



YOUR PLAN OUR FUTURE
TIMARU DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW
LAND USE PLAN

Timaru District Plan Review

Topic 14

Residential Zones

Discussion Document, November 2016



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Timaru District Council has commissioned this report to identify the 'issues' with how the Timaru District Plan 2005 manages residential zones. The report subsequently identifies the potential 'options' to address these issues and the strengths and weaknesses of each option.

Please note that land use growth is being dealt with in the Timaru District 2045 Draft Growth Management Strategy.

The report is intended to inform and provide a basis for public consultation on this matter and to some degree stimulate debate. The report forms part of a suite of public consultation measures that may be used to inform a potential change to the District Plan.

1.2 Report Format

The remainder of the report has been set out as follows:

- Section 2** identifies and describes the issue.
- Section 3** summarises the relevant statutory matters.
- Section 4** briefly explains the current Timaru District Plan approach to residential zones.
- Section 5** discusses some potential options to deal with residential zones.



This document outlines the issue our district faces in relation to residential zones.

We welcome your feedback on this topic.

Steve Wills
Timaru Ward Councillor

2.0 Issue Identification

Issue 1

What standards are needed to maintain the amenity of Residential Zones if housing is developed at greater densities?

Changes in housing types and the use of smaller sections for houses can adversely impact the visual amenity and character of neighbourhoods in general. There may also be more localised effects on immediate neighbours. These impacts could occur under the current District Plan rules, which provide for higher density housing than generally exists within the District's Residential Zones. Higher density housing could also occur if rules are changed to encourage smaller section sizes and more dense development. In addition, an increase in the number of houses in an area has the potential to increase the amount of stormwater runoff from properties resulting in increased frequency or intensity of localised flooding.

If the density of housing increases, or reaches the level provided for within the current Residential Zones, what level of control over development is needed to retain satisfactory living environments?

3.0 Statutory Matters

There are no matters of national importance in section 6 of the Resource Management Act 1991 that are of direct relevance to the issue of residential density in the District Plan. There are however, a number of matters in section 7 of the Act, which must be had regard to in preparing district plans which are relevant. These matters include "efficient use and development of natural and physical resources (section 7(b)), maintenance and enhancement of amenity values (section 7(c)), and the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment (section 7 (f)).

The District Plan Review must give effect to the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement 2013. Objective 5.2.1 of the Regional Policy Statement seeks development which is consolidated, well designed, and sustainable. This development is also to provide sufficient housing choice to meet the Region's housing needs. The explanation to this Objective notes that a consolidated pattern of urban development is the primary focus for accommodating the Region's growth.

4.0 Timaru District Plan

The main objective and policies of the Residential Zones is to recognise the importance of maintaining and enhancing the amenity values of the residential areas of the District. This acknowledges the importance that the community places on living in a pleasant environment.

In the main Residential Zones in Timaru, Temuka, Geraldine and Pleasant Point there is no limitation on the number of houses on a single site providing a minimum area is available for each house. This is a smaller area than if there was a formal subdivision. Once these houses are built, subdividing off a house on the smaller area is possible. In the Residential 2 Zone in Timaru, which is based around the centre of town, the section size requirements and limitations enable more intensive development. In the smaller townships there is a limitation of one house per section. All residential development is required to meet setbacks from road boundaries and to comply with recession planes angled in from the side and rear boundaries.



5.0 Options

The main options to manage the residential zones are summarised as:

- Status quo (i.e. retain the current District Plan approach).
- Amend (i.e. current District Plan approach requires amendment to align it with current best practice).
- Include (i.e. current District Plan does not include approach which requires incorporation).

These options are briefly described in turn below, followed by a brief assessment of their strengths and weaknesses. Please note other options exist for the identified issues that have not been reflected here to keep the document concise.

Issue 1

What standards are needed to maintain the amenity of Residential Zones if housing is developed at greater densities?

The options for addressing this issue are firstly, to retain the current District Plan standards for building houses. Secondly, amend current standards to give more flexibility in house location on a site and introduce standards to counter any potential adverse effects arising from increased density, e.g. site coverage and living area window setbacks. Thirdly, provide for increased utilisation of land by resource consents for comprehensive subdivision and housing, including consideration of design and appearance of residential units and their layout. Fourthly, introduce a new provision requiring a minimum amount of permeable area on each property.

Option 1 – Status quo

- To retain the current District Plan standards for the siting of houses and level of development within residential sites.

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Somewhat effective, but may not fully protect on-site amenity or that of neighbours ▪ Community understands the existing rules.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does not enable better utilisation of sites. ▪ May not protect the privacy of new and existing residents. ▪ May not protect the amenity of neighbours.

Option 2 – Amend

- To amend the District Plan rules to:
 - (a) provide for better use of sites by enabling reduced front yard setbacks (on south facing sites);
 - (b) protect the amenity of neighbours by including building coverage limits to limit building bulk; and
 - (c) protect privacy by including living window setbacks.

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enables better use of sites fronting streets to the south. ▪ Effective in protecting the amenity of existing and future residents. ▪ Provides certainty on design outcomes for Council, the community and those undertaking such developments. ▪ Reduces reliance on the resource consent process.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May restrict site layout options. ▪ Standards may not address all necessary aspects to protect the amenity of existing and future residents.

Option 3 – Include

- To include in the District Plan new rules to provide for comprehensive development that enables the design and resource consenting of multi-unit housing and subdivision to be considered together. This approach can enable higher density multi-unit housing development (including terraced housing) that would not normally be permitted. These developments would be subject to Council assessment in relation to the design and appearance of the building and the functionality of the development to ensure individual developments contribute to good quality residential environments.

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provides options for landowners to undertake the housing and subdivision approval through a single resource consent process.▪ Encourages good design and layout of residential development.▪ Enables the amenity of future residents and neighbours to be considered on a case by case basis.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Increases reliance on the resource consent process.▪ Increased costs to applicants through having to obtain resource consent.▪ Subjective nature of assessment of building design and site layout can lead to disputes in the resource consent process.

Option 4 – Include

- To include in the District Plan new rules which specify the minimum area of permeable surface on a site to limit stormwater runoff from the property.

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Somewhat effective in avoiding increased stormwater runoff from sites being developed.▪ Will encourage soft landscaping of sites.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ May reduce potential for putting additional residential units on a site.▪ Difficult to apply to existing sites.



Timaru District Council

2 King George Place

Timaru 7910

enquiry@timdc.govt.nz

P: 03 687 7200

F: 03 687 7209

TRIM#1027797

