

5. CHRISTCHURCH CENTRAL CITY BUSINESS ZONES AND BUSINESS 2 ZONES URBAN DESIGN ISSUES AND OPTIONS

General Manager responsible:	General Manager Strategy and Planning, DDI 941-8177
Officer responsible:	Programme Manager Liveable Cities
Author:	Hugh Nicholson, Principal Adviser Urban Design

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's approval of the Christchurch Central City Business Zones and Business 2 Zones Urban Design Draft Issues and Options (attached) for consultation with Councillors, relevant community boards and the community.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Central Christchurch contains a large and distinctive stock of buildings, a strong grid layout and a series of primary public open spaces. The public greatly value the urban fabric of central Christchurch and are concerned about unsympathetic development. The surrounding network of smaller district commercial centres is also changing with a number accommodating large shopping malls.
3. The aim of this study is to establish the elements of good urban design at different scales, to record how these give local expression in Christchurch, to identify the current threats to good urban outcomes and to suggest planning tools to improve local urban design practice.
4. The study presents findings from site visits, historical documents, Ministry for the Environment and Christchurch City Council planning documents, and relevant case precedents from other New Zealand cities. These are then related and analysed using categories and methodologies similar to the approach adopted in the Urban Design Compendium, an internationally recognised good practice document prepared for the English partnerships and the Housing Corporation by Llewelyn Davies (www.urbandesigncompendium.co.uk).
5. A range of possible urban design initiatives is suggested for each issue identified, and these will form the possible basis of a plan change to enhance urban design in Christchurch. The consultation will also enable staff to test how some of these elements may be given effect to through the provisions of the City Plan.
6. Following feedback, analysis an assessment under Section 32 of the Resource Management Act (RMA) will be prepared to guide the Council in deciding whether, and in what form, changes to the urban design purposes of the Central City Business Zones (within the four avenues) and wider city Business 2 Zones may occur. Section 32 of the RMA requires Councils to consider the costs and benefits and the most efficient and effective means within the objectives the RMA.

URBAN DESIGN PANEL

7. The Urban Design Panel has considered the draft report at its meeting on 17 July 2008 and a copy of the recommendations is attached. If the Committee agrees, the recommendations of the Panel will be incorporated into the report prior to community consultation.
8. Officers support recommendations 1 to 8 from the Urban Design Panel. With regard to recommendation 9, officers agree with the Panel that billboards and non-site related advertising are a design issue. However, they note that this issue is common to a number of other zones as well as the Central City business zones and Business 2. Officers recommend that the Committee does not adopt recommendation 9 of the Urban Design Panel's recommendations on the basis that billboards need to be addressed on a more comprehensive basis across all affected zones.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9. There are no financial implications in adopting the issues and options document for consultation.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

10. There are no direct legal implications involved.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2006-16 LTCCP?

11. These plan changes this work will lead to are identified as Priority 1 plan changes in the City Plan Work Programme.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?

12. The relevant Council strategies are as follows:
- Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy – the Central City and key activity centres have been confirmed as an urban intensification area under this strategy. This strategy sets out the importance of urban design in creating attractive urban environments.
 - Central City Revitalisation Strategy – relevant objectives of the strategy to this work include: strengthening the central city as a vibrant and prosperous business centre; and developing a safe and attractive urban environment that is expressed through high quality design and amenity.
 - Regional Policy Statement (RPS) and Proposed Plan Change 1 – Policy 7 of the RPS, Development Form and Design, seeks to achieve high quality urban design outcomes.
 - Christchurch City Plan – the work is identified on the City Plan Work Programme as a Priority 1 plan change.
 - New Zealand Urban Design Protocol – this work is entirely consistent with the Urban Design Protocol. Christchurch City Council is a signatory to the protocol (March 2005).

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

13. The engagement of key stakeholders (i.e. affected and/or interested parties) at this stage of the planning process, is fundamental to the Council meeting its duty under the first schedule of the RMA and sections 78 and 82 of the LGA. The consultation process is proposed to include:
- Joint Council and Community Board Workshop – August/September 2008
 - Council Report – Draft Issues and Options paper – September 2008
 - Community consultation – Issues and Options paper – October/November 2008
 - Council Seminar – Outcomes of consultation – December/January 2008/09
 - Preparation of Section 32 Report and draft Plan Change if required – first half of 2009
 - Council report and notification of Plan Change if required – mid 2009
 - Public submissions and hearings on notified Plan Change if required

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council:

- (a) Approve amendments to the draft Issues and Options incorporating the recommendations 1 to 8 of the Urban Design Panel dated 17 July 2008.
- (b) Thank the Urban Design Panel for its recommendations.
- (c) Approve the amended Issues and Options for consultation with Council and Community Board via a workshop and for consultation with the community.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

That the staff recommendations be adopted.