

SUMMARY STATEMENT

1. Tēnā koutou katoa, my name is **Nicola Helen Williams**. I am employed as a Senior Urban Designer at the **Christchurch City Council**. I have over 20-years' experience as an urban designer in private practice, as well as local and central government.
2. I have prepared evidence on behalf of the Council in respect of matters arising from the submissions and further submissions on Plan Change 14. This summary provides further information and highlights key points relating to the areas of the:
 - (a) Central City Mixed Use Zone (CCMUZ);
 - (b) Central City Mixed Use Zone – South Frame (CCMUZ(SF)); and
 - (c) Large Town Centres of Riccarton, Papanui (Northlands), and Hornby.

I will be providing an additional summary for the Mixed Use Zone (outside the Central City) at a later date.

The topics I will be discussing in this summary include:

- I. Balancing Policy 1 with enablement;
- II. Good urban outcomes for Ōtautahi Christchurch's streets;
- III. The street shaping method to achieve the above;
- IV. Development envelopes for Large Town Centres; and
- V. Listing the structural issues of the Hornby Large Town Centre.

Balancing the outcomes of a Well-Functioning Urban Environment (WFUE) with enablement through height and density in the Central City Mixed Use Zones (including South Frame)

3. This is essentially my urban design brief. How do we encourage as much intensification as possible, but in a way that gives effect to all the outcomes listed in Policy 1 for a WFUE, and ensures our city works for the benefit of *all* people and communities, including future generations.
4. I acknowledge that we have recommended a few fundamental rules for the CCMUZ / CCMUZ (SF) – namely relating to a good street environment;

good solar access, a bit of privacy and some mid site / block amenity. In including these though, given that most development activities in these zones carry a Restricted Discretionary activity status, those provisions operate to give the Council the opportunity to look at an application against various assessment matters. They are a threshold for review, not a limitation.

5. In comparison to the CCMUZ(South Frame), the City Centre Zone and the finer grain residential areas to the north, the CCMUZ is currently quite a harsh environment. As detailed in my primary evidence, the east-west streets are notably narrower than the typical 20m wide Christchurch street, often down to 8 or 12 metres wide, many with a footpath only on one side and often scarcely a street tree. There are also a number of large block perimeters (also known as the circumference of a block. Whilst 600m is the ideal in urban areas, there are a number both up to and over 800m given the numerous dead end streets. This makes active modes of transport such as walking and cycling not only inefficient, but often unsafe. *Note I have included a larger printed copy of Figure 2 from my primary evidence of the South City area so you can read the dimensions more easily.*
6. Site sizes and grain also vary widely from 500sqm lots to 1.5 hectare lots. We have been careful to balance this enablement with good urban outcomes, so it works for all landowners, as well as the community. Effectively we recommend doubling the height limit here from 17m to 32m, but with a managed tower setback to manage bulk and shading issues.
7. Some of the opportunity costs of not including the proposed rules could include:
 - 7.1 Excessive visual and physical bulk from a combination of additional height on large sites;
 - 7.2 Dark (and often colder) streets for much of the year which can discourage public life and/or walkable neighbourhoods [Ref clauses c, e and f of Policy 1];
 - 7.3 Relating to residential activities in the CCMUZ, the continuation of site layout and CPTED issues, which result in privacy tensions between private open spaces and public areas, narrow pedestrian-only accessways, and personal safety issues from site layouts that do not provide safe passage from the street to each front door. Additionally,

there is an interesting piece of work you may come across in the Residential Chapter called Medium Density Housing Research that my colleague Mr Hattam has been working on for the last few years. His research monitors and analyses MDH in a number of zones including the CCMUZ. He notes on Page 4 that in this zone “there is more scope for very poor outcomes to eventuate”. A big factor in this is the absence of a trigger for assessment by the Residential Design Principles 14.15.1.

Good Urban Outcomes for Streets in Ōtautahi, Christchurch

8. Ōtautahi, Christchurch is still a relatively car-dependant city. However, the city has been gifted with a generally flat topography which offers superb potential for “An Accessible City”¹. Walking is the universal mode for every age and stage. Combining a safe and accessible walkable street network, with the connection to hopping on and off the bus, achieves two ticks for lower emission and accessible modal choices. Well-functioning streets, neighbourhoods and centres are an essential pre-requisite for a quality and more compact city which maximises social benefits and minimises costs.
9. Other benefits of good urban outcomes, whereby buildings prioritise the street, include urban vibrancy, which provides for safer and more prosperous centres, as well as contributing to lifestyle affordability. This provides choices at different price points about how we move around the city i.e. walking and cycling is free and the buses are now very affordable. This directly benefits all people, communities and future generations (purpose of WFUE), whilst also contributing to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (e.) and becoming more resilient to the effects of climate change (f.)

Street shaping method to achieve a good urban outcome.

10. To achieve the above, I have extended the method of a street shaping tool currently used in the City Centre Zone, namely the 45-degree angle from the top of the street wall. This metric in the Ōtautahi Christchurch context is important in that it almost matches the Equinox sun altitude here of 46.5-degrees and seeks to provide solar access into east-west streets between 22 September and 21 March, around half of the year. I have recommended

¹ Transport chapter of the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan, 2012.

this street shaping method be applied to the CCMUZ; CCMUZ(SF) and the Large Town Centres, above the operative street wall height.

11. This street shaping rule, whilst still enabling height, seeks to achieve two good urban objectives:
 - (a) To minimise or manage the potential adverse visual and physical impacts of towers, including length and bulk on large sites; and
 - (b) To maintain a reasonable level of sunlight onto footpaths on the southern sides of streets and where possible, and where possible cycle lanes and street corner public realm areas.
12. The other tool for managing building bulk in the CCMUZ (residential towers only) and Large Town Centres is the 40-metre diagonal tower dimension which is utilised in the CCZ.

Large Town Centre Development Envelope Options

13. Further to my primary evidence, I have added the diagrams below to show the maximum base and tower envelope for a medium sized 1,048sqm site on Main North Road, Papanui, south of the Northlands Mall.



Figure 1 – Plan of a typical site in the Large Town Centre of Papanui where the provisions enable an envelope to effectively fill the full extent of the site (assuming it does not back or side onto a residential zone), with the addition of a tower above the building base – setback on a 45-degree angle from the street.

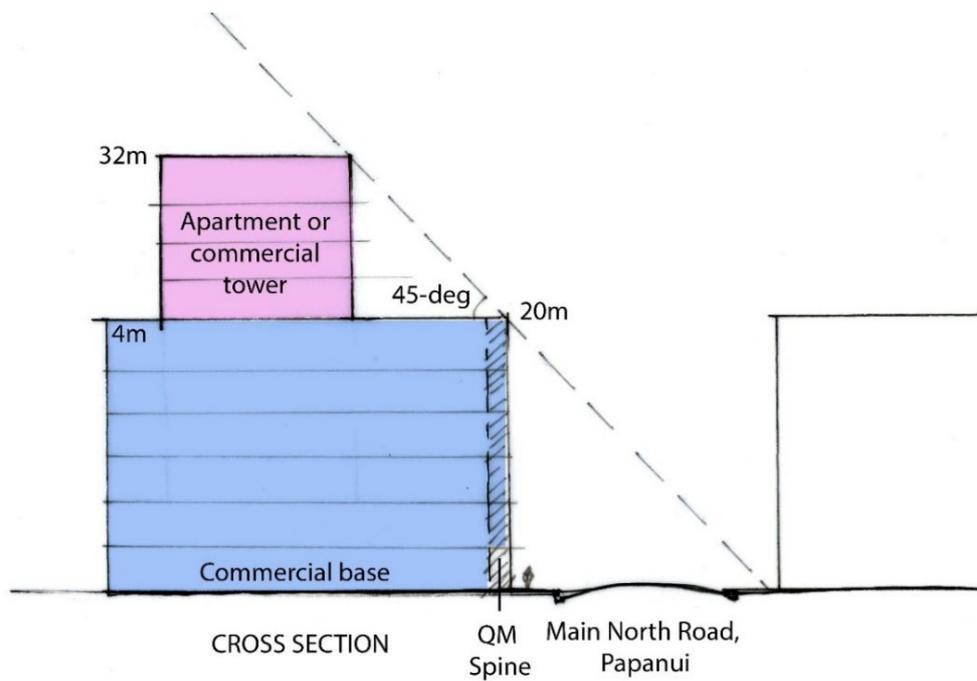


Figure 2 – Corresponding cross section to the plan in Figure 1, illustrating the potential for a six storey commercial base and a four storey tower up to 32 metres.

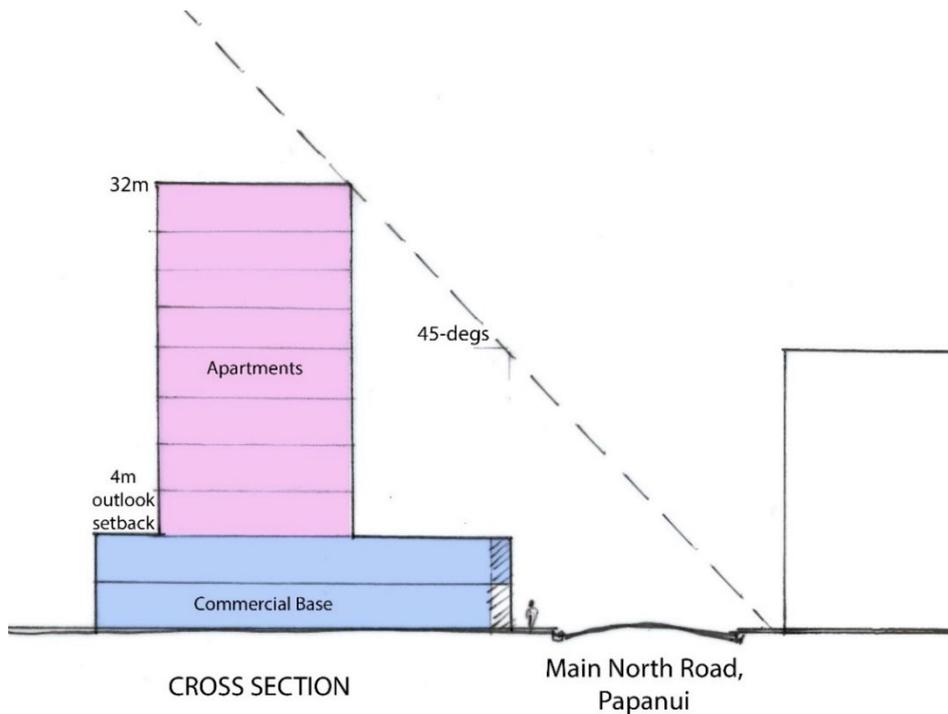


Figure 3 – Another potential cross section of a two storey base and an eight storey tower up to 32 metres. Permitted activities for residential (P21) states residential shall be located above the ground level so a commercial ground floor and 9 storey apartment building above would also be permitted.

14. However, I do acknowledge that there is currently no minimum height in these centres and in my experience also reviewing resource consents, there is still a notable quantum of applications that come through with single storey development.

Hornby Large Town Centre

15. To summarise my paragraphs 162-169 and figures 36-40 of my primary evidence, whilst I consider Hornby to strategically be a good centre for future quality growth given its proximity to jobs, community and open space amenities, its current urban structure is physically divided by a number of wide roads (including SH1) and a railway and spur line. This, combined with the large land parcels and blocks, creates a relatively impermeable urban structure which establishes physical barriers to movement on foot, cycle and poor accessibility both within and between the core of the centre and the adjacent land uses.
16. I maintain my recommendation that there is a structural need for regeneration in advance of offering additional height within the Large Town Centre. Not doing so could further entrench the car-based environment, as well as potentially lose opportunities for strategic new connections through large blocks when sites are redeveloped.

Conclusion

17. Overall, I consider that the proposed provisions strike a careful balance and adherence to both the outcomes of Policy 1 of a WFUE, and the NPS-UD which requires at least 6 storeys of development in Centres and the Central City Mixes Use Zones.

Thank you.

Date: 24 October 2023

Nicola Williams

