

#### 4. GREENFIELDS SUBDIVISION DESIGN

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The purpose of this report is to discuss with the Committee some of the issues relating to the design of subdivisions in urban growth areas, particularly in the light of the recent decisions of the Environment Court (see preceding report by David Mountfort).

##### BACKGROUND

Since the release of the Proposed City Plan in 1995 and particularly since the release of decisions following submissions in May 1999 it has become increasingly apparent that zoning land 'Living' without any additional development control mechanisms is unacceptable. Poor design outcomes and resource inefficiency have resulted. A report to the 31 July 2002 meeting of this Committee provided background information about new residential subdivisions and described some of the initiatives underway to improve our performance in this area. The recent Environment Court decisions have now confirmed that there is an urgent need for putting in place both statutory and non-statutory measures to achieve sustainable urban design.

##### DISCUSSION

The starting point for these measures is the assumption that what we are seeking is development which has a sense of place, has a low impact on the environment, is resource efficient, and meets the needs of the community. There are a large number of issues to be grappled with, ranging from the macro to the micro levels. Some of these will be able to be addressed through the proposed Variation to the City Plan and other Statutory Instruments, such as the Local Government Act, or the Regional Policy Statement, while others will rely on good practice, incentives, education and changes in attitude etc. Janet Reeves, Josie Schroder (Urban Designer, Urban Design and Heritage Team) and Tracey Kendall (Planner, City Plan Team) will elaborate on some of the issues arising, as highlighted below, at the meeting.

- New Urbanism - appropriate and achievable or seductive idealism?, mixed use
- Consolidation v. self-contained communities
- Density - overall higher density, variable density within subdivisions, effect of land allocation for open space and surface water management
- Meeting the market - providing choice, affordability, traditional v. new types of housing (apartments, attached, high rise, cluster housing, eco-villages)
- Understanding the developer, the development process and development economics
- The need for staging and rationing
- Flexibility v. certainty - the role of masterplans, structure plans, outline development plans, development briefs, development frameworks, design statements etc
- Integration - achieving co-operation between developers/landowners; forming roading, pedestrian, cycling, public transport, waterway and open space networks and linkages
- Urban/rural interfaces
- Difficulties of separate subdivision and building development processes
- Section size, shape and orientation
- Impermeable surfaces
- Use of resource hungry plants and limited plant diversity
- Lifecycle costs of development

- Building form and relationship between houses
- Public/private interfaces
- Visual monotony and lack of distinctiveness

#### NATURAL + PEOPLE + ECONOMIC STEP ASSESSMENT

#	CONDITION:	Meets condition ✓✓0*	HOW IT HELPS MEET CONDITION:
<b>The Natural Step</b>			
N1	Reduce non-renewable resource use	✓	
N2	Eliminate emission of harmful substances	✓	
N3	Protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems	✓	
N4	People needs met fairly and efficiently	NA	NA - See People Step + Economic Step
<b>The People Step</b>			
P1	Basic needs met	✓	Survey to establish needs recommended
P2	Full potential developed	✓	
P3	Social capital enhanced	✓✓	Creating communities
P4	Culture and identity protected	✓	New identity created
P5	Governance and participatory democracy strengthened	0	
<b>The Economic Step</b>			
E1	Effective and efficient use of all resources	✓	Layout & design need to ensure this
E2	Job rich local economy	✓	Construction jobs
E3	Financial sustainability	✓	Manageable maintenance liabilities

#### Staff

**Recommendation:** For discussion.

#### Chairman's

**Recommendation:** That a report be prepared to document the discussion that results from the issues raised in the Greenfields subdivision design discussion and to outline potential methods that the Council could use to address these issues.