

Overview of feedback received on Nelson’s Resource Management Plans March 2016



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Introduction

In November 2015 Council sought feedback and suggestions from the public on issues they wanted to see addressed in the new Nelson Plan.

In the consultation material (e.g. see Live Nelson special: A1453539) a range of questions were asked that sought to frame the conversation around key resource management issues, which were informed by the strategic outcomes for the Nelson Plan adopted by Council. These issue topics were:

- City development
- Built environment
- Freshwater
- Landscape
- Coasts
- Heritage
- Hazards
- Air Quality
- Biodiversity

More than 300 suggestions were received from 288 people or organisations. The most popular topics were Built Environment and City Centre Development, Freshwater, Air Quality and Biodiversity. This information will be used to guide the development of provisions in the Nelson Plan.

A range of suggestions were also received on broader issues not necessarily relevant to the Nelson Plan. These suggestions are discussed on the final page of this overview, under "Crossover with other areas in Council", and also highlighted in the remainder of the overview.

Air quality

Council received 43 comments relating to air quality. Seventeen were in favour of woodburners being allowed throughout the city, with many people commenting on the improved efficiency of modern burners.

A small number of people supported woodburners being allowed in specific areas such as Stoke or Atawhai, and one group requested Atawhai be considered as a separate Airshed.

Around a quarter of respondents congratulated the Council on air quality improvements and didn't wish to see this worsening in future, instead supporting alternatives to woodburners. Some asked what steps the Council would implement if air quality became worse should more woodburners be allowed.

There were also requests for more education, policing of wet wood use, an aligned approach with Tasman District Council and promotion of devices that reduce woodburner emissions.

Concerns were raised about the impact of vehicle emissions on air quality and a number of methods were suggested to promote reduced car use to improve air quality.

Alcohol

There were six responses in relation to alcohol, including one from the Nelson Marlborough District Health Board, and all favoured greater restrictions on access to alcohol, and the development of an alcohol policy. Several people identified the need for consistency between the Nelson Plan and the alcohol policy, e.g. in relation to hours of operation.

Amenity

Enhancing amenity is a broad issue which cuts across the majority of other topics. For this reason a great number of comments were received in relation to amenity, the majority of which supported improved efforts to maintain, restore or improve the city's character.

The need for well designed buildings and consideration of streetscape was raised, and a number of people sought a more pedestrian friendly environment in the Central City and less car parks in the city centre.

There was also a comment on the need to balance the cost of amenity with other financial pressures.

Area based

A range of feedback was received in relation to specific areas. This included requests for residential zoning in the Hill St/Champion Road area, and rezoning requests for Todds Valley.

A Schedule for Manuka Street Hospital was called for and concerns were raised in relation to the compatibility of McCashin's Brewery within the surrounding Residential Zone. In addition, a greater number of activities and shops were sought for Tahunanui .

Biodiversity

Council received 41 comments in relation to biodiversity. Most of the feedback expressed support for non-regulatory methods, including pest and weed control, planting natives and assistance for land owners to protect biodiversity on their land. Brook Sanctuary, Project Maitai and Nelson Nature were supported. A small number of people requested an end to whitebaiting in the Maitai River.

Built Environment

Eighty people commented on issues relating to the wider built environment (beyond the City Centre).

There was strong support for allowing 'granny flats' and additional residential units within existing houses. Many people were enthusiastic regarding more townhouses, two bedroom units and apartments in the region.

A small number of people commented that buildings up to four storeys in height would be acceptable beyond the CBD. One person requested that apartment heights be limited near the coastline.

Intensification of existing land rather than rezoning more rural land was preferred by many, with a smaller number saying redevelopment of non-productive rural land was acceptable.

City Centre Development

Eighty people commented on city centre issues, with nearly half of those giving strong support for inner city living.

A small number noted town houses and apartments close to the inner city as being more favourable than living above shops, with one person suggesting a specifically zoned inner city residential zone. An even number of people supported and opposed the requirement for balconies in inner city dwellings.

One of the key reasons people sought more inner city living was to enhance the vitality of the CBD, particularly in response to population growth within Stoke and western parts of Nelson, and the likelihood of these people travelling to Richmond for their shopping rather than the Nelson CBD.

Another reason given in support of increased inner City living was to provide smaller accommodation units that would be affordable and would appeal to both young people and older people, thus freeing up larger houses for families.

Several people asked the Council to encourage innovative design and others were in favour of maintaining the inner city's character, particularly through design controls. Development contribution waivers were also suggested.

A very small number of people requested fewer rules for new inner city development.

There were a range of views about how high inner city buildings should be, with most seeking three or four storey maximums.

A two storey minimum for Trafalgar Street buildings was generally supported and the pedestrianisation of Trafalgar Street (either the upper section or all of it) was requested by a reasonably large number.

Coastal

Twenty six people made comments on coastal issues, which covered a broad range of topics. Those of particular relevance to the Nelson Plan included concern about stormwater discharges to the coast, run off from land activities and the need to more rigorously monitor discharges into the coastal environment.

Other Nelson Plan related issues included the need to improve water quality at the beaches for swimming, the identification and protection of whitebait spawning areas and areas where measures are required to protect against sea level rise.

Energy

Ten people made comments relating to energy. There was support for encouraging and subsidising use of solar energy, requiring new houses to have solar systems and ensuring subdivision layouts require east-west aligned allotments for solar gain.

Forestry

Seven people commented on forestry-related topics, with most in favour of phasing out plantation forestry (and consequent clear-felling activities) on the City's backdrop.

Freshwater

Forty nine people commented on freshwater issues. More than half expressed support for the actions and planned improvements to the Maitai and other water bodies.

There were mixed views on maintenance of stream edges, for example in relation to the use of sprays in these areas.

Nearly a quarter commented on water takes, particularly groundwater. A precautionary approach was sought, including review of existing consents for large takes in Stoke.

A number of people sought water conservation measures, including requirements for new houses to have rain water tanks, and subsidies for existing houses to install them.

Discharges were a concern raised by some including those relating to rural activities. Issues relating to petrol and diesel washing off service station forecourts and entering stormwater was raised, as was the impact on Poorman Stream of discharges from quarry and forestry activities in Marsden Valley.

A number of ways to improve the quality of the water exiting the Maitai Dam were also suggested.

Two people stated that no further action on freshwater was required.

Hazards

Council received 31 comments relating to hazards, with the majority relating to climate change issues. A third of those requested better identification and communication of areas which will be affected by sea level rise.

Several people recommended a policy of managed retreat, with another preferring investment in coastal protection works.

A small number expressed support for the proposed approach to sea level rise (a risk based approach) and others raised issues about important infrastructure in low lying areas and the need for planning ahead to manage impacts on that resource. Reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and adaption to climate change generally was also sought.

Several people asked Council to disallow development in areas where hazard risk made the activity unsuitable. Other suggestions included removal of stormwater from unstable hillsides, not requiring resource consent in the Inundation Overlay where it related to a low risk activity such as building a carport and highlighting that hazard risks identified on LIMs do not mean Council is responsible for those risks.

One comment noted that the Maitai flood model zone was already influencing consent processes and that this approach was too risk averse and uncertain.

Heritage

More than 30 people provided suggestions in relation to heritage, with the majority in favour of protection of heritage. Most feedback was in relation to buildings, but there were also comments on trees, archaeological sites, Māori cultural heritage as well as general support for financial assistance and better interpretation. In addition, there were some site specific suggestions.

More than three quarters of respondents saw it as important that heritage was retained or enhanced with some taking a neutral stance and two wanting reduced heritage controls.

Landscape

Thirty one people made comments relevant to landscape management.

Several people specifically supported the identified Outstanding Natural Landscapes and a number supported allowing low impact recreation in these areas.

There were a number of specific recommendations seeking the inclusion of the Maitai River, Grampians, Botanical Hill, Nelson Haven, Boulder Bank, Pepin Island and Delaware Bay as Outstanding Natural Landscape areas

The phasing out of clear felling/plantation forestry on the city's backdrop was a common discussion point. Other issues raised included a request for no building on the hilly backdrop to the city (including the Stoke backdrop) and comments relating to the current Landscape Overlay being ineffective or too conservative.

Noise

Eight people commented on issues relating to noise. These related to compliance with the Council's existing resource consent for events, the inner city noise Plan Change (including the need for acoustic insulation of inner city residential units), road noise in Atawhai, noise from neighbouring dogs (which is managed through separate dog control measures), loud music and heat pump units, and site specific issues e.g. compatibility of McCashin's Brewery within the surrounding Residential Zone and Nelson Airport engine testing (and potential expansion of their operations).

Open Space

There were a large number of comments relating to Nelson's parks and reserves, however most concerned issues outside of the scope of the Nelson Plan (for example requests for capital works, provision of walkways and cycling tracks and parks maintenance).

The following points are issues that could be considered during Plan development: requesting provision for more retail near to the beach, protection of existing green areas and rezoning land that is unsuitable for building for open space use.

Others sought better integration of the resource management plan with other council plans (e.g. recreation, reserve management and community facility plans) and the purchase of City backdrop land for use as open space.

Parking

Seven people or organisations commented on parking. There were mixed views on inner city parking, from requiring onsite parking for inner city apartments to letting the market decide on all inner city parking provision. Some wanted parking to be more difficult to discourage drivers, while others sought that a new parking building be developed.

There was a suggestion for making parking surfaces permeable to help deal with flood risks and NMIT made a request to reduce the parking requirements for their site.

Regional Infrastructure

Five people and organisations commented on regional infrastructure. Three urged more planning and/or actions to protect significant infrastructure from the future effects of climate change. A small number of people said the airport would need to be relocated.

One organisation said intensive developments shouldn't attract more development levies as they wouldn't put more pressure on infrastructure. Adequate infrastructure to support population growth was requested by one organisation.

New Zealand Defence Force sought greater recognition of their operations.

Crossover with other areas in council (and other topics)

Much of the feedback also relates to other business units within Council, and a large amount of feedback was received on issues not directly relevant to the development of the Nelson Plan. The information was passed on to relevant staff for consideration in the development of other work (e.g. asset and activity management plans) in December 2015.

The main 'other' topics included:

- Transport
- Parks operations
- Community facilities
- Rates
- Arts and heritage
- Water supply (including fluoridation)
- CBD capital enhancements
- Housing Affordability
- Solid waste
- Maitai walkway
- Gondola