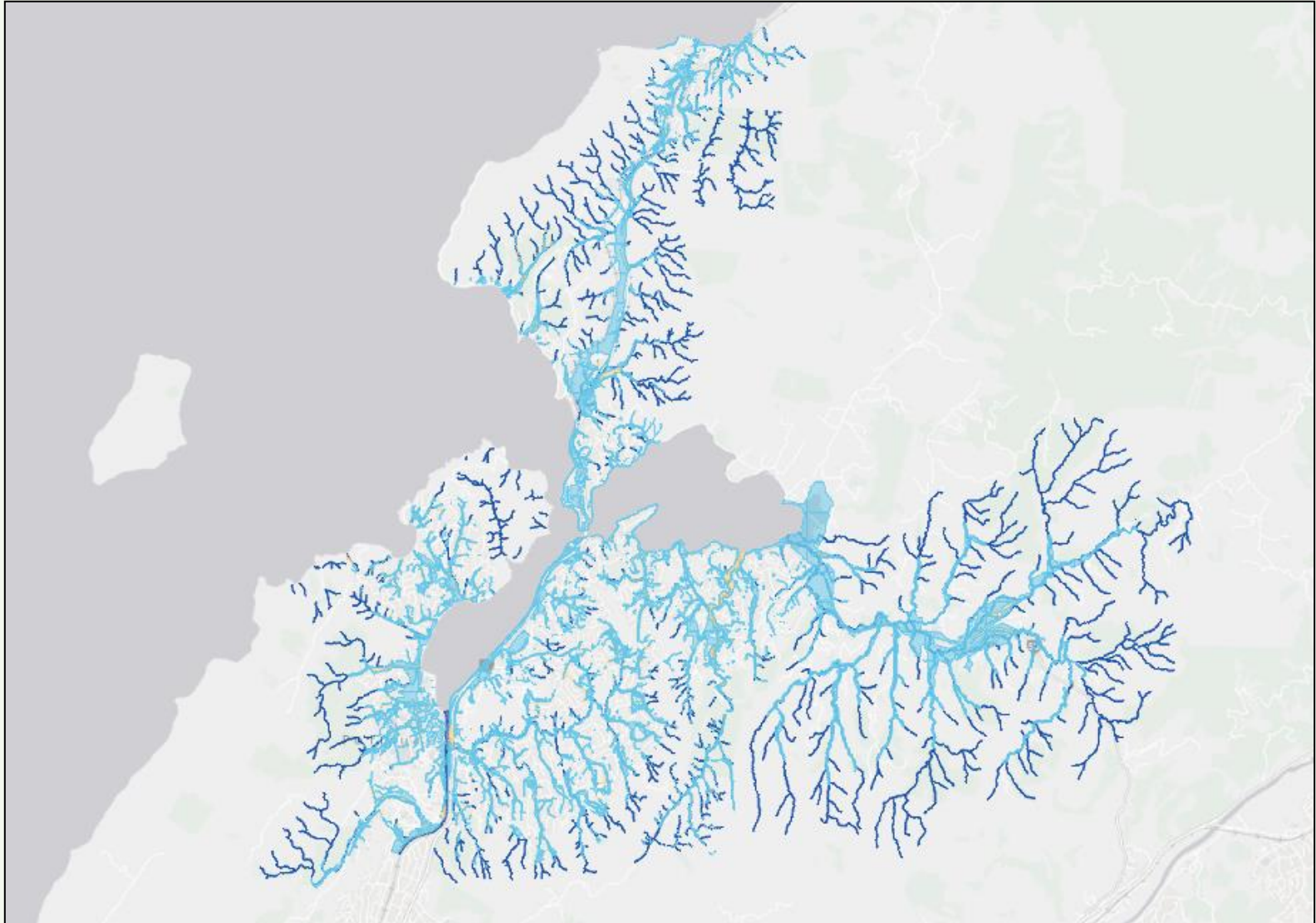


SASM Overlay



Flooding Overlay

Flood Hazard Mapping - 1 in 100-year event

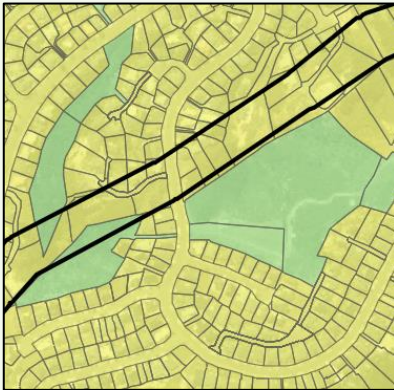


Qualifying matters

Qualifying matters relate to values that may require the Medium Density Residential Standards to be modified

These are typically building height restriction in areas such as:

- Sites adjacent to key infrastructure like the National Grid
- Sites adjacent to Historic Heritage and SASM sites
- On steep south facing slopes to avoid shading lower properties



National Grid Corridor

Lost housing capacity assessment

- Theoretical housing capacity of 224,767 houses even accounting for 'lost development capacity' on residential sites subject to qualifying matters

What could we expect to see?

- In reality we will not see many 6-storey residential buildings in the short term
- Over time we will likely see some 6-storey buildings mixed with medium density buildings (3 and 4 storeys)
- There are no *minimum* height or density standards in the High Density Residential Zone – developers don't have to build to 6-storeys



Will this lead to increased urban intensification?

- There's no guarantee more houses will actually get built over and above those already anticipated
- Numerous non-planning related variables influence the demand for and supply of housing:
 - Government investment (principally Kaingā Ora)
 - State of the national and regional economy
 - Immigration and population growth
 - Infrastructure constraints
 - Interest rates
 - Market perceptions
 - Motivated developers with access to capital
 - Building costs and access to building supplies
 - Access to skilled labour
- No major new buildings in the City Centre for 20-years despite planning rules already allowing them



How will these changes impact Council services?

Policy, Planning and Regulatory Services

- Potentially more resource consent applications although more permitted development also
- More building consents to be processed
- A stronger monitoring and compliance presence required
- Stronger by-laws and strategy led approach

Three waters and solid waste

- Further demand on our under-capacity three waters networks and services
 - Heightens the importance of LGA tools - Development Contributions, Development Agreements and LTP funding
 - These need to work in an integrated manner with district plan infrastructure and three waters provisions
- Long term bulk water supply and wastewater treatment and disposal issues
- Similar issues with solid waste management and disposal
- Need to divert waste from landfill

How will these changes impact Council services?

Transport

- Greater demand for on-street parking
- Need for a new approach to street form and function
- Increased trip generation and traffic congestion, and declining levels of service
- Demand for improved active transport infrastructure
- Demand for improved public transport services

Parks, Libraries and Community Facilities

- Need for more and higher quality open spaces, recreational spaces and venues
- Greater demand for community facilities and services

Climate Change

- Mitigation - how can we accommodate growth and decrease carbon emissions to mitigate climate change?
- Adaptation - how do we make new development and infrastructure resilient to the effects of climate change?

Thank You