

INDEPENDENT HEARINGS PANEL PRESENTATION

PLAN CHANGE 14

“Neighbourhoods and communities are not homogeneous or static buildings and infrastructure on maps. They compromise people with diverse ethnic, cultural, economic and social values, needs and interests whose wellbeing will be affected and shaped by planning decisions.”

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I. Introduction

- The Paradox of Intensification

Figure 1: Worcester Street / Barbadoes Street Corner



II. A Case Study – the Inner City East Neighbourhood

- An older Inner City marginalised neighbourhood undergoing forced change
- The significant housing role traditionally played
- Intensifying Inner City East
 - Urban renewal – late 1990's and post-quake

Figure 2 Worcester Street – Roger Heslop building with bedsit house in the centre (left photo).



- Participatory Research 2022
 - Findings
 - Impacts of intensification
 - Winners and losers
- Kainga Maha – housing continuum Annie Wilson 2023

Case Study - Jim

Settled in ICE just before the 2011 earthquake having spent much of his life in the North Island. After some time spent homeless and in Night Shelter accommodation Jim found a room in a private rental bedsit. 12 months ago he was given notice as the building was to be demolished for a housing development. Now happily settled in a new bedsit after months of looking, Jim has again been given notice as this building is also to be bowled.

Jim faces an uncertain future. With no special needs or circumstances Jim doesn't qualify high enough on the social housing register and so will continue to rely on the accommodation supplement to help offset rising rental costs.

■ Themes

Figure 3: Hereford Street before and after (today)



III. Plan Change 14

- Planning Models – addressing the distribution inequalities of Urban Growth.
 - Integrating the “Just City with the Compact City.”
 - Refer Appendix I “Just or Just Dense! Urban Intensification in Colonial Cities” Dr Suzanne Vallance November 2023.

These are also concerns that deregulation and upzoning, while increasing housing supply are “not enough” because they do not reduce economic and spatial inequalities and therefore undermine the purpose of new intensification policies to enable affordable housing for all.

Wetzstein, 2022; Dantzler, 2022; Yeoman, 2022, Redriguez – Pose and Storper, 2022.¹

A laissez faire approach, MDRS will see the market decide where intensification occurs, which will see ad hoc development which is dispersed across urban areas and could result in increased costs for public infrastructure and service provision across cities.

Yeoman, 2022; Ferm, Clifford, Canclas and Livingstone, 2021.²

¹ Christchurch City Council, (2023, August,4). “Social Impacts of Housing Intensification”. Research Review.

² Christchurch City Council. (2023, August 4). “Social Impacts of Housing Intensification”. Research Review. Monitoring and Review Team.

Figure 4: Gloucester St today

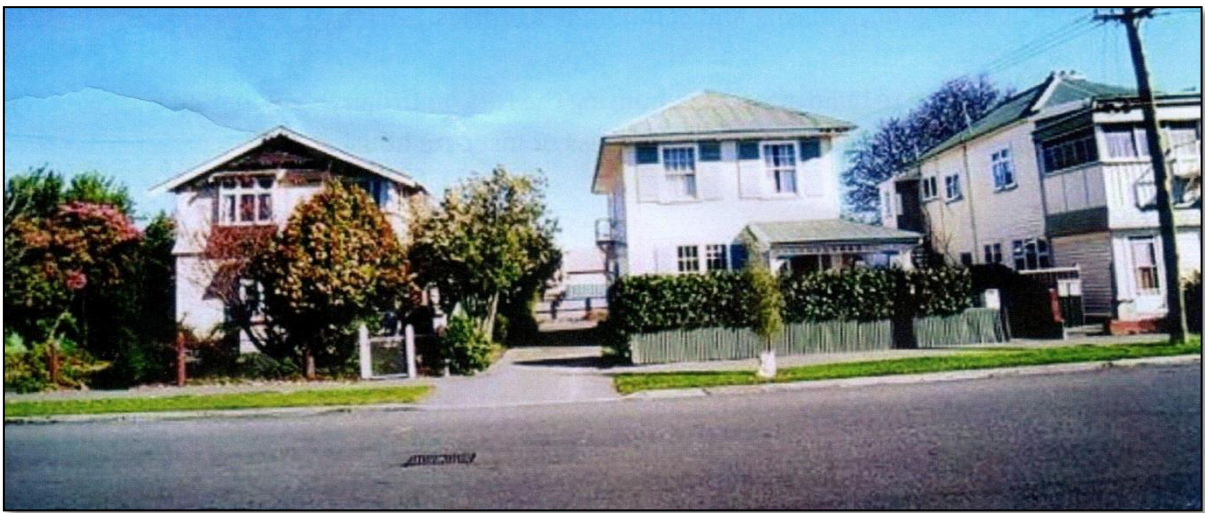


IV. **A Way Forward**

- Addressing the distributive inequalities of urban growth
 - Refer Appendix II “Why and How Could Christchurch City Council promote housing affordability?” Dr Suzanne Vallance November 2023.

In the absence of targeted development and intensification by local authorities, the market could direct intensification towards sites that currently house lower income groups (Naismith & Murphy, 2023; Trambley, 2020; Goederberg, 2021).³

³ Christchurch City Council. (2023, August 20-21). “Social Impacts of Housing Intensification”. Research Review. Monitoring and Review Team.



Just or just dense: Urban intensification in colonial cities

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Colonial contexts

It is widely believed that urban compaction will not only help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by enabling active modes of transport, it will also promote vibrant public space, equitable access to services and facilities, efficient use of infrastructure, reduced urban sprawl onto agricultural land and affordable housing. However, much of the rhetoric supporting urban compaction draws on examples from Asia and Europe. Colonised countries (USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) differ in that their settlement patterns are deeply entwined with land sales. From 1848 when the Canterbury Association was formed, land sales were used for public works such as roads and schools.ⁱ The *commodification* of land – and real estate sales – as the basis of the nation's wealth is still evident today, as seen in the National Government's 2023 election promises.ⁱⁱ Asian and European economies do not rely on the real estate markets for GDP or export earnings/foreign sales in the same way New Zealand does, therefore the rhetoric about the benefits of intensification must be suitably contextualised. This basic difference - in the dominance of the market over urban form - compromises our collective ability to create quality urban environments.

Purpose of growth

As Molotch (1976) famously argued in *The city as a growth machine*ⁱⁱⁱ commodification of housing and competition for rate-payers supports an ideological structure promoting economic growth over civil society. Examples: high profile projects used to lure and satisfy mobile, talented workers take precedence over basic infrastructure serving the needs of those with fewer choices. Another lure is the possibility of owning a detached dwelling which also speaks to the city's colonial origins. As Freestone^{iv} noted 'Culturally, the English country cottage was the model dwelling and if immigrants could not be yeoman farmers then they could at least tend suburban gardens'. This means TAs spend significant sums on greenfield infrastructure, often at the expense of existing urban areas.

Who wins, who loses

While the benefits of consolidation as a climate change mitigation strategy may be seen as a 'public good', the **negative impacts of uncoordinated and poorly provisioned intensification** are largely felt by those left behind. Negative impacts include increased crime, pollution and noise; the loss of greenspace; overburdened infrastructure; disputes over car-parks; unsafe and therefore poor access to active/public transport, facilities and services.^v Those who can escape the concrete jungle, do so, thereby driving sprawl through leapfrog development^{vi}

Just or just dense?

Just city advocates have long argued that justice can be promoted by engaging, enabling, empowering and supporting non-profits, not only in their aspirations for housing and safe infrastructure through non-statutory means, but also by mitigating commercial and residential gentrification through statutory planning^{vii} (also see handout **Local government's role in Affordable Housing 27** options)^{viii}. It should not be assumed the 'market will provide' housing affordability or housing choice; it evidently does not. Thus any proposals for intensification should be matched with significant investment in infrastructure and services to maintain liveability reduce risk from overburdened infrastructure. Participatory planning approaches should be deployed as have been used in Christchurch previously^{ix}, in Vancouver (where residents ended up requesting higher densities^x) and Vienna, consistently rated the most liveable city in the world^{xi}.

ⁱ <https://my.christchurchcitylibraries.com/christchurch-brief-history/#European-settlements>

ⁱⁱ See for example, <https://thespinoff.co.nz/the-bulletin/01-09-2023/national-lays-out-the-welcome-mat-for-wealthy-foreign-home-buyers>

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^x Gethin Davison gethindavison@gmail.com (2011) An Unlikely Urban Symbiosis: Urban Intensification and Neighbourhood Character in Collingwood, Vancouver, *Urban Policy and Research*, 29:2, 105-124, DOI: 10.1080/08111146.2011.557995

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Why and how could Christchurch City Council promote housing affordability?

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The Local Government Act outlines responsibilities for wellbeing and there is a well-established body of research demonstrating wellbeing and other benefits from secure and affordable housing. In addition, the SIGMAH calculator (Social Infrastructure and Green Measures for Affordable Housing) developed by researchers at Swinburne University of Technology and applied in Australia allows decision makers to understand how costs can be avoided from areas such as health, policing, and community services through improved access to housing. It also estimates benefits from higher consumption, income and educational attainment. In Australia it was calculated that the investment in social and affordable housing from the Commonwealth's National Housing Accord and Housing Australia Future Fund over the next five years will create an additional \$4.4 billion worth of wider benefit over the next four decadeⁱ. Housing should be seen as essential infrastructure.

The lack of affordable housing Greater Christchurch is dire. Annie Wilson's (Kāinga Maha) recent presentation *Reaching a happy medium in urban housing - Te Pūtahi* (teputahi.org.nz)ⁱⁱ shows the complexity of interactions across the housing continuum (Figure 1). The fragility of housing tenure was also highlighted with more people now moving from right (market sale) to left (homelessness) of the spectrum.

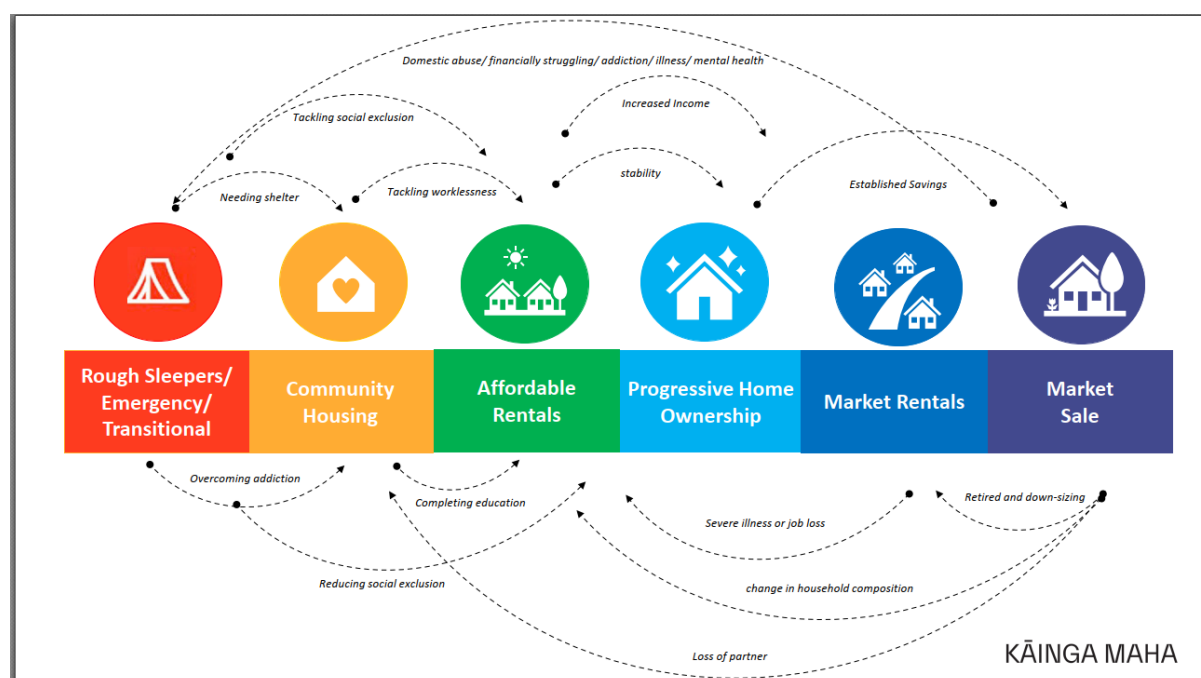


Figure 1. Housing needs from Annie Wilson, Kāinga Maha.

In taking a holistic view of the value of housing, combined with legislative responsibilities under the LGA, there is a strong imperative to take immediate action by adopting the following:

1. Understand how urban intensification can become a form of 'slum clearance by stealth' because aging but affordable housing stock – Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAHⁱⁱⁱ) like the boarding houses and bedsits in Inner City East - is replaced by new infill housing that does not meet existing residents' needs.
2. Appreciate the relationship between housing types and supply and demand for housing across the spectrum (homelessness to market sale).
3. Include NOAH supply in local affordable-housing targets and goals. Identify and understand how NOAH supply ebbs and flows so as to make informed decisions on how to both support new and preserve existing affordable housing supplies of different types.^{iv}
4. Protect any existing low-cost housing stock or find ways to ensure like is replaced with like to mitigate gentrification, displacement and the slide towards homelessness.
5. Offer grants and low-interest loans for energy efficiency and functional upgrades. This is because access to capital for maintenance is the main reason NOAH is sold.
6. Directly fund and finance affordable housing.^{v, vi}
7. Introduce flexibility in regulatory tools around minimum car parking, size and square metre requirements and maximum heights.^{vii}
8. Create pathways and tools to promote innovation in housing provision, rather than creating processes where any departure from BAU causes costs and delays.^{viii}
9. Incentivise a range of developers and housing typologies from small units to significant developments^{ix} and preserve affordable housing through rates rebates for owners and developers committed to the community. Planning concessions can also be awarded to enable affordable housing.
10. 'Inclusionary planning'^x is a way of securing or leveraging affordable housing through the planning and urban development process. Developers make a percentage-based contribution towards supplying affordable housing according to a prescribed percentage of the affordable housing development. A minimum percentage should be introduced across the region, higher percentages in greenfield or urban renewal projects. This can be phased and increased over time. It can be applied to residential, commercial and some industrial land and easily transferred to any affordable housing organisation. Dwellings designated inclusionary should be indistinguishable from market housing^{xi}.
11. 'Density bonuses' permit higher densities in return for an affordable housing contribution, though quality should not be sacrificed and density bonuses might be deployed in conjunction with mixed tenure.

12. 'Impact fees' be applied to developers whose projects negatively affect affordable housing demand or supply.
13. Incentivise and enable through regulation a mix housing typologies and tenure in housing developments.
14. Set affordable housing targets.
15. 'Value capture' a portion of increased value that occurs when land is rezoned to higher value uses or when infrastructure is provided, then direct this value towards affordable housing. Urban renewal projects and rezoning provide opportunities for value capture^{xii}.
16. Develop land use policies that encourage diverse housing forms.
17. Offer rates concessions to community housing organisations.
18. By-laws, bespoke statutes or Resource Consents for various solutions including short-term (Air B n Bs) rentals and landbanking in affordable areas^{xiii, xiv}.
19. Lead by example ensuring a quality approach in council-owned and couple supported housing initiatives.
20. Explore innovative housing provision land supply options^{xv}.
21. Advocate for integration: In a study of four major cities – Melbourne, Vancouver, Toronto and Portland – researchers from the University of Melbourne found that vertical governance that aligned funding and priorities across levels of government was one of the most important aspects of delivering affordable housing (Raynor & Whitzman, 2020).
22. Advocate for the removal of tax concessions like negative gearing.
23. Advocate for underused government-owned land to be used for affordable housing.
24. Work with Greater Christchurch for consistency in standards and rules to tame leapfrog development and battle for ratepayers.
25. Invest in quality infrastructure and services that both residents and investors find attractive, within urban limits. Stop subsidising peri-urban development through infrastructure provision.
26. Work with Community and Mana Whenua Housing Organisations (CHOs). Consider creating a "co-investment/ partnership ecosystem that will sit between governments and the private marketplace, ultimately delivering a national housing model supported by three efficient and sustainable housing sector pillars – public, community and private"^{xvi}. In this co-investment model, the government contributes land while the community housing operator acts as developer and borrows funds. Any gains from development are shared proportionally. The government preserves its equity, the CHO costs and risk is reduced and they build equity over time. In Australia it was estimates that co-investment can deliver 25-30^{xvii} per cent more dwellings than when government buys from finished properties from a developer.

27. Align ‘compact city’ and ‘just city’ ambitions, recognising that intensification can have adverse effects on residents – gentrification, pollution, loss of privacy, etc - and impose additional stress on already vulnerable populations^{xviii}.

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¹ Those in bold also have useful recommendations for central government and developers.