

SOUTHERN MARLBOROUGH URBAN GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

WAIRAU-AWATERE SETTLEMENTS

A STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

MAY 2010

STATEMENT OF PROPOSAL

Public consultation document



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STATEMENT OF PROPOSAL

Submissions must be made to the Council by Friday 18 June 2010, 5pm. If you indicate that you wish to speak to your submission, you will be contacted prior to the Hearing to arrange a time to speak. The Hearings dates are proposed to be 2,5 and 6 July 2010.

A full Statement of Proposal can be obtained by contacting MDC on 03 520 7400, fax 03 520 7496, email to mdc@marlborough.govt.nz, via the Council's website www.marlborough.govt.nz or by mail at Growing Marlborough, MDC, PO Box 443, Blenheim 7240.

If you wish to make a submission, please complete the submission form available from the above contact points, or in writing including your name, postal address, email address (if you have one) and daytime phone number so that we may acknowledge your submission. Please also indicate in your submission if you wish to speak. Please send your submissions to: Growing Marlborough, MDC, PO Box 443, Blenheim 7240, by fax to 03 520 7496, email growing@marlborough.govt.nz or complete the online submission form at www.marlborough.govt.nz

Public information statement: Responses to Council consultations are public information. Your comments may be included in reports that are available to the public and the media.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Demographics and population growth

The population of Marlborough is predicted to grow by from approximately 44,000 to approximately 54,000 by 2031 (high prediction). The demographics (age group bands and socio-economics) show a trend of the 50-69 year old band increasing as a proportion and the 20-39 year old band decreasing as a proportion. While some of this population growth can be provided for through infill, the majority will require new urban residential land.

Direction and certainty

A key message that the Marlborough District Council has received from all interest groups including developers, professionals, housing companies, planners and the community was to provide clear direction as to where growth should occur and equally where it should be discouraged. The major reason for this was to provide a much higher level of certainty for investments of time, capital and resources.

Efficient resource use

Marlborough challenges, as with most of NZ provincial regions, include a relatively small ratepayer base (25,000), high infrastructure costs and a spread-out network of small townships. As such the imperative is to ensure as efficient infrastructure / resource investment as possible by encouraging concentration of development, utilization of available capacity and intensification of existing urban areas. That is, the choice between Greenfield expansion or infill / brownfield.

Choice of location and price positioning

One of the prime intentions through the project has been to provide the community with a level of choice in terms of locality, section price positioning and housing type. In addition the preference is for growth in areas that are or can be well serviced by community infrastructure (connectivity, cycle/walk paths, shops, services, transport etc).

Urban Design principles for the development concepts

During the concept design phases consideration has been given to a number of key urban design outcomes. Examples include positioning and aspects of open spaces, provision for a mix of residential densities, roading layout to maximise connectivity and solar orientation.

Planning context

The strategy is designed to provide a comprehensive and integrated planning context for the MDC Infrastructure, Policy and Finance teams. In addition it is intended to carry weight for Council planners and the Environment Court.

Perhaps most importantly the Strategy, individual growth pocket costings and combinations for the first time enable Council to develop expenditure planning matrices that will feed straight into the LTCCP / LTP and Annual Plan processes.

Timeframe and sequencing

The timeframe for this Strategy is 25 years, so not everything needs to be 'built tomorrow' or detail planned for. Given the suggested sequencing, key decision points do not occur until approximately 2015 and 2020 that is 5 and 10 years hence. The growth estimates provide a quantum / order of magnitude that need to be planned for. The timing should be viewed as being quite flexible and should be updated at approximately 5-7 year intervals that take into account actual growth, demand, economic and population forecasts.

Funding

Indicative rough order costings have been worked up to provide an indication of costs on a per household lot basis for each of the growth combinations. It must be emphasized that these are a preliminary tool simply to provide an 'order of magnitude' and relativity for the various growth pockets. It will require significant design and policy work as well as testing options to determine where and how significant infrastructure costs will be funded. Apart from scheduled upgrades (in the LTCCP) no budget provision has been made yet for new growth areas.

Regional policy and planning tools

The Marlborough Regional Policy Statement (MRPS) and Marlborough Resource Management Plans (MRMP) are currently under review and the three urban design stages (Blenheim Town Centre, Southern Marlborough and Northern Marlborough) will help underpin and determine policy and plan rules. Specific areas to be rezoned will find their way into the MRMP where appropriate. In general terms the project will combine up the three stages into one integrated strategy for the whole entire region. In MRPS terms the emphasis will be on enabling growth where it is practical, deliverable, serviceable, provide efficient resource use and of course be affordable.

In conjunction, in areas where there are relatively 'poor' conditions such as water supply, water quality, geo-technical issues (e.g. land stability), sensitive ecosystems or flooding etc, growth is strongly discouraged. Further efficiencies are sought through looking at lot sizes and urban density. Much consideration has also been given to current rules, options and locations for any new Large Format Retail (LFR) and also Rural Residential (RR) in the district.

Key Strategy summary

The following key outcomes are identified for the individual Wairau-Awatere settlements:

Renwick:

Roading improvements, limited residential growth to the west and provision for some further commercial.

Wairau Valley Township:

Roading improvements including footpaths, growth heavily constrained to specific areas.

Grovetown:

Roading improvements, growth provision to the south.

Spring Creek:

Roading improvements, no provision for further growth.

Tuamarina:

Roading improvements, no provision for growth.

Rarangi:

No provision for growth, ecologically fragile area.

Seddon:

Roading improvements, Domain design, some further residential and commercial areas.

Ward:

Minimal SH1 roading interventions

Blenheim:

Series of growth pockets around the existing township, LFR / RR provisions, and revision of density rules to encourage better efficiency. Some attention on CBD fringe areas such as Grove Road, Main St, Part Terrace and Auckland St precincts to encourage upgrading and mixed use development.

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STATEMENT OF PROPOSAL

The Marlborough District Council is intending to adopt the Southern Marlborough Urban Growth and Development Strategy as a document to guide future policy direction. The strategy is designed to provide a comprehensive and integrated planning context for the Council to consider when making decisions about the future policies and plans under the Resource Management Act, asset management plans as well as the Long Term Council Community Plan and other relevant documents.

The Council engaged consultants Urbanismplus to help develop this document, along with sister strategies for Blenheim Town Centre and Northern Marlborough. Significant consultation has taken place in devising these plans, which is described in Section 1 of this report. Comments made through submissions in this public consultation will inform the Council's deliberations in adopting the final document. There will be further opportunities for public comment on many of the proposals as they are integrated into future Long Term Council Community Plans, Annual Plans and the Marlborough Regional Policy Statement and Resource Management Plans.

This Statement of Proposal has been prepared in accordance with section 87 of the Local Government Act 2002.

This section of the Act states that the Statement of Proposal must include:

- a statement of the reasons for the proposal; and
- an analysis of the reasonably practicable options, including the proposal; and
- any other information the local authority identifies as relevant

Reasons for the proposal

The Marlborough region has undergone significant changes in the past 20 years, in terms of population growth and make-up, environmentally and economically. These changes have led to significant development pressure that the Council has been required to respond to. Projections show that further growth is likely to take place in the next 20 years, and the Council is seeking to anticipate these growth trends and plan accordingly, so that growth is accommodated in a sustainable way.

The Council commissioned three strategies to identify the nature of the growth, and to recommend what action should be taken to sustainably develop and respond to the demands that this growth will bring. The Southern Marlborough Urban Growth Strategy is one of these documents, and is of particular importance as it covers the

part of the region that is most likely to face development pressures – i.e. Blenheim and vicinity, and the Wairau and Awatere Plains.

The key aims of this strategy are:

- to achieve integrated urban design outcomes, where initiatives preferably achieve most than just one objective
- to align funding priorities and infrastructure upgrades with planning policy; and
- to take planning steps that will positively impact on the development of the settlements over a 25 year period between the last Census, 2006, and 2031.

A further key objective is to enable ongoing and significant public input into this process, so that this strategy is developed in line with current and future community aspirations.

Reasonably practicable options

The Council is required to make decisions about future plans on regular occasions through its various statutory responsibilities –

- Marlborough Regional Policy Statement
- Resource Management Plans to manage the use, development or protection of the natural and physical resources.
- Long Term Council Community Plans and Annual Plans describe the activities that the Council are involved in and how they are funded.
- Asset Management Plans for operational guidance for maintenance and renewal of public assets.

All of these plans look to the future, are developed over time, and involve different levels and timings of consultation.

This strategy seeks to inform these documents by simultaneously integrating their information requirements with community input. This approach has been successfully applied elsewhere in New Zealand for this purpose, and is an efficient method of improving future plans and ensuring their alignment with others and with public aspirations. In selecting this approach, the Council is proposing that it will place value on the proposals that the strategy has recommended as a supporting document.

The Council will also have regard to other strategies and information in devising its statutory plans.