



UTF Says Future Tauranga Development Relies on Getting the Basics Right

TAURANGA, 11 May 2023: Submissions prepared by Tauranga’s Urban Task Force highlight gaps between the desired outcomes of urban intensification and the reality of the planning policies proposed by the Bay of Plenty Regional Council (BOPRC).

UTF Chairman, Scott Adams, says the two submissions on Plan Change 6 (PC6) which are due to be presented next month reveal the importance of getting the foundations right to ensure we can build a city that meets the needs of the community for many years to come.

“We have no land available for development. PC6 is supposed to open up the opportunity to intensify building in current residential areas, providing the housing that the city so desperately needs.

“Unfortunately, we believe the current plan change drafted by the BOPRC has been worded in such a way that development of the scale needed won’t be viable,” says Adams.

UTF support the aim of intensification in urban areas, but only if the changes are based on sound planning policy which offers a clear path to rectifying the region’s chronic housing shortage.

“How is Tauranga supposed to move forward and build more capability and capacity for our community if the right plan changes and details have not been approved?

“PC6 gives no consideration to a Future Development Strategy. The strategy is a crucial piece of work to define how our region should grow over the next 50 years and should have been a central element of the way in which this policy was developed. How can long-term growth patterns be absent from this plan change?

“It’s vital that plan changes such as this are based on sound planning policy which will rectify the capacity shortage, whilst also avoiding unnecessary and inefficient process and uncertainty,” he says.

Plan Change 6 is one of several amendments to regional planning policy required by the government as part of the National Policy Statement-Urban Development (NPS-UD).^{*} This new legislation directs regional councils to enable higher density housing to address nationwide shortages.

One of concerns raised by UTF with the BOPRC’s proposed changes is the exclusion of developments under 5 hectares.

“There is no reason why smaller scale developments cannot be considered under this policy. The exclusion of sites under the 5-hectare limit is contrary to guidelines set by the NPS-UD.

“There are many smaller sites throughout the region which can play an important role in providing land for housing and business use,” says Adams.

UTF also want the policy change to provide for intensification in smaller towns in the region.

“As it’s currently worded, PC6 will exclude expansion in existing areas such as Paengaroa and parts of Te Puke. Ensuring we have sufficient supply of future land for urban development will rely on areas such as this becoming available for development.

“The proposed policy acts to severely limit the opportunities for growth despite this being the desired outcome of the NPS-UD.

“The Bay of Plenty is crying out for sensible planning policy which addresses the years of poor growth management. Now’s the time to get it right, and we’re encouraging the BOPRC to ensure this vital policy sets the scene for the kind of development the region so desperately needs,” says Adams.

What is the NPS-UD?

The National Policy Statement-Urban Development (2020) (NPS-UD) introduced requirements for regional councils to amend their Regional Policy Statement to be more responsive to urban development proposals and provide support to intensification of urban areas. Their purpose is to enable additional development capacity, regardless of whether it is

planned in existing planning documents, and to contribute to well-functioning urban environments. The NPS-UD also requires local authorities to take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi) in planning decisions relating to urban environments.

Under the NPS-UD regional councils are required to:

- Take into account Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles
- Provide criteria for assessing private plan changes for un-anticipated or out of sequence urban development proposals for urban environments
- Enable intensification of urban environments

ENDS

For more information about the Urban Task Force including copies of submissions referred to in this release see: <https://urbantaskforce.co.nz/>

For more information on Plan Change 6 see: <https://www.boprc.govt.nz/your-council/plans-and-policies/policies/regional-policy-statement/proposed-change-6-nps-ud>

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