

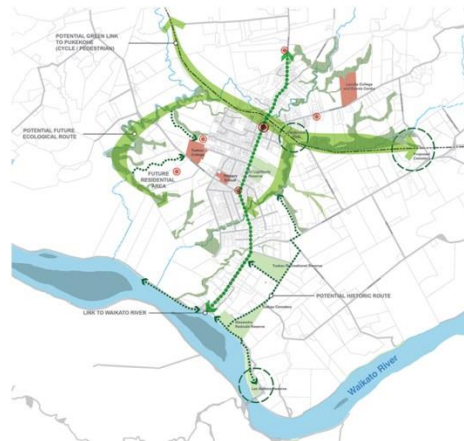
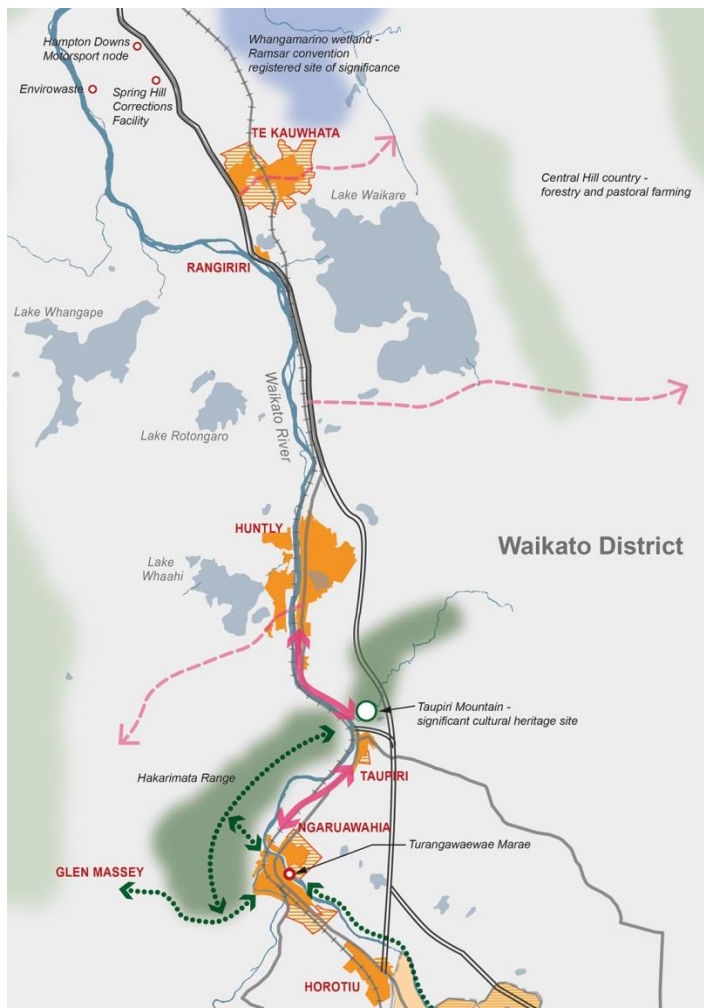
Report

Waikato District Council District Plan Review: Assessment of Options for Urban Design Guidance

Prepared for Waikato District Council

Prepared by Beca Ltd (Beca)

27 June 2016



Revision History

Revision N ^o	Prepared By	Description	Date
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Document Acceptance

Action	Name	Signed	Date
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on behalf of	Beca Ltd		

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Executive Summary

Beca has been engaged to undertake an expert assessment of the Waikato District Council's (WDC) existing urban design guidelines and provide recommendations as to how these may best be rationalised or otherwise provided for within the Waikato District Plan review. Supported by a clearly documented methodology, this assessment will assist to inform the Section 32 evaluation that will underpin the provisions within the Proposed Waikato District Plan as they relate to urban design.

For Waikato District Council (a signatory of the Urban Design Protocol), the outcomes of this assessment include recommendations to assist WDC to make an informed decision as to how the existing guidelines within the Operative Waikato District Plan are most appropriately carried forward to the Proposed District Plan, and other mechanisms (e.g. rules, standards and assessment matters) available to assist in promoting appropriate urban design outcomes for the district.

This report provides a record of the detailed assessment of options that have informed the overall recommendations including the following:

- Problem Definition
- National and Local Policy Context
- Relevant Resource Management Issues
- Draft District Wide Urban Design Objective
- Preliminary Section 32 review of the draft objective
- Assessment of long list of options
- Detailed option assessment of preferred options, including efficiency and effectiveness, benefits and costs and risks, in accordance with Section 32 of the Resource Management Act.

Council's regulatory planning, policy planning, engineering and monitoring staff all have a key role to play in implementing the outcomes sought by the plan, as well as providing a sound understanding of the resource management issues facing the district. The internal stakeholder engagement has provided valuable inputs into the process from a plan user perspective and has assisted to shape the final recommendations made in this report.

In summary, through internal engagement and assessment of various options available to Council, the following approach to urban design guidance is recommended for adoption as part of WDC's district plan review:

- Through a restricted discretionary activity status approach, provide for a single set of 'district wide' guidelines for residential subdivision; town centre land use; medium density residential land use; and comprehensive residential development
- Provide clear standards for residential activities, and minimise guidelines to key outcomes sought (relating to key issues)
- Provide clear triggers in relation to subdivision guidelines
- Provide for 2-3 page 'place specific character statements' where existing guidelines exist
- Require 'design statements' as part of any consent application
- Provide supporting guidance to plan users and applicants

In relation to existing design guidelines, it is recommended that the Te Kauwhata, Tuakau and Pokeno subdivision design guidelines be used as the basis for the development of 'district wide' subdivision guidelines; and that the Huntly, Matangi and Tamahere Precinct Guidelines be retained in their current form, along with the recently developed Pokeno Town Centre guidelines.

The above recommendations and supporting assessment are detailed within the report. Overall, it is considered this approach will result in numerous potential benefits, including:

- Higher quality of subdivision design and land development, resulting in higher quality living environments and associated social and cultural benefits
- Reduced long term community costs, e.g. infrastructure development
- Continued flexibility to promote innovative design
- Environmental benefits, e.g. reduced vehicle reliance, and energy consumption
- Long term economic benefits, e.g. reduced infrastructure costs
- Assisting applicants/developers to achieve the best value from their projects
- Providing for 'place based' outcomes
- Responding to the unique qualities of the local context.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Project

Waikato District Council (WDC) are currently undertaking a review of the Operative Waikato District Plan. Following adjustments to the Waikato District's boundaries (associated with the 2010 Auckland Council amalgamation), the Plan currently consists of a Waikato Section and a Franklin Section. A full review of the district plan is currently being undertaken to deliver a single set of planning provisions for the whole district.

Beca has been engaged to undertake an expert assessment of the existing design guidelines and provide recommendations as to how these may best be rationalised or otherwise within the Waikato District Plan review. Supported by a clearly documented methodology, this assessment will assist to inform the Section 32 evaluation that will underpin the provisions within the Proposed Waikato District Plan as they relate to urban design.

Urban design guidance facilitates best practice solutions whilst respecting and augmenting an areas most celebrated features and enhancing existing amenity. Councils seek to provide urban design guidance in order to deliver well-designed communities that are functional, attractive and safe now and looking ahead to future generations. Key urban design principles underpin this guidance, seeking to provide for: safety, sustainability, connectivity, health, pride and identity, social opportunities, economic and environmental wellbeing.

Design guidance can take different forms and can either be directly written into a district plan through rules, standards and assessment matters or incorporated into urban design guidelines (which are ideally referenced within assessment matters, or may sit separately from the district plan). It is a tool to help Waikato District Council staff, developers, design professionals and applicants to understand Council's expectations around quality design in order to deliver better-designed communities.

For Waikato District Council (a signatory of the Urban Design Protocol), the outcomes of this assessment include recommendations to assist WDC to make an informed decision as to how the existing guidelines within the Operative Waikato District Plan are most appropriately carried forward to the Proposed District Plan, and other mechanisms (e.g. rules, standards and assessment matters) available to assist in promoting appropriate urban design outcomes for the district.

The existing WDC design guidelines considered within the above scope included:

Waikato District Plan Section

- Raglan Town Centre Design Guide
- Huntly Heritage Precinct Design Guide
- Matangi Heritage Precinct Design Guide
- Rangiriri Heritage Precinct Design Guide.
- Te Kauwhata Urban Design Guides
- Tamahere Village Design Guide
- Comprehensive residential development guidelines

Franklin District Plan Section

- Pokeno Design Guide
- Tuakau Urban Design Guide (currently sitting outside the district plan)

In addition to the overall project scope, the following project objectives were determined in collaboration with WDC staff:

- The need for user friendly district plan provisions and/or guidelines for all plan users
- Balancing 'place based' urban design outcomes with best practice outcomes
- Providing a number of options for Council to consider and make an informed decision upon, thus also achieving their obligations under the Resource Management Act.

1.2 Internal Stakeholder Engagement

As well as the wider community, including developers and landowners, WDC staff are considered to be key stakeholders within the development of the district plan. Council's regulatory planning, policy planning, engineering and monitoring staff all have a key role to play in implementing the outcomes sought by the plan, as well as providing a sound understanding of the resource management issues facing the district. Accordingly, the project methodology sought to provide for an inclusive engagement process with Council staff, facilitated through three workshops focused on:

- Development of the problem definition and further understanding of urban design issues facing the district
- Development of a long list of options, including feedback (benefits and costs) and direction on draft options put forward
- Receiving feedback on preferred options developed
- Further refining costs and benefits of options – from a *user* perspective (i.e. through a better understanding from a plan user perspective what mechanisms / tools may or may not work
- Identifying any further areas for research
- Receiving feedback and direction on initial recommendations.

The internal stakeholder engagement provided valuable inputs into the process from a plan user perspective and has assisted to shape the final recommendations made in this report. Further detail on the feedback is contained within the report and detailed in Appendix C.

1.3 Project Methodology

Key steps for developing and assessing preferred options to deliver on the project outcomes are summarised as follows. A table setting out the key stages and WDC inputs is contained within Appendix A to this report; the full methodology is contained within the project Inception Report.

Step 1. Inception reporting and preparation of ‘problem definition’ for confirmation by WDC. This included a high level review of existing design guidance, and a workshop with Council staff (Workshop 1) to receive feedback and input into the development of the problem definition.



Step 2. Development of draft district plan urban design objectives (responding to key urban design issues, and as a basis for assessment of options); and a ‘long list’ of urban design guidance options for initial assessment. Feedback on the long list of options was received from Council staff at Workshop 1. Following initial assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of each option, the preferred options were carried forward for more detailed assessment.



Step 3. Research and information collection – research relating to potential costs, benefits and risks of the preferred options was carried out to inform the detailed assessment of each option. Information sources included:

- Case studies – Ministry for Environment (MfE), other councils
- Best practice urban design, i.e. outcomes
- Best practice planning, i.e. methods – MfE
- Workshop feedback from council staff (Workshop 2)
- Indicative scenario testing.



Step 4. A detailed assessment of each option was undertaken to inform the report recommendations. The assessment was based on the following approaches:

- a. Analysis of costs and benefits – environmental, social, cultural and economic costs and benefits of each option were identified to inform the effectiveness and efficiency of each option in achieving the draft objectives (step 2 above). Economic costs included those in relation financial costs to the Council and community (including resource consent applicants).
- b. ‘Collaborative decision making’ formed part of the assessment process. In particular, Workshops 2 and 3 provided opportunity for input from Council staff to identify the costs and benefits of options from a ‘plan user’ perspective, providing valuable input into the ‘workability’ of each option within the context WDC’s planning processes, resource management issues and available expertise.

The outputs of the assessment are detailed in the recommendations below and were the subject of final Council staff feedback during Workshop 3.

2 Key Findings and Recommendations

This section outlines the key outcomes and findings of the assessment and the resultant recommendations as to how urban design guidance can be most effectively and efficiently provided for within the Waikato District Plan. A full outline of the assessment is contained in the sections that follow.

2.1 Key Outcomes and Findings of the Assessment Process

2.1.1 Key outcomes of internal stakeholder engagement

The following matters were raised throughout the internal engagement process with WDC's staff and have assisted to inform the recommendations made within this report:

- The need for consistency of provisions and guidance across the district for all plan users, to enable fair, implementable outcomes.
- Many existing guidelines are now out of date (being up to ten years old) and need to be reconsidered in light of contemporary issues and design.
- There is a need for flexibility (such that development continues to be encouraged), but certainty (such that the outcomes to be achieved are clear) within the approach to urban design guidance.
- More control over important urban design and built form outcomes (e.g. subdivision and town centre design) is required through the consenting process.
- Guidance should not be too cumbersome, but rather focus on clear outcomes.
- The need to have guidance and provisions with 'teeth' was conveyed, such that outcomes sought can be achieved through a dialogue with developers and/or the resource consent process.
- Many towns in the district (e.g. Pokeno, Tuakau, Te Kauwhata and Ngaruawahia) face growth pressures – provisions should provide the opportunity to generate good urban design and planning outcomes as development occurs in these areas.
- Where towns do not currently face growth pressures, urban design remains important, both to assist in
- Managing piece-meal development / small-lot subdivisions which have a cumulative effect on surrounding connectivity and character is considered an important outcome; support was indicated for a trigger for development plans and a restricted discretionary activity status for residential subdivision.
- Rural residential areas face similar issues to residential areas and therefore need to be considered within design guidance.

Further detail on internal engagement and feedback is contained within Appendix C to this report.

2.1.2 Key learning from best practice and research

The following provides a summary of the key learnings taken from current best practice and urban design approaches by other New Zealand Councils:

- Urban design needs to be made visible to developers / applicants early on in the process – i.e. early multi-disciplinary pre-application meetings where urban design is not seen as a separate entity.
- Urban design needs to be more visible in the district plan – not hidden in guidelines that have 'no teeth'.

- Council's must look closely at the key issues facing the District now and in coming years – what is Council trying to protect / create / achieve?
- Guidelines must be concise, visual and easy to use – for developers / applicants and assessing planners and urban designers.
- Directly linking guidelines to assessment matters is an effective means of ensuring consistency and clarity.
- The use of tick / cross examples in urban design guidelines is an effective means of communicating Council's expectations for design.
- Triggers can be an effective method to control urban design outcomes.
- A restricted discretionary activity status is the predominant means of controlling residential subdivision from those Council's researched.

Further detail on in relation to urban design approaches by other New Zealand Councils is contained within Appendix D to this report.

2.1.3 Other relevant considerations

In undertaking the assessment of options, the following matters were also considered important considerations and formed part of the overall costs and benefits analysis, as well as informing the collaborative decision making with Council staff.

- Financial costs to Council and the community (including developers and landowners) of the resource consent process and related requirements (e.g. reporting).
- Expertise requirements – in particular, urban design reporting requirements and the implications on Council and applicants, such as the need to employ suitably qualified experts.
- Developing guidelines, including implications of time, community input and costs.
- Scale of development – in particular, at what scale of subdivision and/or development should urban design guidance apply, and what triggers may be applicable.

These matters are referred to, as appropriate, throughout the detailed assessment in the report below.

2.2 Final Recommendations

The following recommendations are derived from the detailed assessment of options contained in the section below. Further detail on the recommended district plan structure relating to the applicable zones is contained within Appendix B.

Recommendations

1. Provide for a single set of **'district wide' urban design guidelines** for the following activities:
 - a. Residential subdivision (within the Living zone) and Rural Residential subdivision (within Country Living and Rural Residential zones), where the proposed subdivision exceeds the following thresholds¹:
 - 6 or more new lots are created; and/or

¹ Note, these thresholds are to be further tested and refined as part of the development of district plan standards and design guidelines preparation.

- A new public access way or road is created; and/or
 - 3 or more rear lots are created.
- b. Town centre land use (within Business and Village zones), excluding 'minor works'² (e.g. works less than 25m², painting, repairs, signage) and 'works not visible from public places'³.
 - c. Comprehensive residential development (within residential zones), i.e. multiple residential unit development (four⁴ or more residential units) over a single site.
 - d. 'Compact residential development' (i.e. medium density residential including small lot subdivision and town houses greater than 1 dwelling per 300m² or 30 dwellings per hectare (as per Future Proof)).

It is recommended that each of the above activities be subject to a '**restricted discretionary activity**' status within the Proposed District Plan, subject to relevant assessment criteria, including 'to the extent which the activity meets the intent of the relevant design guidelines'.

It will be important to identify the relevant matters discretion is being limited to for each activity (i.e. medium density development, town centre land use and residential subdivision will each have different matters of discretion).

2. Provide **more detailed 'performance standards'** in relation to urban design for the following activities:
 - a. Residential development (within the Living zone)
 - b. Rural residential development (within Country Living and Rural Residential zones)
 - c. Town centre land use (within Business and Village zones)
 - d. Comprehensive residential development (within residential zones), i.e. multiple residential unit development (four or more residential units) over a single site.
 - e. Medium density residential development (within residential zones), i.e. densities of greater than 1 dwelling per 300m².
3. Building on best practice approaches, the focus of assessment criteria and guidelines should be on the most relevant and important urban design issues within the Waikato District. In this

² The term 'minor works' (or the final terminology agreed) may require a 'definition' or explanatory note to be added to the Proposed District Plan for clarity of implementation.

³ Key outcomes are focused around the built form relationship with public realm outcomes, particularly main streets, public open space and other areas frequented by the public. It is not the intention to require consents for minor works or works that do not have an impact on the public realm interface.

⁴ Number of units to be further tested and refined as part of the development of district plan standards and design guidelines preparation.

manner, guidelines should be relatively concise and limited to approximately ten key topic points. It is recommended that a Council staff workshop process be initiated to determine the most prevalent and important issues. As a starting point, the following matters are recommended for consideration (i.e. being those matters that discretion will be restricted to for restricted discretionary activities; and the matters covered within the relevant guidelines):

Residential and Rural Residential subdivision (design and layout)

- Walking, cycling and vehicle networks
- Block and site layout
- 'Street address' of dwellings
- Public / private relationship
- Safety
- Densities for larger subdivisions
- Sustainability
- Sustainable drainage strategies
- Landscaping – public and private areas
- Public realm outcomes

Town centre land use (design and layout, including)

- External appearance, scale and design of buildings
- Character – including consistency with any relevant local guidelines
- 'Street address', i.e. Public / private relationship
- Safety
- Landscaping, where relevant
- Built form articulation – breaking up of bulk
- Sustainability principles, where relevant
- Waste management

Medium density residential and comprehensive residential development (design and layout)

- External appearance, scale and design of buildings
- External appearance
- Outdoor living spaces
- Positioning and orientation
- Visual and acoustic privacy
- Parking and access
- Safety
- Access and parking
- Landscaping, where relevant
- Built form articulation – breaking up of bulk
- Waste areas

4. Design guidelines should be structured to provide the following information:

- **Outcomes** – relating directly back to assessment matters for the relevant activity and clearing describing the outcomes sought;
- **Design principles** – articulating the key principles that will assist to achieve the outcomes – importantly, it is ultimately the principles of design that should be adhered to;

- **Supporting drawings and precedents images** – providing examples of how the principles may be met in practice.

Further detail on the structure of the Proposed District Plan and guidelines is contained in Appendix B.

5. In relation to **existing design guidelines**, it is recommended that:

- The Te Kauwhata, Tuakau and Pokeno subdivision design guidelines be used as the basis for the development of 'district wide' subdivision guidelines, as described above. In addition, and as described below, these areas should also be subject to 'place specific character statements'.
- The Huntly, Tamahere and Matangi Heritage Precinct Guidelines be retained in their current form.
- The Rangiriri Heritage Precinct be replaced with appropriate built form heritage protection for those buildings with heritage value.
- The Pokeno Town Centre guidelines be retained in their current form.
- The comprehensive residential development guidelines be reviewed and revised alongside new medium density residential development guidelines, and be used as the basis for the development of 'district wide' guidelines, as described above.
- The Raglan design guidelines be abandoned in their current form, and that these centres be the subject of 'district wide' town centre guidelines, as described above. In addition, and as described below, these areas should also be subject to 'place specific character statements'.

6. It is recommended that provision be made for 'place specific character statements' for the following areas:

- Te Kauwhata, Tuakau and Pokeno growth areas – to assist in identifying place specific outcomes derived from existing subdivision guidelines.
- Raglan and Tamahere centres – to assist in identifying place specific outcomes derived from existing town centre guidelines.
- Other town and village centres and residential growth areas, as determined appropriate by Council.

The 'place specific character statements should be concise and outcome specific, intended to support the higher level district wide urban design guidelines. In this manner, they should be limited to between one and three pages (including plans indicating site specific outcomes) outlining the specific issues and/or character outcomes sought for the area.

It is recommended that character statements for areas subject to existing guidelines be developed at the same time as district wide guidelines; other town and village centres and residential growth areas may follow at a later date, as determined appropriate by Council and subject to appropriate engagement with local communities⁵.

⁵ Preparation of urban design character statements and/or guidelines not undertaken as part of the district plan review will be subject to plan changes processes pursuant to the Resource Management Act.

7. As part of any resource consent application subject to a restricted discretionary, information requirements should include a 'design statements' prepared by a suitably qualified professional in architecture or urban design, responding to the following matters (as appropriate and commensurate to the scale of the activity):
- Site Analysis , including site plans and streetscape character
 - Existing Neighbourhood Context, including natural and cultural environments; movement; built form character; use and activity; and urban structure
 - Planning Context, including opportunities and constraints
 - Design Response, including concept plans; proposed site layout; proposed building design; sunlight Access; landscape and open space; and streets, accessways and lanes.

Summary Table: Recommended urban design guidelines, urban design assessment matters and urban design related standards by activity status / zone

Activity Zones	Subdivision			Land Use			Notes
	More detailed urban design standards	More detailed urban design assessment criteria	Urban design guidelines	More detailed urban design standards	More detailed urban design assessment criteria	Urban design guidelines	
Living Zone / Residential Zone	x	✓ (RDA)	✓ (RDA)	✓	x	x	RDA subdivision triggers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 8 or more new lots are created; and/or ■ A new public access way or road is created; and/or ■ 3 or more rear lots are created.
Business Zone / Village Zone	x	x	x	✓	✓ (RDA)	✓ (RDA)	-
Industrial Zone	x	x	x	✓	x	x	-
Country Living Zone / Rural Residential Zone	x	✓ (RDA)	✓ (RDA)	✓	x	x	RDA subdivision triggers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 8 or more new lots are created; and/or ■ A new public access way or road is created; and/or ■ 3 or more rear lots are created.
Medium Density Residential	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	✓ (RDA)	✓ (RDA)	I.e. one dwelling per 150m ² -300m ² , within identified areas. Assumes subdivision occurs under Living Zone provisions. These areas may be zoned or subject to proximity criteria (e.g. from open space and local amenities).
Comprehensive Residential Development	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	✓ (RDA)	✓ (RDA)	I.e. 5+ dwellings on a site. Assumes subdivision occurs under Living Zone provisions.
Pa Zone	x	x	x	x	x	x	Suggest non-statutory guidelines be development with iwi.

✓ Indicates recommended approach (i.e. recommendation for use of more detailed standards; more detailed assessment criteria; and/or urban design guidelines)

x Indicates not recommended

'RDA' Indicates restricted discretionary activity status recommended, limited to urban design matters.

3 Detailed Assessment of Options

This section provides a record of the detailed assessment of options that have informed the recommendations outlined above, including the following:

- Problem Definition
- National and Local Policy Context
- Relevant Resource Management Issues
- Draft District Wide Urban Design Objective
- Preliminary Section 32 review of the draft objective
- Assessment of long list of options
- Detailed option assessment of preferred options, including efficiency and effectiveness, benefits and costs and risks.

3.1 Problem Definition

Following engagement with WDC staff, the overarching ‘problem’ or ‘matter to be addressed’ was defined as follows:

Design guidelines have been developed separately for various towns and precincts throughout the Waikato District, including the northern part of the Waikato District which previously sat within the Franklin District.

This has resulted in both overlaps between the guideline themes (e.g. heritage / character areas and lot layout) and, given the generic, best practice approach to many of the guidelines, there is significant overlap between guidelines of the same theme. However, in the same instance, there are clear inconsistencies in terminology, formatting, graphic styles and structure of guidelines.

Many of the guidelines have been developed in consultation with local communities and include an element of ‘place specific’ guidance and outcomes for those communities (the most recent being the Pokeno town centre guidance in 2015). Notwithstanding, in most instances, the content of the guidelines remains relatively generic, in that they are based on best practice urban design principles. An important aspect of the assessment will therefore be balancing the need for place specific guidance (i.e. contextual differences between the areas) with the provision of generic ‘district wide’ guidelines – recognising that overly prescriptive provisions can deter and restrict development and community growth.

A number of the guidelines are intended to protect heritage and/or character values of particular areas (e.g. Huntly, Raglan, Matangi and Rangiriri). Further consideration is required as to the extent of control required in these areas, particularly taking into account the need to balance protecting local character and heritage while encouraging growth.

A key challenge for any local authority is application of design guidelines through regulatory and non-regulatory methods. A number of the guidelines remain non-statutory, while others sit within the district plan but lack a clear connection to the district plan rules and/or assessment matters. Providing a consistent approach that allows decision makers to apply design guidance in appropriate instances is necessary if good urban design outcomes are to be fostered.

While guidelines for residential subdivision and development and town centres apply to a number of specific locations, there are no such guidelines that apply district wide. In particular, good urban design outcomes (e.g. good connectivity; good on-site amenity; energy conservation; and facilitating

a positive public / private realm relationship) should be fostered as early as possible through good subdivision and town centre design. Where basic best practice principles are followed at this scale, good outcomes are likely to follow at a smaller scale.

3.2 National and Local Policy Context

This section outlines the relevant national and local policy context that has assisted to provide both background and direction for this assessment.

3.2.1 National Guidance

3.2.1.1 New Zealand Urban Design Protocol 2005 (NZ UDP)

The NZ Urban Design Protocol (NZ UDP) is a voluntary agreement between signatories, of which the Waikato District Council is one (since Oct 2011). It commits the signatories to specific urban design initiatives intended to raise the quality of urban design within their town or city. The Protocol identifies seven essential design qualities for signatories to consider as part of the day to day planning and design of their urban environments:

1. Context – seeing that buildings, places and spaces are part of the whole town or city;
2. Character – reflecting and enhancing the distinctive character, heritage and identity of our urban environment;
3. Choice – ensuring diversity and choice for people;
4. Connections – enhancing how different networks link together for people;
5. Creativity – encouraging innovative and imaginative solutions;
6. Custodianship – ensuring design is environmentally sustainable, safe and healthy; and
7. Collaboration – communicating and sharing knowledge across sectors, professions and with communities.

While non-statutory, the NZ UDP provides a mandate for the consideration of high quality urban design. The Protocol also provides a greater collective understanding of what high quality design outcomes are and the value that is added by encouraging them in practice, and how it may be achieved. In conjunction with the NZ UDP research was undertaken resulting in the publication of *The Value of Urban Design* (2006). The research showed conclusively that good urban design has the potential to create value for communities, individuals, the economy and the environment, with the potential benefits including:

- Better public health
- Greater social equity
- Enhanced land values
- A more vibrant local economy
- Reduced vehicle emissions
- More sustainable use of non-renewable resources.

3.2.1.2 National Guidelines for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) 2005

The National Guidelines for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) provides local authorities with a framework for incorporating crime prevention within quality urban design by focusing on reducing the opportunity to commit crime. There are four key CPTED principles:

1. Surveillance – people are present and can see what is going on
2. Access management – methods are used to attract people and vehicles to some places and restrict them from others
3. Territorial reinforcement – clear boundaries encourage community 'ownership' of the space
4. Quality environments – good quality, well maintained places attract people and support surveillance.

In addition to the CPTED principles, the guideline introduces seven qualities of safer places intended to improve the urban environment while reducing crime and the fear of crime. These are listed below:

1. Access: Safe movement and connections – Places with well-defined routes, spaces and entrances that provide for convenient and safe movement without compromising security
2. Surveillance and sightlines: See and be seen – Places where all publicly accessible spaces are overlooked, and clear sightlines and good lighting provide maximum visibility
3. Layout: Clear and logical orientation – Places laid out to discourage crime, enhance perception of safety and help orientation and way-finding
4. Activity mix: Eyes on the street – Places where the level of human activity is appropriate to the location and creates a reduced risk of crime and a sense of safety at all times by promoting a compatible mix of uses and increased use of public spaces
5. Sense of ownership: Showing a space is cared for – Places that promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility and community
6. Quality environments: Well designed, managed and maintained environments – Places that provide a quality environment and are designed with management and maintenance in mind to discourage crime and promote community safety in the present and the future
7. Physical protection: Using active security measures – Places that include necessary, well designed security features and elements.

The CPTED principles and qualities are integral to achieving safe urban environments that attract users and contribute to community wellbeing. Site layout and the interface between buildings and spaces are particularly important elements in relation to CPTED.

3.2.2 Waikato Strategic Context

Clear strategic direction and growth aspirations can be found within the Council's strategic and regulatory documents relating to the city centre and city as a whole. Direction considered relevant to the proposed ICDP is summarised below.

3.2.2.1 Waikato Regional Policy Statement (2012)

- Encourages development of the built environment to occur in an integrated, sustainable and planned manner – minimising land use conflicts (and potential for reverse sensitivity) and anticipating / responding to changing land use pressures outside of the Waikato Region which may impact local built environment
- Promotes compact urban environments that support existing commercial centres and multi-modal transport options
- Encourages rural residential development to occur in areas identified in the district plan for such uses so as to avoid natural hazard areas and productive land
- Advocates the incorporation of energy efficiency in development plans and design guides

3.2.2.2 Future Proof (2009)

- Defines the future land use and settlement pattern for Hamilton, Waipa and Waikato districts based on integrated planning principles. The Future Proof strategy is to be reviewed in 2016 to incorporate the northern part of the Waikato district and better reflect the effects of Auckland growth pressures on these areas.

3.2.2.3 Iwi Management Plans

- Focus on the sustainable management of resources and sustainable development plans

3.2.2.4 Waikato District Plan

- Waikato Section
 - Focus on curtailing scattered development and encouraging consolidation.
 - Acknowledges issues associated with development that doesn't correspond with / or respect an areas existing context or established development pattern.
- Franklin Section
 - Focus on better management of rural residential development to avoid fragmentation, especially with current development pressures on this northern area due to proximity to Auckland.
 - Outlines the key urban design principles to be recognised through development as: context, character, choice, connections, creativity, custodianship and collaboration.
 - Emphasises the importance of sustainable development of main urban areas and recognises the importance of: containment and intensification, integrated live/work/play models, planning for public infrastructure, integrated land use and transport planning, aesthetics, health and safety.
 - Respects diversity of residential areas through applying a number of different residential zones.
 - Supports the design of central business / retail areas by advocating for non-regulatory methods including centre plans and design guidelines.

3.3 Relevant Resource Management Issues and Indicative District Wide Urban Design Objectives

As indicated within the strategic policy context and through internal engagement with Council staff, key resource management issues relating to urban design for the Waikato District relate to the sustainable growth of urban areas, particularly local towns and villages and growing residential areas (including rural residential). These are summarised as follows:

- Uncontrolled subdivision and development leading to urban sprawl and related issues (e.g. reliance on motor vehicles; lack of provision and access to local amenities; lack of local identity; lack of social cohesion).
- Loss and/or lack of consideration of local character, including local amenity values, the natural landscape and built heritage values.
- Loss and/or lack of consideration of cultural values, including:
 - Those relating to local tangata whenua culture and traditions
 - The protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.
- Development of built environments that do not contribute to and enhance social values within the community, through the provision of approximately designed living, working and public places and the relationship between these areas.
- Development of built environments that do not promote sustainable transport options, including walking, cycling and public transport.

3.3.1 Indicative District Wide Urban Design Objective

The purpose of this assessment is to undertake an expert assessment of the existing design guidelines and provide recommendations as to how these may best be rationalised or otherwise within the Waikato District Plan review. As part of this, the following indicative objective and policies have been set and discussed with WDC, and form a basis for the evaluation of options.

At the time of writing, objectives and policies for the Proposed District Plan are yet to be developed. The purpose of the objective and policies below is two-fold: to assist WDC in the development of objectives and policies that respond to the issues identified in this report; and to provide a point of evaluation for the methods being assessed in this report. A preliminary Section 32 review of the indicative objective is contained below to evaluate whether it is likely the most appropriate way of achieving the purpose of the RMA in accordance with Section 32(1)(a). It is acknowledged that further review and refinement of the objective will be required during the preparation of the district plan at a later date.

Indicative District Wide Urban Design Objective⁶:

Future development within the District's urban environments enhances and fosters good quality urban design outcomes, including:

- *Responding to and positively contributing to local character*
- *Providing opportunities to enhance social and cultural wellbeing*
- *Providing safe, legible, well connected environments*

⁶ In addition to 'district wide' objectives and policies, it is expected that more detailed urban design objectives relating to specific zones and activities may be developed by WDC as part of the district plan review.

- *Promoting sustainable land use and transport outcomes*
- *Enhancing amenity values.*

Indicative District Wide Urban Design Policies:

- **Urban Design Policy 1:** *Residential subdivision, including rural residential, and comprehensive development fosters good quality urban design outcomes, including appropriate response to the local context and character.*
- **Urban Design Policy 2:** *Development within town and village centres responds to and builds upon the local character anticipated for the area, while assisting to provide a safe, attractive, connected public realm.*
- **Urban Design Policy 3:** *Development within industrial areas is undertaken in a manner that fosters good connectivity with adjoining urban areas (existing and future) and provides a safe environment for all users.*
- **Urban Design Policy 4:** *Medium density is designed in manner that provides good quality amenity outcomes for residents and adjoining landowners, and is located within walkable distances from open space and local amenities.*

3.3.2 Preliminary assessment of the urban design objective against the Resource Management Act

As outlined in the table below, it is considered that this objective is the most appropriate way to give effect to the purpose of the Act. By promoting sustainable land use and transport outcomes premised on good urban design principles, social, cultural and economic well-being is supported, amenity values are enhanced and the natural environment (and natural resources) is safeguarded.

RMA Provision	Evaluation
S5 (includes social, economic, cultural, health and safety)	This objective seeks to provide for social well-being and health and safety by promoting the development of safe, legible, well-connected and sustainable communities.
S5(2)(a)	This objective sustains the potential of natural and physical resources for future generations by providing well-connected communities and promoting sustainable land use and transport outcomes.
S5(2)(b)	By promoting sustainable land use and transport outcomes and well-connected communities, this objective assists in safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems.
S5(2)(c)	This objective seeks to avoid, remedy and/or mitigate adverse effects on the environment by promoting sustainable land use and transport outcomes and well-connected communities.
S6	This objective recognises and provides for Section 6(e) and (f) by providing opportunities to enhance social and cultural wellbeing.
S7	This objective provides for section 7(b) by promoting sustainable land use and transport outcomes and well-connected communities. It provides for section 7(c) by enhancing amenity values.
S8	This objective responds to section 8 through providing opportunities to enhance social and cultural wellbeing.
Response to issues	The objective seeks to respond to the resource management issues identified in section 5.1 by promoting good quality urban design approaches to those issues identified.

3.4 Assessment of Long List of Options

The following long list of options was compiled and assessed based on initial project inputs, review of existing guidelines and input from internal stakeholder engagement (Council staff workshop dated 17 February 2016).

The assessment is based on a 'high level' assessment of costs and benefits and the perceived effectiveness and efficiency of each option. The options to be carried forward (Options 1, 4, 5, 7, and Sub-options 11 and 12) are assessed in more detail in the following sections, which included input from Council staff and consideration of the likely financial costs to Council and plan users.

It is noted that options 11, 12 and 13 are sub-options to be considered in addition to options 1 to 10. In other words, they are not options to be considered by themselves, but rather are options that may provide additional tools to achieve the urban design objective outlined in section 3.3.1.

#	Option Description	Recommendation
1.	'Do nothing', i.e. remove all guidelines and rely on existing standards.	This option has been discarded . This is not considered an efficient or effective method to achieve the objectives as they relate to urban design and built environment quality. Notwithstanding the above, this option has been carried through to more detailed assessment as a baseline comparison for other options.
2.	Retain the 'status quo', i.e. retain existing guidelines in their existing form, and rely on existing standards.	This option has been discarded . Overall, this is not considered an efficient or effective method to achieve the objectives as they relate to urban design and built environment quality, particularly in relation to outcomes for the district's wider urban environments. Notwithstanding the above, a number of heritage and/or character guidelines or elements of the guidelines have been carried forward. Refer option 11 below.
3.	Retain the existing design guidelines, with amendments to make more user friendly and consistent with one another.	This option has been discarded . While this option will improve existing guidelines (including usability) and usability, overall this is not considered an efficient or effective method to achieve the objectives as they relate to urban design and built environment quality, particularly in relation to outcomes for the district's wider urban environments.
4.	Provide for a single set of 'district wide' design guidelines for each of the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ residential subdivision (i.e. greenfields) ■ town centre land development (i.e. a new town centre commercial building) ■ residential land development (i.e. a new dwelling). All subdivision and land use development consent applications in these areas shall be a restricted discretionary activity, assessed against these guidelines.	This option has been carried forward . The provision of guidelines in relation to residential subdivision, land use and town centre land development are considered to be efficient and effective methods of achieving the objectives.
5.	As above (4), AND in addition, provision of 1 to 3 page 'place specific character statements' to	This option has been carried forward . The provision of guidelines in relation to residential subdivision, land

#	Option Description	Recommendation
	<p>support specific outcomes for specific areas.</p> <p>For example, there would be an overarching set of guidelines for all town centres, plus additional one page 'character statements' for each town centre.</p> <p>The additional 1 to 3 pages may include specific outcomes sought for that centre.</p>	<p>use and town centre land development, along with place specific character statements, are considered to be efficient and effective methods of achieving the objectives.</p>
6.	<p>Provide for a single set of guidelines for residential greenfields subdivision development throughout the district. All subdivision consent applications in these areas shall be a restricted discretionary activity, assessed against design guidelines.</p> <p>Other areas and land uses not subject to guidelines. I.e. all town centre and residential design guidance removed.</p>	<p>This option has been discarded.</p> <p>The provision of guidelines in relation to residential subdivision are considered to be an efficient and effective method of achieving the objectives.</p> <p>Further assessment of the implications of providing or not providing guidelines in relation to town centres is required. Reliance on existing standards is not considered an effective method to achieve the objectives. Further understanding of the likely standards for town centres, in lieu of guidelines, is required to form part of any overall recommendation. Further options are discussed below in this regard.</p>
7.	<p>As above (6), AND in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop more stringent standards for residential (particularly comprehensive and compact residential development) and town centre land uses. I.e. bulk and location rules that are designed to meet the intentions of good urban design outcomes. ■ And retain existing place specific residential and town centre guidelines. 	<p>This option has been carried forward.</p> <p>The provision of guidelines in relation to residential subdivision are considered to be an efficient and effective method of achieving the objectives.</p> <p>The provision of more stringent standards in relation to residential land use (particularly comprehensive and compact residential development) and town centre commercial land use are considered to be an efficient method of achieving the objectives, however, there is potential that they may not be effective, particularly in relation to achieving good urban design for town centres. In this regard, further assessment of the implications of providing or not providing guidelines in relation to town centres is required.</p>
8.	<p>Remove all guidelines in lieu of more detailed residential greenfields subdivision, town centre and residential development standards (district wide). I.e. bulk and location rules that are designed to meet the intentions of good urban design outcomes.</p>	<p>It is recommended that this option be discarded.</p> <p>This option is considered somewhat efficient in achieving the objectives, in that it provides a cost effective approach with good certainty to plan users. However, it is unlikely to be effective in promoting good urban design outcomes, particularly in relation to residential greenfields subdivision and town centres.</p>
9.	<p>As above (8), AND in addition:</p> <p>Where standards are not met, assessment against urban design guidelines will be required (i.e. as a restricted discretionary activity).</p>	<p>This option has been discarded.</p> <p>This option is considered somewhat efficient in achieving the objectives, in that it provides a cost effective approach with good certainty to plan users. However, it is unlikely to be effective in promoting good urban design outcomes, as it is unlikely to encourage plan users down the 'design guidelines' route.</p>
10.	<p>Provide for design guidelines as non-statutory guidance (based on existing or revised standards).</p>	<p>This option has been discarded.</p> <p>This is not considered an efficient or effective method to achieve the objectives as they relate to urban design and built environment quality.</p>
	<p>Sub-Options – to be considered alongside other options.</p>	
11.	<p>Retain existing place based heritage and/or character</p>	<p>This option has been carried forward as a specific sub-option for further assessment.</p>

#	Option Description	Recommendation
	guidelines, i.e. Huntly, Matangi, Rangariri, Pokeno town centre, Tamehere, town centre	This 'sub-option' is considered efficient and effective in protecting specific heritage elements in the district. It is important that they be recognised as heritage or character protection guidelines, as opposed to urban design guidelines. Town centre guidelines may be appropriate to combine with option 5 above, i.e. town centre character statements.
12.	For residential greenfields subdivision include the requirement for a 'development plan' addressing identified matters.	This option has been carried forward as a specific sub-option for further assessment. This option provides an additional tool to assist plan users in addressing design outcomes, similar to an urban design statement.
13.	Provide residential subdivision standards (applicable to the creation of 4 or more sites); where standards are not met, a development plan addressing identified matters is required.	This option has been discarded . This option is considered somewhat efficient in achieving the objectives, in that it provides a cost effective approach with good certainty to plan users. However, it is unlikely to be effective in promoting good urban design outcomes for subdivision.

Based on the above assessment, options 1, 4, 5, 7, and sub-options 11 and 12 above have been carried forward for more detailed analysis and are further assessed in the following sections.

3.5 Detailed Option Assessment of Preferred Options, including Efficiency and Effectiveness, Benefits and Costs and Risks

In accordance with s32(1)(b)(i) a number of alternatives have been considered to achieve the draft objective outlined in section 3.3.1 above, namely those options carried forward from the evaluation of the long list of options above. The efficiency and effectiveness of these options is outlined and further evaluated below, taking into account the possible environmental, social, cultural and economic (financial) benefits and costs.

3.5.1 Financial Analysis

As part of the overall economic benefits and costs, the economic implications of applying for resource consent where urban design guidelines are applicable have been researched and assessed. This includes consideration of the potential costs of ‘urban design guidance’ to the Council and community through the resource consent process, including for developers and investors. The financial costs are summarised in the table below and have aided the overall assessment of each option contained in the following sections.

For the purposes of this assessment, **low cost** is \$1,000 to \$10,000; **moderate cost** is \$10,000 to \$40,000; and **high cost** is \$40,000 or more. All costs are estimates only and should not be construed as the final cost or used as estimates beyond the purpose of this report.

Resource Consent Step	Description of requirements	Potential Additional Financial Cost	Where the costs falls
1. District Plan Review / preparation of policy framework	Preparation of assessment matters	LOW: Limited additional cost over and above existing costs	Council / community (as ratepayers)
	Preparation of urban design guidelines	<p>MODERATE TO HIGH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Estimated cost of \$25,000 (minimum⁷) or more per guideline (e.g. subdivision; town centre; comprehensive residential) depending on level of detail sought. ■ Possibility to ‘adopt’ best practice guidelines (therefore minimising the above costs) ■ Cost of engagement on proposed guidelines 	Council / community (as ratepayers)
2. Consent application	Preparation of consent application (excluding design statement, refer below)	LOW: May be some additional cost associated with responding to assessment matters	Applicant
	Preparation of supporting ‘design statement’ ⁸ and/or ‘development plan’	<p>LOW TO MODERATE:</p> <p>The monetisation of the costs of preparation of a design statement is</p>	Applicant

⁷ Assumes guidelines based on best practice, not place specific; engagement, including internal, undertaken by Council staff.

⁸ A design statement is an analysis document prepared to understand the site’s context, identify existing elements of the site and interrelationships between different factors which affect the site. It presents the design

Resource Consent Step	Description of requirements	Potential Additional Financial Cost	Where the costs falls
		difficult, as each site and development proposal has their own unique characteristics and constraints which will dictate the type and amount of information required. Additional costs associated with preparation of design statement are estimated ⁹ to be between \$2,000 and \$5,000 (and up to \$10,000) depending on complexity of proposal. Majority of drawings would be required to be developed as part of subdivision and consenting regardless (e.g. site plans, cross sections, etc.). Additional costs are primarily in relation to additional context drawings and supporting reporting.	
	Application assessment, including assessment of design statement	<p>LOW TO MODERATE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May increase consenting requirements overall, resulting in greater level of applications to Council. ■ Additional costs associated with assessment of application and design statement. Council may be required to train or recruit suitably experienced planning and / or urban design staff to undertake assessments; or to contract out assessments, depending on complexity of application. ■ Estimates are between \$1,500 and \$5,000 for external reviews (i.e. by contractors) ■ <i>Notwithstanding the above</i>, cost of suitably qualified planner / urban designer may be able to be met within existing personal budgets. 	Council / community (as ratepayers); or applicant, if user pays approach
	Notification of application	The district plan may also allow for non-notification of restricted discretionary subdivision applications. Notwithstanding, there may be applications that do not meet the objectives of the plan and may require notification and a hearing.	Council / community (as ratepayers); and applicant
3. Monitoring	Monitoring of outcomes	LOW: Limited additional cost over and above existing costs.	Council / community (as ratepayers); and applicant
4. Outcomes of activity	Long term outcomes	NIL: Outcomes likely to be positive only.	Community

process undertaken in preparing a development proposal. It uses images and words to describe the rationale and design decisions made in relation to a development proposal and how it has responded to the opportunities and constraints of a site and its surrounding context.

⁹ Estimates only, based on Beca urban design reviews undertaken for other Councils, and Auckland Council research into costs of design statements (Auckland Plan Section 32 Analysis for Design Statements); excludes GST and reporting for hearings; site visits and meetings only associated with larger, more complex proposals.

3.5.2 Assessment of preferred options

This section assesses the options carried forward in light of their benefits and costs, and the effectiveness and efficiency in achieving the draft objective outlined in section 3.3.1 of this report.

The benefits and costs have been identified through engagement with internal stakeholders, and through research of other councils, best practice and economic implications (including the financial analysis in section 3.5.1 above). As described by the MfE, **effectiveness** assesses *the contribution new provisions make towards achieving the objective, and how successful they are likely to be in solving the problem they were designed to address*; **efficiency** measures *whether the provisions will be likely to achieve the objectives at the lowest total cost to all members of society, or achieves the highest net benefit to all of society*.²¹ The assessment of efficiency under the RMA involves the inclusion of a broad range of costs and benefits, many intangible and non-monetary (MfE, A Guide to Section 32 of the Resource Management Act 1991, 2014). In this manner, analysis of the benefits and costs also assists in determining the effectiveness and efficiency of each option.

It is noted that options 1, 4, 5, 7 carried forward below are distinct options in their own right while, as described above, options 11 and 12 are sub-options options that may provide additional to assist in achieving the urban design objective.

3.5.2.1 Option 1

'Do Nothing', i.e. no urban design guidance or provisions to be included within the plan.

Consideration	Comment
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reduced compliance costs for owners or developers. ■ Reduced processing time and associated costs. ■ No costs associated with development of design guidelines. ■ Provides a greater level of certainty for developers and land owners. ■ Standards provide certainty to developers about the minimum standards that need to be met for developments as well as notification triggers.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Existing standards may not achieve good urban design outcomes. ■ Increased long term community costs resulting from poor planning or design. ■ The desired urban design outcomes cannot all be controlled by minimum standards. ■ Existing standards are unlikely to meet the objectives of the Plan.
Effectiveness	Retaining the existing standards and removing all existing urban design guidelines will not be effective in promoting the incorporation of good urban design outcomes within future development in the District's urban environments. Existing standards do not require consideration of key urban design principles and there is a risk that future development will not be designed in such a way so as to achieve Council's vision for future growth of the District's towns and villages (Part 1.6 Waikato Section / Part 17B Franklin Section, Waikato District Plan).
Efficiency	Maintaining the status quo will not result in any additional financial costs to WDC, however, this option does not achieve the objective (as it removes Council-driven urban design guidance and reduces clarity in terms of Council expectations surrounding design) and therefore is not considered efficient.
Risk of Acting or Not Acting if there is uncertain or insufficient information	<p>There is low risk from uncertain information.</p> <p>There is a risk associated with not acting as ad hoc or poorly designed residential and commercial development may reduce the ability of people and the community to provide for their social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being.</p>

Overall, it is considered that the existing standards do not provide enough guidance and control to enhance and foster good quality urban design outcomes within the District.

3.5.2.2 Option 4

Provide for a single set of 'district wide' design guidelines for each of the following categories:

- residential subdivision (i.e. greenfields)
- town centre land development (i.e. a new town centre commercial building)
- residential land development (i.e. a new dwelling).

All subdivision and land use development consent applications in these areas shall be a restricted discretionary activity, assessed against these guidelines.

Consideration	Comment
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Potential to achieve better quality of subdivision design and land development. ■ Reduced long term community costs resulting from better planning and design. ■ Continued flexibility of application to promote innovative design solutions ■ Environmental benefits likely to be accrued, e.g. including ecological responses and reduced reliance on motor vehicle through good connectivity. ■ Improved urban design outcomes that would have associated spin-offs in respect of social and economic objectives as the relevant areas become more attractive and efficient places to live, work and visit ■ Useful supporting material could be included such as diagrams and illustrations to show best practice. ■ Assists applicants/developers achieve the best value from their projects.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Costs to applicant of responding to design guidelines through resource consent process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For subdivision, this is perceived additional cost that would otherwise likely be accrued by the complexity of the application regardless of the guidelines. – For suburban residential development, this has the very real potential to result in additional development costs, with minimal advantage over a standards approach. – For comprehensive and/or compact residential development, the costs are more likely to be justified. – For town centre development, it is considered that there may be additional cost to the developer (however, such costs are balanced by the longer term benefits to the community) ■ Possible longer time-frames from administering more detailed qualitative design provisions. ■ The Council and the community would incur additional costs relating to developing and administering the design guides.
Effectiveness	<p>Providing a single set of district-wide urban design guidelines will be effective in encouraging the consideration of urban design within future developments and encouraging a consistent approach across the District. This approach will however not be effective in acknowledging the special urban design and built form characteristics of various towns and villages. In addition, this approach may not be fully effective in fostering quality urban design outcomes unless the guidelines are directly linked to the district plan (i.e. through assessment matters) and required to be taken into consideration.</p>
Efficiency	<p>Providing a single set of district-wide urban design guidelines will result in financial costs to WDC for the preparation of each set of guidelines. However, this is balanced by the fact that provision of a single set of urban design guidelines will improve the</p>

Consideration	Comment
	<p>efficiency of the application process for applicants / developers, design professionals and Council assessors as it consolidates Council-driven urban design guidance and enhances clarity in terms of Council expectations surrounding urban design.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, and as noted above, for suburban residential development, guidelines may result in additional development costs, with minimal advantage over a standards approach.</p> <p>While relatively efficient, overall and having regard to other options assessed (particularly 5 below), this option is not considered the <i>most</i> efficient option to achieve quality urban design outcomes for the individual communities of the Waikato District (and the benefits associated with this) as it does not consider the unique characteristics of the District's various towns and villages.</p>
<p>Risk of Acting or Not Acting if there is uncertain or insufficient information</p>	<p>There is low risk from uncertain information.</p> <p>There is a risk associated with failing to acknowledge the unique characteristics of the District's various towns and villages, which may result in reduced social and economic well-being within these communities.</p>

Overall, it is considered that the provision of a single set of district-wide guidelines for residential subdivision and town centre development is appropriate (with the exception of those for residential land use); however, it does not provide enough place-specific guidance and control for future development in the District, which may result in a loss of existing character and amenity. In addition, unless these guidelines are directly linked to the district plan, they have limited potential to drive a requirement for quality urban design.

3.5.2.3 Option 5 – RECOMMENDED OPTION

Provide for a single set of 'district wide' design guidelines for each of the following categories:

- residential subdivision (i.e. greenfields)
- town centre land development (i.e. a new town centre commercial building)
- residential land development (i.e. a new dwelling).

All subdivision and land use development consent applications in these areas shall be a restricted discretionary activity, assessed against these guidelines.

In addition, provision of short (1 to 3 pages) 'place specific character statements' to support specific outcomes for specific areas. For example, there would be an overarching set of guidelines for all town centres, plus additional one page 'character statements' for each town centre. The additional pages may include specific outcomes sought for that centre.

Consideration	Comment
<p>Benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Potential to achieve better quality of subdivision design and land development. ■ Reduced long term community costs resulting from better planning and design. ■ Continued flexibility of application to promote innovative design solutions ■ Environmental benefits likely to be accrued, e.g. including ecological responses and

Consideration	Comment
	<p>reduced reliance on motor vehicle through good connectivity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improved urban design outcomes that would have associated spin-offs in respect of social and economic objectives as the relevant areas become more attractive and efficient places to live, work and visit ■ Useful supporting material could be included such as diagrams and illustrations to show best practice. ■ Assists applicants/developers achieve the best value from their projects. ■ Provides for 'place based' outcomes where appropriate and/or desired by the community. ■ Design guidelines will improve the quality of development by supporting development that successfully responds to the unique qualities of its surrounding context.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Costs to applicant of responding to design guidelines through resource consent process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For subdivision, this is perceived additional cost that would otherwise likely be accrued by the complexity of the application regardless of the guidelines. – For suburban residential development, this has the very real potential to result in additional development costs, with minimal advantage over a standards approach. – For comprehensive and/or compact residential development, the costs are more likely to be justified. – For town centre development, it is considered that there may be additional cost to the developer (however, such costs are balanced by the longer term benefits to the community) ■ Possible longer time-frames from administering more detailed qualitative design provisions. ■ The Council and the community would incur additional costs relating to developing and administering the design guides.
Effectiveness	<p>Providing a single set of district-wide urban design guidelines supported by character statements will be effective in encouraging the consideration of quality urban design outcomes within future developments. This option will be effective in encouraging a consistent approach across the District whilst also respecting and responding to the unique characteristics of individual towns and villages.</p> <p>As with Option 2, this approach may however not be fully effective in fostering quality urban design outcomes unless the guidelines are directly linked to the district plan (i.e. through assessment matters) and required to be taken into consideration.</p>
Efficiency	<p>Providing a single set of district-wide urban design guidelines supported by character statements will result in financial costs to WDC for the preparation of said documents. However, this is balanced by the fact that provision of a single set of urban design guidelines will improve the efficiency of the application process as it consolidates Council-driven urban design guidance and enhances clarity in terms of Council expectations surrounding urban design. In addition, this option will efficiently achieve quality urban design outcomes for the individual communities of the Waikato District (and the benefits associated with this) through recognition of the unique characteristics of the District's various towns and villages.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, and as noted above, for suburban residential development, guidelines may result in additional development costs, with minimal advantage over a standards approach.</p>
Risk of Acting or Not Acting if there is uncertain or insufficient	<p>There is low risk from uncertain information.</p>

Consideration	Comment
information	

Overall, it is considered that, subject to removing suburban residential development, guidelines, the provision of a single set of district-wide guidelines for residential subdivision and town centre development, supported by character statements for specific areas encourages good urban design outcomes and achieves a good level of control for future development in the District. This option is an effective and efficient method to achieve the objective of fostering quality urban design outcomes. However, unless these guidelines and character statements are directly linked to the district plan, they have limited potential to drive a requirement for quality urban design.

This is the recommended option and forms the basis for recommendations made in section 2 of this report.

3.5.2.4 Option 7

Provide for a single set of guidelines for residential greenfields subdivision development throughout the district. All subdivision consent applications in these areas shall be a restricted discretionary activity, assessed against design guidelines. Other areas and land uses not subject to guidelines. I.e. all town centre and residential design guidance removed.

In addition, develop more detailed district plan standards for residential (particularly 'comprehensive' and 'compact' residential development) and town centre land uses, i.e. bulk and location rules that are designed to meet the intentions of good urban design outcomes.

Consideration	Comment
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In relation to residential subdivision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Higher quality of subdivision design and land development. – Potential to achieve better quality of subdivision design. – Flexibility enabled by guidelines to provide innovative design solutions. – Improved urban design outcomes in residential areas – Useful material can be included in guidelines such as diagrams and illustrations to show best practice. – Reduced long term community costs resulting from better planning and design. ■ In relation to land development where more stringent standards are provided for (e.g. new commercial town centre development and residential dwellings): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provides a greater level of certainty for developers and land owners as more prescriptive rules would result in fewer 'surprises' in respect of rule interpretation and implementation – Creates greater certainty for Council decision makers, as prescriptive rules would reduce subjectivity and misinterpretation – By specifying standards which should be met, requires developments to meet best-practice minimums for residential dwellings/units providing better outcomes for residents. ■ Standards provide certainty to developers about the minimum standards that need to be met for developments as well as notification triggers.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In relation to residential subdivision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For subdivision, this is perceived additional cost that would otherwise likely be accrued by the complexity of the application regardless of the guidelines. – Possible longer time-frames from administering more detailed qualitative design provisions. ■ In relation to land development where more stringent standards are provided for

Consideration	Comment
	<p>(e.g. new commercial town centre development and residential dwellings):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Council and the community would incur additional costs relating to developing and administering the new rules. – Prescriptive standards may still result in developments which are out of context and fail to relate sympathetically to, and enhance their surroundings. – A single set of ‘representative standards’ has the potential to stifle design creativity and innovation. <p>■ A requirement to comply with certain rules may mean developers and Council decision makers are less likely to consider applications in the context of the surrounding built environment, but assess urban design as a ‘tick box’ exercise.</p>
Effectiveness	<p>This option will be effective in encouraging a consistent approach across the District in relation to assessment of urban design outcomes.</p> <p>Providing a single set of district-wide urban design guidelines for residential greenfields subdivision will be effective in encouraging the consideration of quality urban design outcomes within this particular type of future development.</p> <p>However, the use of standards to control residential and town centre design may not be effective in clearly expressing Council’s expectations of design outcomes. In addition, if standards are too stringent they may remove flexibility and reduce opportunities for innovative design, at the cost of effectively achieving quality urban design outcomes.</p> <p>Further, this approach will not be effective in acknowledging the special urban design and built form characteristics of various towns and villages.</p> <p>For residential greenfields subdivision, the use of guidelines may not be fully effective in fostering quality urban design outcomes unless the guidelines are directly linked to the district plan (i.e. through assessment matters) and required to be taken into consideration.</p>
Efficiency	<p>Providing a district-wide urban design guideline for residential greenfields subdivision and the creation of more stringent standards will result in moderate financial costs to WDC for the preparation of said guidelines and standards.</p> <p>Provision of a single set of urban design guidelines for residential greenfields subdivision and more stringent standards for residential and town centre development will improve the efficiency of the application process (for all) as it consolidates Council-driven urban design guidance. However, this option may not be efficient in achieving the objective as a purely words-based urban design control (standards) for residential and town centre development may lack clarity (for applicants, developers, designers, assessors) surrounding Council’s expectations of urban design in these environments. In addition, If standards for residential and town centre design are too stringent this option may overly complicate the application process (for all) and limit opportunities for flexible and innovative design (for applicants).</p> <p>Further, this option does not efficiently achieve quality urban design outcomes for the individual communities of the Waikato District (and the benefits associated with this) as it does not consider the unique characteristics of the District’s various towns and villages.</p>
Risk of Acting or Not Acting if there is uncertain or insufficient information	<p>There is low risk from uncertain information.</p> <p>There is a risk associated with provision of standards that are overly stringent in overly complicating the application and assessment process.</p> <p>There is a risk associated with failing to acknowledge the unique characteristics of the Districts various towns and villages, which may result in reduced social and economic</p>

Consideration	Comment
	well-being within these communities.

Overall, it is considered that the provision of a single set of district-wide guidelines for residential greenfields subdivision and more stringent standards for residential and town centre development does not provide enough place-specific guidance and control for future development in the District, which may result in a loss of existing character and amenity. In addition, there is a risk that the use of standards to control urban design outcomes may reduce opportunities for flexible and innovative design and overcomplicate the application and assessment process. Further, unless the residential greenfield subdivision guidelines are directly linked to the district plan, they have limited potential to drive a requirement for quality urban design.

3.5.2.5 Option 11 (Sub Option) (Recommended)

Retain existing place based heritage and/or character guidelines, i.e. Huntly, Matangi, Rangariri, Pokeno town centre, Tamehere, town centre.

Consideration	Comment
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Protection of district heritage ■ Retention of district character / town centre character elements
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Costs to applicant of responding to design guidelines for specific areas through resource consent process.
Effectiveness	Retaining existing place based heritage and/or character guidelines will be effective in acknowledging the unique characteristics of the various towns and villages within the District. However, should these guidelines be out of date or contradictory to one another, or contradictory to other proposed urban design standards / guidelines - they may not effectively achieve the objective of quality urban design outcomes.
Efficiency	This option will assist in efficiently achieving quality urban design outcomes for the individual communities of the Waikato District (and the benefits associated with this) through recognition of the unique characteristics of the District's various towns and villages (so long as the guidelines are up to date and do not contradict other urban design guidelines or standards within the district plan).
Risk of Acting or Not Acting if there is uncertain or insufficient information	<p>There is low risk from uncertain information.</p> <p>There is a risk associated with existing guidelines being out of date or contradictory to proposed urban design standards or guidelines, potentially resulting in a reduced quality of urban design and inconsistencies.</p>

Overall, it is considered that this sub-option will assist in the provision of place-specific urban design guidance for future development (so long as existing guidelines are up to date and consistent across the District and consistent with other proposed urban design guidelines and standards).

3.5.2.6 Option 12 (Sub Option) (Recommended)

For residential greenfields subdivision include the requirement for a ‘development plan’ addressing identified matters.

Consideration	Comment
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Higher quality of subdivision design and subsequent land development. ■ Encourages critical thinking of the site design. ■ Provides a greater level of certainty for developers and land owners as to matters to addressed ■ Creates greater certainty for Council decision makers, as more prescriptive rules would reduce subjectivity and misinterpretation ■ Greater potential to maintain and enhance design quality as design will generally be tailored to reflect the site and context and can achieve a more diverse and suitable range of urban design outcomes. ■ Assists applicants/developers achieve the best value from their projects. ■ Standards provide certainty to developers about the minimum standards that need to be met for developments as well as notification triggers.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Costs to applicant of preparing a development plan. In many cases this is a perceived cost that would otherwise be accrued by the complexity of the application regardless of the guidelines. ■ Possible longer time-frames from administering more detailed qualitative design provisions.
Effectiveness	<p>Providing residential greenfields subdivision standards and requiring a development plan will be effective in enhancing Council’s control over the achievement of quality urban design outcomes.</p>
Efficiency	<p>Retaining existing heritage and design guidelines will not result in any additional financial costs to WDC, however, this option may be overly cumbersome and complicate the application process for applicants / developers, designers and assessors.</p>
Risk of Acting or Not Acting if there is uncertain or insufficient information	<p>There is low risk from uncertain information.</p> <p>There is a risk associated with provision of standards that are overly stringent and the requirement for a development plan complicating the application and assessment process.</p>

Overall, it is considered that provision of a ‘development plan’ for larger scale subdivision and comprehensive development including staging and/or significant infrastructure (e.g. roads and open space) will provide greater opportunity for comprehensive design of development, assisting to avoid adhoc outcomes over time.

4 Next Steps

Building on the recommendations outlined in section 2 above, we would recommend that WDC consider the next steps in the development of the Waikato Proposed District Plan:

- Convene a number of facilitated workshops with Council staff to agree and develop the following matters:
 - District wide guidelines to be developed as part of the district plan review
 - Place specific guidelines to be developed
 - Approach to development of guidelines – i.e. whether adopting other best practice guidelines; developing guidelines from existing guidelines (recommended approach – e.g. Tuakau and Pokeno guidelines as a ‘starting point’); or to start afresh
 - Matters to be covered within the above guidelines – based on resource management issues and other known local challenges (this will also assist to inform the matters of discretion for restricted discretionary activities)
 - Guidelines structure, including relationship / connection with district plan (e.g. through assessment matters)

Based on the outcomes of the above workshops, Council would have a clear scope of works to move forward with for the preparation of district plan urban design provisions and guidelines in a comprehensive manner as part of the overall district plan review.

Appendix A: Project Methodology, including client engagement

The following table outlines the project methodology, including key engagement points with the WDC. A full breakdown of the methodology, as per the offer of service, is contained within the project Inception Report.

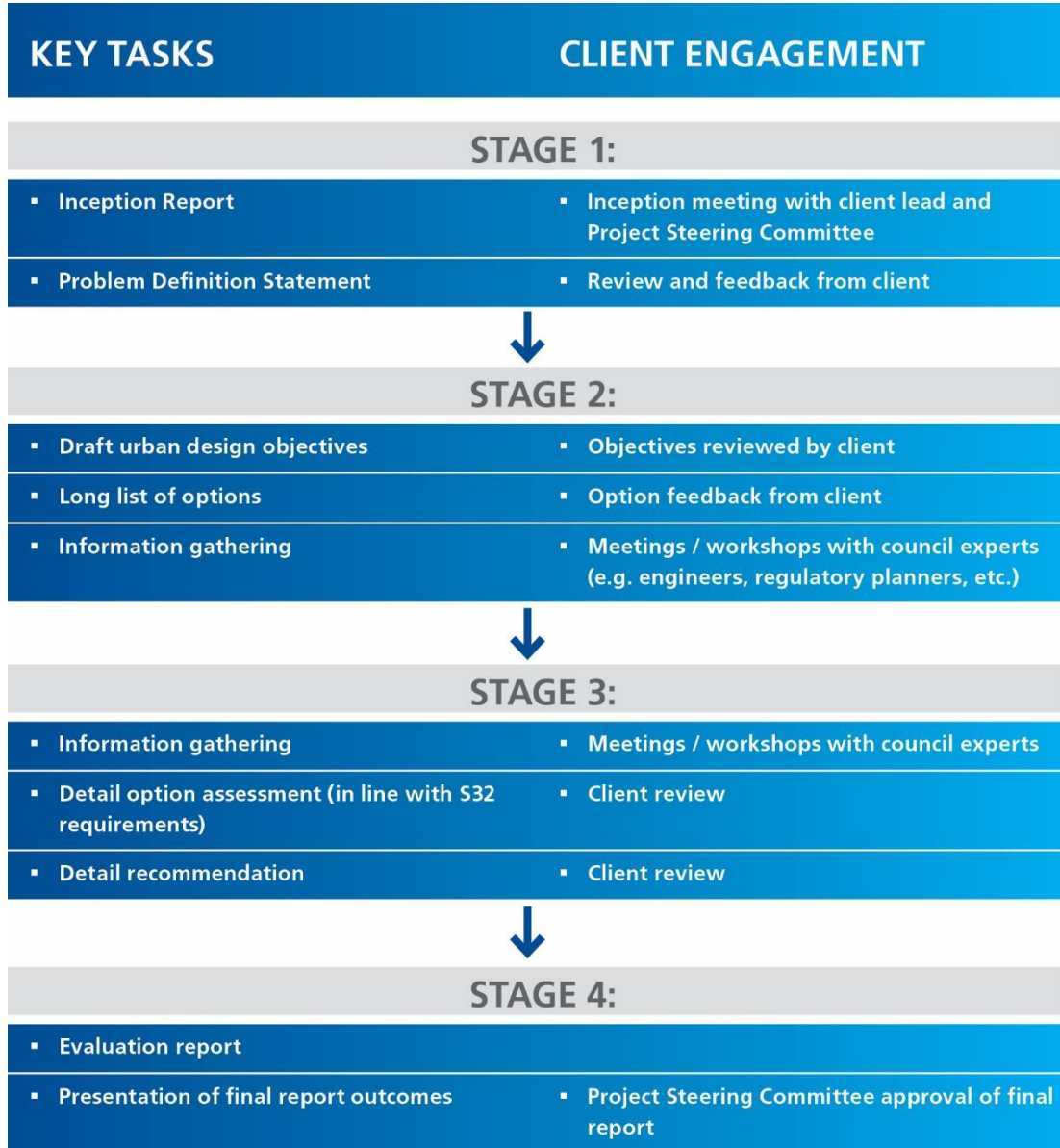
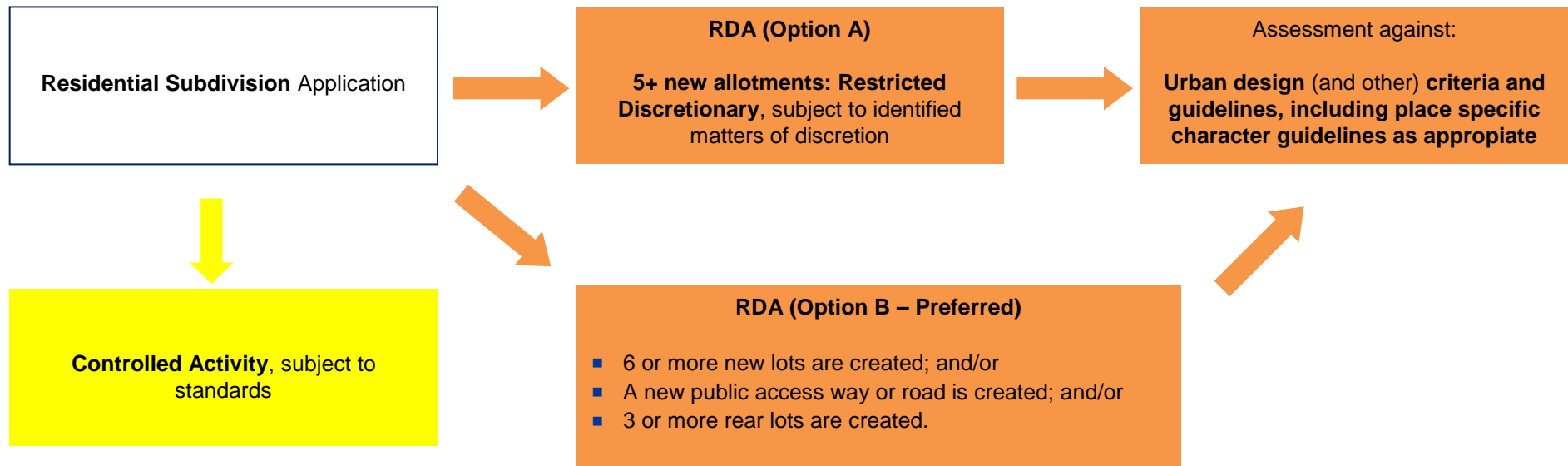


Table 1: Summary of Proposed Methodology

Appendix B: Recommended district plan structure for urban design provisions and guidance

Recommended district plan structure for subdivision in the Living Zone and Country Living Zone



Reasons

- 5+ lots likely to result in rear lots and therefore provides opportunity to consider on-site and surrounding amenity issues
- May result in need for public access ways or roads (correlates with thresholds for a 'public access way')
- Greater likelihood to have public realm and/or open space components or relationships
- Consistent with approach by other councils

Standards Focus

- Minimum (and maximum) lot sizes
- Access
- Services
- Building platforms (meeting relevant land use standards)

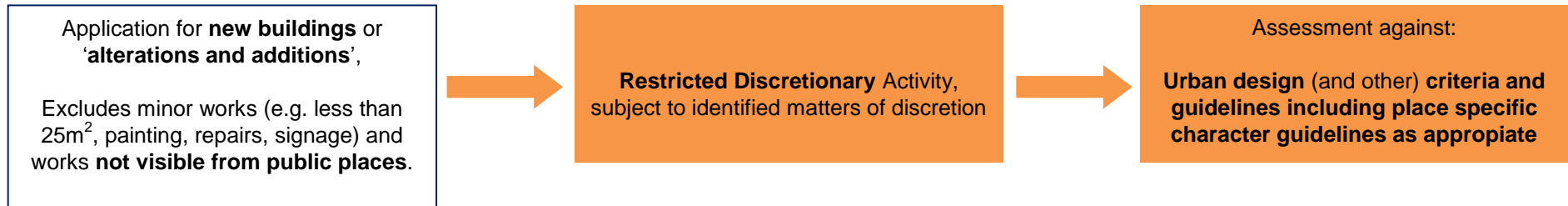
Criteria / Guidelines Focus

- Walking, cycling and vehicle networks
- Block and site layout
- 'Street address' of dwellings
- Public / private relationship
- Safety
- Densities for larger subdivisions
- Sustainability
- Sustainable drainage strategies
- Landscaping – public and private areas
- Public realm outcomes

Guidelines Structure

- Assessment matters and guidelines linked, i.e. guidelines reference assessment matters
- Issues identified
- Clear intent / outcomes sought stated
- Illustrated guidelines provided, with varying examples where possible

Recommended district plan structure for land use activities in the Business Zone / Village Zone



Reasons

- Key outcomes are focused around the built form relationship with public realm outcomes, particularly main streets, public open space and other areas frequented by the public.
- It is not the intention to require consents for minor works or works that do not have an impact on the public realm interface.

Standards Focus

- Bulk and location, e.g. height, setbacks, site coverage
- Active facades
- Access and parking
- Services
- Residential activity standards

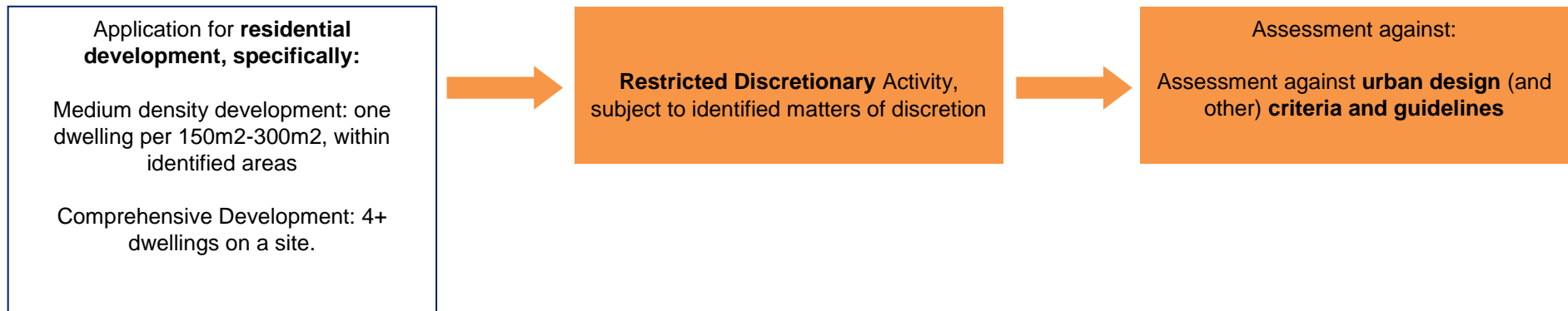
Criteria / Guidelines Focus

- Design and layout, including:
 - external appearance, scale and design of buildings
 - Character – including consistency with any relevant local guidelines
 - ‘Street address’, i.e. Public / private relationship
 - Safety outcomes
 - Landscaping, where relevant
 - Built form articulation – breaking up of bulk
 - Sustainability principles, where relevant
 - Waste management

Guidelines Structure

- Assessment matters and guidelines linked, i.e. guidelines reference assessment matters
- Issues identified
- Clear intent / outcomes sought stated
- Illustrated guidelines provided, with varying examples where possible

Recommended district plan structure for residential land use activities in the Medium Density Zone, or Comprehensive Development in a Living Zone



Reasons

- Medium density developments and comprehensive developments often suffer issues relating to amenity, created by badly designed or laid out developments and dwellings.
- Higher density living requires greater consideration of layout given the potential issues of living in close proximity to neighbours and the associated effects.
- Higher density living necessitates more considered approaches to providing outdoor living space, service areas and access than large sites.

Standards Focus

- Bulk and location, e.g. height, setbacks, site coverage
- Access and parking
- Services

Criteria / Guidelines Focus

- Design and layout, including:
 - External appearance, scale and design of buildings
 - External appearance
 - Outdoor living spaces
 - Positioning and orientation
 - Visual and acoustic privacy
 - Parking and access
 - Safety outcomes
 - Access and parking
 - Landscaping, where relevant
 - Built form articulation – breaking up of bulk
 - Waste areas

Guidelines Structure

- Assessment matters and guidelines linked, i.e. guidelines reference assessment matters
- Issues identified
- Clear intent / outcomes sought stated
- Illustrated guidelines provided, with varying examples where possible

Appendix C: Feedback received from WDC throughout internal engagement

This section summarises key outcomes of the internal engagement process undertaken as part of the project assessment.

Council's regulatory planning, policy planning, engineering and monitoring staff all have a key role to play in implementing the outcomes sought by the plan, as well as providing a sound understanding of the resource management issues facing the district. Accordingly, the project methodology sought to provide for an inclusive engagement process with Council staff, facilitated through three workshops focused on:

- Development of the problem definition and further understanding of urban design issues facing the district
- Development of a long list of options, including feedback (benefits and costs) and direction on draft options put forward
- Receiving feedback on preferred options developed
- Further refining costs and benefits of options – from a *user* perspective (i.e. through a better understanding from a plan user perspective what mechanisms / tools may or may not work)
- Identifying any further areas for research
- Receiving feedback and direction on initial recommendations.

The following Council staff were invited to all three workshops, noting that attendance varied depending on availability.

- David Totman; AnaMaria d'Aubert; Andrew Corkill; Betty Connolly; Craig Birkett; Damon Mathfield; Ella Makin; Jenni Vernon; Karleen Thomson; Katherine Overwater; Kelly G. Nicolson; Robert Marshall; Stephen Howard; Susan Chibnall; Wayne Furlong; and Wayne Harden.

The workshops were facilitated by Damon Mathfield (WDC) and Carl Lucca (Beca).

Workshop 1: 29 March 2016 – Options Workshop

As starting point and prior to the first workshop, the definition statement and a set of questions was provided to workshop attendees to assist in developing an understanding of the project and generate discussion at the session. The questions provided and discussed at the workshop included:

- With reference to existing WDC design guidelines, which guidelines are actively referred to for guidance; and which ones may have become superfluous (e.g. they may be out of date or otherwise no longer relevant)?
- In terms of the guidelines, are any particular guidelines more user friendly than others?
- Is external and/or specific urban design expertise sought to assist in assessing applications against the urban design guidelines? Is this an approach that is likely to occur or be required more in the future?
- Are there particular areas / zones where it is considered desirable to have general 'best practice' design guidelines across the district? E.g. residential subdivision; town centres?
- Are there areas (town centres or villages) that are under particular pressure that do not have design guidelines and would otherwise merit from them (not necessarily prescriptive place based guidance, but maybe 'best practice' guidance)?
- Built form outcomes can be encouraged in numerous ways, e.g. statutory and non-statutory guidelines, activity rules and associated assessment criteria (including reference to guidelines); and standards (e.g. bulk and location and so forth). Is there any view on what works best to achieve the outcomes sought, both from a regulatory view and community view?

Key outcomes and discussion points of the workshop included:

- The need for consistency of provisions and guidance across the district for all plan users, to enable fair, implementable outcomes.
- Many existing guidelines are now out of date (being up to ten years old) and need to be reconsidered in light of contemporary issues and design.
- There is a need for flexibility (such that development continues to be encouraged), but certainty (such that the outcomes to be achieved are clear) within the approach to urban design guidance.
- More control over important urban design and built form outcomes (e.g. subdivision and town centre design) is required through the consenting process.
- Guidance should not be too cumbersome, but rather focus on clear outcomes.
- The need to have guidance and provisions with ‘teeth’ was conveyed, such that outcomes sought can be achieved through a dialogue with developers and/or the resource consent process.
- Many towns in the district (e.g. Pokeno, Tuakau, Te Kauwhata and Ngaruawahia) face growth pressures – provisions should provide the opportunity to generate good urban design and planning outcomes as development occurs in these areas.
- Where towns do not currently face growth pressures, urban design remains important, both to assist in
- Managing piece-meal development / small-lot subdivisions which have a cumulative effect on surrounding connectivity and character is considered an important outcome; support was indicated for a trigger for development plans and a restricted discretionary activity status for residential subdivision.
- Rural residential areas face similar issues to residential areas and therefore need to be considered within design guidance.

Workshop 2: 16 March 2016 – Preferred Options Workshop

This workshop was the presentation of the preferred options for urban design guidance (including associated anticipated costs) and an overview of research into current best practice. Direction and feedback from Council staff is summarised below, with Council staff wanting to see:

- More consistency and control in managing applications and more clarity for developers – uniformity in rules and guidelines with teeth
- An approach for managing piece-meal development as the District mainly deals with small subdivisions (<10 lots) and the cumulative effect of these smaller subdivisions on connectivity and character can be detrimental if Council doesn’t have some level of control / discretion over the form / layout of these developments
- An approach that is tied to the effects based / activity status nature of the district plan – so that if an application is denied it is very clear as to why (staff referenced building bulk and location criteria as needing more support in terms of rationale with teeth)
- A trigger for Development Plans (i.e. development over X number of lots)
- Potential use of a trigger for Restricted Discretionary Activities surrounding number of lots for a residential subdivision (possibly related to right of way rules when this ticks over to require a new road)

Workshop 3: 30 March 2016 – Discussion on Recommendations

During this workshop, the initial recommendations as to the preferred approach to guidance within the district plan was presented to the attendees for feedback. Overall, the intent of the recommendations (as per section 2 of this report) was generally agreed with, with minor comments and feedback received and incorporated into the final version of the recommendations as appropriate.

Appendix D: Other New Zealand Council Approaches to Urban Design Guidance

In order to explore urban design guidance options and get an understanding of current best practice, research into the approach utilised by other Councils was undertaken. This research involved both desktop analysis and phone conversations with Council urban design staff.

In mid-March, urban design staff from Selwyn District, Christchurch City and Waipa District Councils were contacted in order to discuss their approach to, and recommendations for, urban design guidance. A summary of their feedback is contained below:

Selwyn District Council (Gabi Wolfer, Urban Designer)

- Five main Urban Design Guides – Medium Density Housing, Subdivision, Large lot re-subdivision, Commercial and Fencing
- Not referenced as matters Council will consider when assessing applications or in the rules/standards
- The guidelines provide tick/cross type graphics / photos, and are relatively lengthy (40+pages)
- currently going through a review of their district plan and assessing the success of their guidelines
- Believe that most developers pay little attention to subdivision guidelines as they don't have teeth
- Would like to see more visibility of urban design in the district plan. Believes that this should include a graphic element to clearly demonstrate the outcome we are trying to achieve.
- Need to be made visible to developers / applicants early on in the process – i.e. early multi-disciplinary pre-application meetings where urban design is not seen as a separate entity
- Particular areas have need for development plans
- Advise that Waikato District Council look closely at the key issues facing the District now / in coming years – what is Council trying to protect / create / achieve.

Christchurch City Council (Josie Schroder, Principal Urban Designer)

- Most effective way to achieve visibility of urban design is through standards with supporting guidelines
- For character areas / town centres – guidelines are a good approach. For subdivision – standards are effective, but need some flexibility
- Noted legal requirements surrounding the ability to specifically reference guidelines in a district plan
- If a design guideline is specifically referenced in the Plan (i.e. as an assessment matter) that any future changes to these guidelines would then require a Plan Change
- For Lyttelton / Akaroa – statutory design guidelines have been prepared which have been quite effective
- Currently working on residential new neighbourhood zone rules which will be supported by guidelines (in hearings). The aim was for these guidelines to be referenced in the Plan as a specific assessment matter. This resulted in a lot of push-back from developers and consequently they will not listed as an assessment matter, but still referenced in district plan text.
- Wanted subdivision to be RD, but ended up as controlled but with a lot of matters of control
- Outline development plan areas identified with specific rules related to development / subdivision allow for a comprehensive approach to land use and subdivision
- Emphasized the importance of simplicity – for developers / applicants and assessors

Waipa District Council (Gareth Moran, Manager, Regulatory Team)

- Combination of design guidelines and standards, depending on activity and area
- Pro-active approach with development community, e.g. pre-app meetings

- Contract urban design services annually to support assessment of consents and other urban design matters
- Emphasis on achieving outcomes sought within town centre plan
- Piece-meal subdivision still remains an issue
- Statutory guidelines and standards give teeth to negotiate

Urban design approaches to subdivision – New Zealand Council examples

The following table outlines the district plan status of residential subdivision within various Councils, matters considered as part of the assessment process and whether residential subdivision design guidelines apply.

Council	Residential Subdivision Status	Key matters of discretion	Triggers	Urban design guidance
Auckland	Restricted Discretionary		Matters of discretion depend on intensity of subdivision, i.e.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Up to 4 dwellings ■ 5-15 dwellings ■ 15+ dwellings 	Yes – Auckland Design Manual
Taupo District	Restricted Discretionary	Infrastructure; lot layout (minimal guidance)	Subdivision including roads triggers RD activity status	No overarching residential subdivision guidelines.
Selwyn District	Controlled possible under rural rules Restricted discretionary default for township rules	Rural rules provide minimal urban design guidance Specific reference (in Town rules) to: provision of walkways/ cycleways/ footpaths, landscaping, size and shape of allotments.	Minimum allotment size specified for existing development areas for controlled activities (as identified on planning maps). Subdivision that doesn't have legal access to a formed / maintained legal road (other than SH or arterial) triggers RD status	Subdivision Design Guide (2009) / Rolleston Subdivision Guideline (referenced in DP) / Subdividing Large Rural Style Lots
Hastings	Controlled possible Restricted Discretionary Non-Notified possible	Subdivision design a central assessment matter focused around six key elements - connectivity, street, block and site orientation, site or lot design, public open space, stormwater management, street design Subdivision Design Guide as an assessment criteria	Minimum and maximum area standards for lifestyle sites within certain zones	Subdivision and Development – Best Practice Design Guide

Council	Residential Subdivision Status	Key matters of discretion	Triggers	Urban design guidance
Far North District	Controlled possible		Minimum lot size triggers for activity status (Controlled, Restricted Discretionary, Discretionary) for each zone. Maximum number of lots / subdivision	No overarching residential or subdivision guidelines
Napier* * Covered by a code of practice for subdivision and land development	Controlled possible	Includes consideration of: scale / intensity of form, pedestrian / cyclist access	Minimum lot size standards for specific zones	No overarching residential subdivision guidelines.

