

Housing Intensification Provisions

Enhanced Development Mechanism: Medium Density Housing in the Residential Suburban Density Transition, Residential Medium Density, Residential Banks Peninsula and Specific Purpose (School) zones

The Land Use Recovery Plan (LURP) was approved by the Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery under the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act 2011, and came into effect on 6 December 2013. It introduced a package of new provisions into the City Plan, aimed at addressing housing needs following the earthquakes. These provisions were incorporated into the Christchurch District Plan, with modifications. The rules encourage more intensive housing types, such as terrace and town house developments, within existing urban areas.

This information sheet provides potential applicants with information about the Enhanced Development Mechanism provisions in the Christchurch District Plan for medium density housing.

What is the Enhanced Development Mechanism?

The Enhanced Development Mechanism is a set of District Plan provisions which enable medium density housing developments such as town houses or terrace houses, on qualifying sites within the Residential Suburban Density Transition and Residential Medium Density Zones. It can also be used where one of these zones is overlaid by a Specific Purpose (School) zone but the site is no longer being used for educational activities. The Enhanced Development Mechanism encourages amalgamation of sites, which allows for more efficient use of land and achievement of a better level of amenity within the site and neighbourhood.

How does it work?

The Enhanced Development Mechanism enables residential development at a higher density than would be allowed under the usual District Plan rules. The minimum qualifying site area is 1,500m² (typically 2-3 existing adjacent sections). Within sites of this size, development to a density of 30-65 dwellings per hectare is allowed for under the Enhanced Development Mechanism, compared with the 10-15 dwellings per hectare which is typical across the city's suburbs.

Large sites provide the flexibility to design medium density housing in a way that fits in with the surrounding area.

The space available can be used to vary the design and pattern of buildings on the site and to incorporate useful and attractive open areas. Taller buildings (up to 11 metres high) must be located away from boundaries so they do not shade or overlook neighbours.

Applications under the Enhanced Development Mechanism rules that comply with all criteria can be processed without the requirement for limited or public notification until 31 December 2018.

Where can the Enhanced Development Mechanism be used?

The EDM has specifically been targeted at neighbourhoods that have the facilities and infrastructure to support the development without placing undue pressure on the existing community. Controls have also been put in place to ensure that developments will not affect the amenity of the surrounding area.

Clause 14.13.1 of the District Plan sets out the qualifying standards for the Enhanced Development Mechanism. To qualify, a site:

- must be located in the Residential Suburban Density Transition Zone, the Residential Medium Density Zone, the Residential Banks Peninsula Zone, or Specific Purpose (School) zone;
- must be between 1,500m² and 10,000m², and in one continuous block of land;

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- must provide comprehensive development delivering a minimum density of 30 households per hectare (1 unit per 330m²) and a maximum density of 65 households per hectare (1 unit per 150m²);
- must lie fully within:
 - » 800 metres walking distance of a Commercial Central City Business or Commercial Central City Mixed Use zone, or a Commercial Core zone, or the Commercial Banks Peninsula zone, or a qualifying supermarket not less than 1,000m² gross floor area (other than in the Residential Banks Peninsula zone); and
 - » 800 metres walking distance of either a primary or intermediate school; and
 - » 400 metres walking distance of an Open Space 2 zone or an Open Space 1 zone greater than 4,000m²; and
 - » 600 metres walking distance of a core public transport route (except within the Residential Banks Peninsula zone);
- must not be in a Special Amenity Area (SAM) identified in the City Plan as at 6 December 2013;
- must not be within 400m of the boundary of an Industrial Heavy zone;
- must not be within the Riccarton wastewater interceptor catchment (until work on this infrastructure is completed); and
- must not be within the tsunami inundation area identified by Environment Canterbury (refer Appendix 14.16.5 of the District Plan).

For more information on how the location criteria are applied, or to confirm whether a site meets the qualifying standards please contact the Council.

What can be built on qualifying sites?

Clause 14.13.3 sets out the standards which must be met by developments using the Enhanced Development Mechanism. In summary, these include:

- Maximum height of 11m (three storey) except within 15m of a Residential Suburban zone boundary where the height is limited to 8m (two storey)
- 4.5m road setback unless otherwise stated, and garages and carports must be located at least 1.2m behind the front façade of the unit for residential units fronting the road
- 1.8m setback from neighbouring properties unless otherwise stated
- Recession Planes from internal boundaries
- Minimum unit sizes of between 35m² (studio) and 90m² (3 or more bedrooms) and a requirement for a mix of unit sizes where 6 or more units are proposed.
- Ground floor habitable space requirements
- Outdoor living space requirements include:
 - » Units with 2 or more bedroom units – 30m² per unit, with 16m² being private and accessible.
 - » Ground floor 1 bedroom units – 16m² per unit, minimum dimension of 4m, all private and accessible.
 - » Upper floor 1 bedroom units – 16m² per unit, with 6m² with a minimum dimension of 1.5m being private and accessible.
- 1 car park per unit, and 1 cycle space per unit (unless the car park is provided in a garage)
- 40% site coverage by buildings
- Outdoor service space of 2.25m² per unit with a minimum dimension of 1.5m, plus 3m² with minimum dimension of 1.5m for washing lines
- Landscaping and tree planting requirements
- Acoustic insulation near some types of road
- Maximum building coverage of 40%.

The detailed District Plan provisions can be viewed at <http://districtplan.ccc.govt.nz/pages/plan/book.aspx?exhibit=DistrictPlan>

What consents are required?

Development using this mechanism is a restricted discretionary activity where all the required standards are met. A resource consent is required so the Council can assess the design of the development and its effects on the amenity of the surrounding area. If the development meets all of the locational criteria then the application will be non-notified, meaning that there is no requirement for written approval from neighbours or opportunity for people to make submissions. If not, then the normal test for identifying affected parties will be applied.

A building consent will need to be obtained for all new buildings and any changes to existing buildings. Development Contributions are payable in accordance with the Council's Development Contribution Policy.

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What information do I need to provide with my resource consent application?

Residential Design Principles

It is important that medium density housing is well designed and that any effects are confined to the site. The residential design principles assessment matters focus on issues including development context, contribution to the street, safety and access, landscaping, crime prevention, amenity for occupants and neighbours and visual appearance.

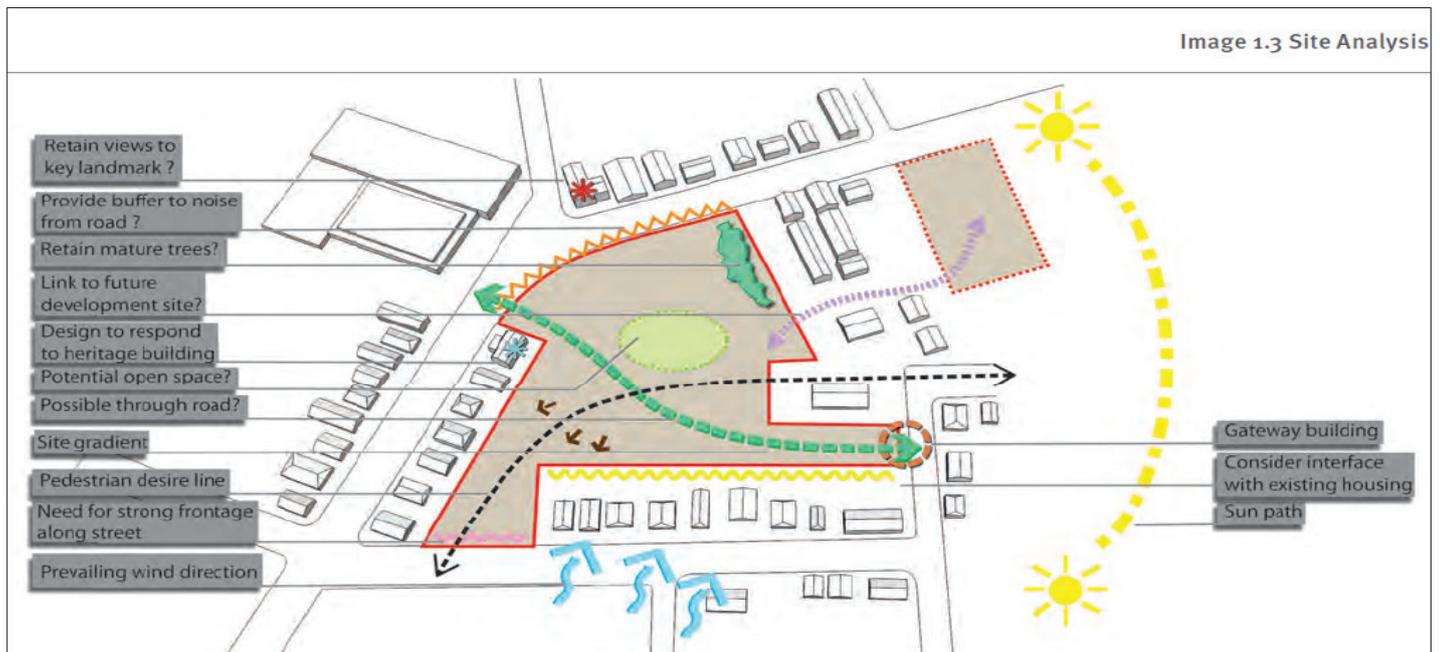
All applications for developments using the Enhanced Development Mechanism must include a 'design statement' prepared by an expert suitably qualified in Architecture or Urban Design (Clause 14.13.3.15 of the District Plan).

A design statement outlines the design, justification of the proposal, examines local character and site constraints, and explains the vision and concept of the proposal in terms of how it will contribute to creating a high quality development that responds positively to the surrounding context.

A design statement should consider:

- The nature of the land uses proposed across the site
- The amount of development to be built on the site
- The layout of development across the site
- The scale of the buildings or other structures
- The treatment of landscaped areas
- The overall appearance of the development

The diagram below gives an indication of how a site analysis might look for a particular site. It explores, at an appropriate scale, the influences of the surrounding area as well as the on-site factors that might influence how it is developed.



A separate Urban Design Guide for multi-unit housing is available on the Council's website at http://resources.ccc.govt.nz/files/Homeliving/buildingplanning/forms/P332_UrbanDesignGuideL3Zones.pdf

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What are the next steps I should take?

Initial ideas or partial site assembly stage

- Ask for confirmation from the Council that the site qualifies for this mechanism.
- Come and discuss your initial idea informally at a pre-application meeting (with or without potential landowner partners or developers) to identify the key issues related to the site and understand the applicable planning rules.

Commitment to develop

- Appoint a suitably qualified architects, planners or designers to help you through the process and prepare the types of information you will need to provide.
- Arrange a pre-application meeting at an early stage between council staff and your professional advisors to discuss key issues and design parameters.
- Maintain the dialogue, to discuss and resolve emerging issues as they come up.
- Ensure your plans and design statement are of the standard expected prior to lodging your application.

In order to satisfy the residential design principles assessment, landowners and developers are urged to arrange a pre-application meeting with Council from the very outset of any development project involving the Enhanced Development Mechanism. In doing so, common understanding of the constraints affecting a site can be developed prior to a land purchase or before professional expertise is employed. This will save time and money and will mean that by the time an application is considered there should be no surprises, and that the ultimate value or appeal of the scheme is enhanced.

Further information

For more information about the Enhanced Development Mechanism provisions or to arrange a pre-application meeting about a particular proposal, please contact the Council's Customer Centre on (03) 941 8999.

Information sheets summarising the other intensification provisions first introduced by the Land Use Recovery Plan are also available:

- Building two residential units on a vacant site in the Residential Suburban and Residential Suburban Density Transition zones
- Converting an Elderly Persons Housing Unit into a residential unit in the Residential Suburban and Residential Suburban Density Transition zones
- Converting a Family Flat into a residential unit in the Residential Suburban and Residential Suburban Density Transition zones
- Converting an existing dwelling into two residential units in the Residential Suburban and Residential Suburban Density Transition zones
- Community Housing Redevelopment Mechanism: Community and social housing