

Finding the Balance

Let's plan now for a better future

Review of the District Plan



Draft Commercial Chapter

How commercial businesses (for example shops, supermarkets, offices and banks) operate and where they are located in our District (incorporating Christchurch City and Banks Peninsula) has changed significantly following the earthquakes.

Many businesses have had to relocate throughout the District, in some cases creating new business 'hot spots' in non-traditional commercial areas. Some are operating in areas removed from their customers, services and suppliers, and many businesses want to return to a centralised commercial location or hub.

What businesses need now is certainty. The new draft proposed District Plan will provide this certainty by establishing a clear and simple regulatory framework for where businesses may locate.

Our areas of focus

Our District is changing and to ensure we meet the needs of current and future generations, in considering the draft Commercial Chapter our areas of focus are:

Strengthening existing centres by avoiding the dispersal of retail and office activities
 Since the earthquakes, a significant amount of retail and office activity has located outside the Central City and suburban centres. This reflects the current City Plan and the temporary provisions that have enabled businesses to relocate to industrial and residential areas, until April 2016, due to earthquake-damaged premises. This shift in location has the potential to negatively impact surrounding communities, with issues such as increased traffic and noise, particularly if businesses were to remain in these areas long term.

The draft Chapter proposes to strengthen the role of centres as the focus for commercial activity by providing for retail and office activities within these centres, and limiting dispersal to industrial and residential areas. This ensures services and activities are accessible to communities by walking, cycling and public transport, and avoids the negative impact of these activities.

Achieving better design in the rebuild of commercial centres

As the rebuild progresses, there has been concern that poorly-designed buildings could lead to a lower quality environment in centres, for example buildings with large blank walls that have little relationship with the street, or a dominance of car parking at the front of a site, which does not encourage pedestrian activity on the footpath.

With significant damage to a number of commercial centres, there is an opportunity to achieve better quality design outcomes as we rebuild centres. This is proposed through introducing requirements for an urban design assessment for most new development to ensure it enhances the centre and relates well to its surroundings.

Draft Commercial Chapter key objectives

A distribution of commercial activity focused within a network of centres at a scale and intensity consistent with the role of a centre, and that:

- Supports a consolidated pattern of growth and well-functioning urban form, consistent with the Strategic Directions Chapter.
- Supports the role, recovery, vitality and amenity of centres, particularly those that suffered significant earthquake damage.
- Ensures goods, services and other facilities are readily accessible to residents, visitors and workers by a range of transport modes.
- Avoids the adverse effects on the efficiency of the transport network and transport facilities.

A scale and form of built form that is consistent with the role of the centre, and that:

- Contributes to a high quality urban environment with a high level of amenity.
- Integrates with the surroundings through the layout and design of buildings.
- Minimises adverse effects on adjoining land uses.

What we are considering

We are considering various draft options and we welcome your views on them and any suggestions you may have.

A key focus would be to continue the current policies of encouraging commercial activities to operate and develop within a range of identified commercial centres in suitable locations across the city. Activities would continue to be steered toward the centres in a way that achieves consistency with the scale and function of the commercial centre (whether it is a suburban centre or the Central City). This approach avoids development outside of the commercial centres that is likely to have adverse effects on the residential environment and transport network, and goes hand-in-hand with the recovery of centres including those identified through the suburban master plans.

When considering the development and location of commercial centres, the impact on the character and amenity of adjacent land uses would also be taken into account, for example the effects on residential development.

Draft options we are looking at include:

Classification of commercial centres

- Introducing a new classification that recognises the function of existing and new centres across the city. The proposed classifications are:
 - Central City
 - District, e.g. Riccarton, Papanui
 - Neighbourhood, e.g. St Martins, Edgeware
 - Local, e.g. Thorrrington
 - Retail Park, e.g. Tower Junction.

Commercial zones

- Replacing existing zones (e.g. Business 1 and 2) with the following to recognise the different scale and form of development anticipated:
 - Commercial Core
 - Commercial Fringe
 - Commercial Local
 - Retail Park.
- Providing for a new commercial centre in Halswell.
- Rezoning of centres including Aranui, Hillmorton, and Belfast North to recognise the scale of development in these centres and their role going forward.
- Recognising Retail Parks such as Tower Junction to provide for large-scale retail stores.
- Rezoning of existing car parking areas adjacent to shopping areas at:
 - Shirley (to Commercial Core)
 - Merivale (to Residential Medium Density)
 - St Martins, Wairakei/Greers Roads (to Residential Suburban)
 - Fendalton, Barrington and Linwood (to Commercial Fringes).

Activities in commercial zones

- Retaining opportunities for residential and office activities in centres.
- Limiting large-scale retail and office activities in Neighbourhood and Local Centres.
- Making provision for medium density residential development within centres.
- Limiting large-scale retail and office activities in Neighbourhood and Local Centres.

Built form of commercial centres

- Encouraging good design outcomes through an assessment of the design and appearance of new buildings and alterations.
- Introducing maximum building heights that relate to the centre classification and size, with a bonus height allowance for corner sites, in some centres.
- Retaining a maximum plot ratio for the Retail Park Zone to avoid adverse effects on adjoining properties and more intensive development.
- Removing maximum plot ratio in the Core and Fringe commercial zones and relying on other methods to control the scale of development.
- Introducing requirements for buildings up to the footpath, glazing and verandas on identified pedestrian-orientated streets.
- Retaining requirements for building setbacks and recession planes when they are adjacent to a Residential Zone.
- Maintaining outdoor storage area screening requirements and simplifying requirements for landscaping.

We want to hear from you

At this stage these are draft options only, open to discussion, and we would like to hear your views. You can also comment on the proposals in the proposed District Plan when it is notified for submissions later this year.

Email the District Plan Review project team at dpreview@ccc.govt.nz to:

- let us know what your views are about the draft Commercial Chapter
- find out more about the draft Commercial Chapter
- register for e-newsletters.

To find out more

Visit www.ccc.govt.nz/districtplanreview to find out more about the District Plan Review and to download the other chapter information sheets.