
Submission on Napier City Proposed District Plan

Form 5 Submission on publically notified proposal for policy statement or plan, change or variation

Clause 6 of Schedule 1, Resource Management Act 1991

To: Napier City Council - Planning Unit

Date received: 14/12/2023

Submission Reference Number #:157

This is a submission on the following proposed plan (the **proposal**): Napier City Proposed District Plan

Submitter:

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I wish to be heard: Yes

I am willing to present a joint case: Yes

Could you gain an advantage in trade competition in making this submission?

- **No**

Are you directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission that

(a) adversely affects the environment; and

(b) does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition

- **Yes**

Submission points

Point 157.1

Section: HRZ - High Density Residential Zone

Sub-section: HRZ - High Density Residential

Sentiment: Oppose

Submission:

We vehemently oppose the proposed rezoning of Vigor Brown Street and the surrounding neighbourhood to allow High Density housing, for the following reasons.

- The possibility of Vigor Brown Street being rezoned as High Density is already causing stress and anxiety amongst residents. People buy houses in a street like this because of the quiet and tranquility, and for the enjoyment of a private back garden area. These qualities would disappear with High Density, and one of the best and friendliest neighbourhoods we have ever lived in would no longer be a desirable place to live. Houses that are currently owner-occupied would likely become rentals, resulting in less community spirit, a general reduction in standards and consequential loss of character.
- Within the foreseeable future, rising sea levels may well compromise lower lying parts of Napier. It does not look like wise planning to allow High Density housing in an area that may become uninhabitable well before the buildings' expected lifespan. The huge outlay necessary for upgrading utilities etc. to cope with the increased load of High Density housing would be ratepayers' money wasted. New businesses will seek to establish themselves on higher ground, well away from central Napier, negating any possible benefit of High Density housing in our area. Such housing would be better suited to areas where future growth will not be affected by rising sea levels, and where existing communities will not be disadvantaged by shading and loss of privacy.
- Patterns of work, recreation and shopping are evolving in such a way that dense accommodation close to the city centre is no longer seen as desirable or necessary by many. More people are now working from home, and the CBD is not the hub of activity it once was, with big box retailers establishing themselves elsewhere. Without a comprehensive public transport system such as Auckland and Wellington - both Tier 1 - have, it makes no sense to turn a desirable inner city neighbourhood into a congested high-rise area.
- NCC was wrong to designate areas of Napier as High Density Residential Zones. There is no requirement under the National Policy Statement - Urban Development for a city the size of Napier - Tier 2 - to allow six-storey developments in existing neighbourhoods. For such developments to function there must be efficient public transport available. Napier does not have this, and there is no indication of anything changing there. Most residents in Napier rely on cars for transport, and to allow any High Density developments without provision for parking would create mayhem, as the only parking available would be on the streets. Such a lack of parking close to residences would also discourage use of electric cars.
- Napier City Council has a poor track record so far with large apartment block projects. The apartment developments in West Quay and Humber Street have cost ratepayers dearly, and have only been successful in providing work for lawyers, blighted as they are with problems of poor design and weather tightness issues. The houses in Vigor Brown Street and MacDonald Street are still standing, warm and dry, after over 100 years. They are loved and cared for by their owners. Where is the sense in ripping a community apart for the benefit of property developers and the legal profession?
- We bought our house in Vigor Brown Street in 2020. A strong influence on our decision to buy the house was the knowledge that a Heritage Protection Overlay was proposed for the area, with a public meeting and a letterbox pamphlet drop occurring not long before Covid. For the NCC to now propose that this area be zoned High Density, despite the report from Graham Linwood noting that Vigor Brown and MacDonald Streets both contained "...significantly high levels of character" is a slap in the face for residents of the whole area, many of whom, like us, feel betrayed and let down by the council.
- We bought into the area specifically for the character and heritage. To destroy this by allowing High Density would be to destroy a community. High Density housing anywhere close to Heritage Protection zones would completely defeat the purpose of the so-called protection - six, or even three storey buildings next to historic villas and bungalows would create significant shading, loss of privacy, and increased noise levels. Residents of Vigor Brown Street are annoyed by NCC's about-turn, regarding it as not acting in good faith or in the best interests of the residents of the area and the city at large, and do not understand the council's eagerness to embrace High Density housing that is completely inappropriate and unnecessary.

Relief sought

The Napier City Council should place a General Residential classification on the area bounded by George's Drive, Kennedy Road, Jull and Carnell Streets. No High Density housing should be allowed in any existing suburbs of Napier, to avoid problems of shading and loss of privacy to existing residents.

Point 157.2

Section: OVR5 - Napier South Historic Heritage Overlay

Sentiment: Amend

Submission:

After commissioning a Heritage Review from Graham Linwood, MacDonald Street between Carnell St and Kennedy Road was designated a heritage area, despite the corresponding portion of Vigor Brown St featuring a very similar style and standard of housing. The report also mentions that both streets contain many more significant original houses all the way down to Latham St. Having only part of MacDonald Street with any heritage protection is a complete waste of time if High Density or even Medium Density developments are permitted in Vigor Brown Street. Blocks of six storeys high, or even three, built along Vigor Brown Street would deprive the MacDonald Street houses of sun and privacy, as well as subjecting the currently quiet and peaceful street to increased levels of noise and disruption due to the flow-on effects of lack of parking for any such developments in Vigor Brown Street. Any 'heritage' would soon be gone. The only way to avoid this is to extend the Heritage Overlay to include Vigor Brown Street, and to not allow any multi-storey developments on the streets that back on to MacDonald and Vigor Brown, i.e. George's Drive and Jull Street.

Relief sought

We would like to see the Heritage Overlay extended to include MacDonald and Vigor Brown Sts from Carnell to Latham St. These houses define the character of the area, and should be protected to preserve this.