



Feedback to the Papakura Local Boards on the draft Auckland Unitary Plan

By Patrick Fontein, 11th June 2013 update.

1.0 Background.

The Manurewa and Papakura Local Boards commissioned SD4 to carry out a Fine Grain Analysis on the draft Unitary Plan documents released in September 2012. SD4 completed the FGA Reports in November 2012, and each of the Boards accepted the FGA Reports for their area. Both Boards then made submissions to Auckland Council on the Sept 2012 draft.

Both Boards have now asked SD4 to review the March 2013 Unitary Plan draft, to see:

1. *How many of, and to what degree, their feedback points have been incorporated into the draft Unitary Plan*
2. *which have not been incorporated and the relative impact in relation to the Board's place-shaping aspirations for the area.*
3. *what has been included in the plan that might change the Boards' previous feedback, or which the Board may wish to provide feedback on*

In the case of Manurewa, the Local Board is also interested in knowing specifically what the impact is of applying the single house to the area of Hill Park covered by the current Heritage 8 zone, particularly in terms of providing protection to the character of the area. For example, are there any sections over 1000sm and what is the likelihood of subdivision? The Board is also keen to see trees retained in the area to ensure the character of the area is maintained.

In the case of Papakura, the Local Board will wish to ascertain whether the draft Unitary Plan contains any proactive policies or intervention mechanisms that would effect the step change to a metropolitan centre; beyond the passive approach to zoning and the associated rules. If not, what could be added to the draft Unitary Plan to augment the zoning and rules and would this assist with implementation on the ground?

This Report is an update on a preliminary Report provided to Council Officers on 2nd April 2013 and a 23rd April 2013 Update Report, which was circulated to Papakura Local Board Members and discussed at a Local Board Meeting on 23rd May 2013.

This most recent update incorporates feedback provided from the Board, and provides SD4 commentary in certain requested areas.

2.0 SD4's comments on the specific points raised by both Papakura and Manurewa Boards

2.1 Urban Design:

1. *That the Plan should follow a design led and place based approach.*
2. *That urban design regulatory controls be included within the Unitary Plan, with the appropriate rule and assessment criteria structure to enable those rules to inform and influence development proposals and improve the quality of development in our neighbourhoods.*
3. *That during the next stage of development of the Unitary Plan, the Local Board be provided with updates on how the Unitary Plan provisions will deliver high quality urban environments that respond appropriately to their context (including topography, character and amenity values), particularly within those areas identified as being of moderate to significant change. The design and management of streets should also be of a high standard.*

SD4: *(Comment on whether the new Unitary Plan (UP) addresses the Boards submission):* Yes: The entire draft Unitary Plan has a strong urban design focus, in line with your submission. (eg Section 2.2 of the Text: "Enabling Quality Urban Growth"). SD4 recommend that both the Papakura and Manurewa Boards continue to support the urban design led approach, and continue mentioning this to Council in it's submissions

2.2 Infrastructure before development:

1. *That the Unitary Plan should have a number of triggers in place before the additional development potential provided by the plan can be uplifted, to ensure that all necessary infrastructure to handle increased population (including transport, water, wastewater, schools, health, and other community and social infrastructure) is in place before new development, over and above existing plan provisions, is permitted.*
2. *That there should be a staged approach to the development of town and local centres, to support Papakura as a metropolitan centre, Takanini as a town centre and Hingaia as a neighbourhood centre.*

SD4: Not really; Section 3.1.1 of the Text covers Infrastructure. Our interpretation on reading this text is that it is light or even silent on ensuring the infrastructure is provided prior to development commencing. SD4 acknowledges that this is a difficult issue to manage economically, as the areas where Council may wish to see intensification would need to have large amounts of funding applied to infrastructure upgrades, after which there maybe uncertainty over whether the market wishes to intensify in the Council chosen areas.

2.3 Prioritise brownfield, master-plan Greenfield:

1. *That brownfield development should be prioritised and encouraged, to ensure the effective use of urban land.*
2. *That new Greenfield developments should be master planned in order to ensure that comprehensive development occurs and that infrastructure and transport planning is effective. The provisions of existing Structure Plans should be reviewed and updated in line with Auckland Plan strategic directives, to ensure that environmental quality is not compromised and that sustainable new communities are delivered.*

SD4: Yes: The draft Unitary Plan has maintained its focus on intensification within existing urban areas (i.e. brownfield). There has been a substantial amount of work dedicated to RUB analysis. The focus has been on master-planning of these areas to ensure intended outcomes are achieved. SD4 recommend a continued focus by both Boards on insisting on comprehensive master-planning for any future urban areas.

2.4 Height within the Terrace Housing and Apartments Building Zone

1. *That the proposed height limits for the terraced housing and apartment building zone are unlikely to be viable over much of the Unitary Plan period.*
2. *That the proposed height limits for the terraced housing and apartment building zone is not supported as there is evidence that they will not provide the numbers of new dwellings required in Manurewa to support the levels of population growth expected. The Board recommends that further analysis is undertaken, as part of the area plan development, to provide a robust evidence base for deciding height limits.*

SD4: Partially: There is a main thrust of the Unitary Plan to only allow 4 storeys in higher density residential areas. 4-8 storeys are allowed in town centres. The draft Unitary Plan now allows 14.5m or 4 storeys within this terrace housing and apartment zone (see Part 4 Rules, 4.3.1, section 4.4.1 Building Height). SD4 believe that this height limit will now allow substantial intensification (where economically viable), as long as the existing improvements are low or moderate.

2.5 Density Controls and Accessory Units

1. *That the removal of density controls for mixed housing developments with three or more units is supported provided a high quality of urban design and amenity is required.*
2. *That accessory units or minor dwellings be provided as a permitted activity, noting that good design outcomes will still need to be provided for these buildings*

SD4: (Partially) The removal of density controls has remained in the mixed housing zone. Part 4 Rules 4.3.1, 3.3 allows the conversion of a dwelling into two units. Other than this the UP does not allow minor dwellings or accessory units.

3.0 SD4's comments on the specific Papakura Board issues

3.1 Metropolitan Centre

1. *Ascertain whether the draft Unitary Plan contains any proactive policies or intervention mechanisms that would effect the step change to a metropolitan centre; beyond the passive approach to zoning and the associated rules. If not, what could be added to the draft Unitary Plan to augment the zoning and rules and would this assist with implementation on the ground?*
2. *That development of the Papakura Area Plan must be given a higher priority than currently programmed, to ensure that planning provisions are appropriate and well planned at the local level. Until the Area Plan is in place, the Unitary Plan should adopt an interim approach designed to avoid irreversible outcomes.*

SD4: Not really; Section 3.2.3.3 covers the Objectives and Policies of Metropolitan Centres and Section 4.3.3 the Rules of the Business area, incl the Metropolitan Centres. In neither of these sections are there any specific references to the above.

SD4 recommend that the Papakura Board make the following requests:

1. **The Papakura Board is supportive of the Papakura Centre being designated a metropolitan centre, which will allow a massive change in development typologies for the area.**
2. **To ensure that Papakura's central area transition to a metropolitan centre, it is of critical importance to the local Papakura Community that prior to any development being approved under the more permissive zoning, that the Papakura Area Plan be developed, or as a minimum the Papakura metropolitan precinct plan be developed, which needs to include areas inside and adjoining the metropolitan centre area.**
3. **The initial higher density developments within the Papakura metropolitan precinct area will be the "make or break" for the centre. The Papakura Board request Auckland Council resource to carefully investigate potential early starter catalyst projects, alongside the private sector, so that Papakura's redevelopment starts attractively.**

3.2 The extent of the Single Housing Zone v the Mixed Housing Zone in Papakura

1. *The Papakura Local Board have asked SD4 to review the extent of the Single Housing zone proposed in the draft Unitary Plan throughout Papakura and review whether some of the Single Housing zone should be Mixed Housing zone.*

SD4 Background information.

Having reviewed the previous Papakura District Plan, the following comments apply:

- The area shown as mixed housing in the Unitary Plan (mainly the area surrounding the Metro Centre area) were predominantly Residential 2 in the Papakura District Plan. Residential 2 allowed 9m in height with 12m allowed under Controlled activity status. Site density is 1 house per 350 m², although this could reduce to 150m² in a controlled activity. The Mixed Housing zone allows 8m in height and with discretion can increase to 10m.

- The area shown as Single housing in the Unitary Plan were predominantly Residential 1 in the Papakura District Plan. Residential 1 allowed houses of 9m in height and 1 house per 400m², with an ability to reduce to 1 per 350m². The Unitary Plan Single House zone is more restrictive than the old Papakura District Plan, with an 8m height limit and 1 house per 500m².
- So the Unitary Plan has “down-zoned” the existing residential areas of Papakura, when compared to the earlier Residential 1 and 2 zones of the Papakura District Plan. All this at a time when we are trying to intensify the Auckland Urban area to accommodate another 1 million people?

SD4 Comments:

SD4 has substantial experience in reviewing the development potential of various Auckland urban residential areas. The following are the main two characteristics that define urban neighbourhoods with strong intensification re-development potential:

- **Site Size:** Residential urban areas where a number of sites are 700m² + and especially where there are a number of sites of 1,000m² +.
- **Improvement value:** Where the area has a large number of properties with an improvement value on the property that is low. i.e. where the land value is 60-90% of the capital value of a property.

Papakura has a large number of properties that fit the above two intensification criteria. If Auckland Council is going to reach anything near the 60-70% intensification targets of the Auckland Plan, it must take all the reasonable intensification opportunities available.

SD4’s major concern is the large proposed extent of single housing zone, when this is clearly a reduction in development potential from the earlier Papakura Residential 1 zone. When this is then added to the large site sizes and low improvement values, there are large intensification opportunities that are being missed, within Papakura.

So where would SD4 advocate changing the draft Unitary Plan provisions of the single housing zone to mixed housing?

As much of Papakura was subdivided and created in the 1950’s many of the section sizes were larger, although the quality and scale of the housing on these large sections is now modest. These are the ideal characteristics of intensification suburbs. We should therefore start with the concept that all Papakura property should be zoned mixed housing, unless we can find good reason for the neighbourhood / precinct to be Single Housing Zone.

The main characteristics of the single housing zone are:

- **Site Size:** Where the section size is relatively small and future increased density intensification will be difficult, and / or
- **Improvement Value:** Where the area has properties with improvement values near or at greater than land value, and / or
- Neighbourhoods with Significant Heritage or Character areas.

So where in Papakura would any of the Single House Zone criteria apply?

- Any subdivision area completed since 1980, as this is where the section sizes are often (relatively) smaller, and the improvements are more substantial, eg
 - All of the recently developed Takanini areas
 - All areas east of Dominion Rd and north of Settlement Rd
 - The recently developed areas of Hingaia (eg Harbourside)
 - The Parkhaven Drive area

SD4 are of the view that all the remaining areas of Papakura should be in the Mixed Housing zone. There are no compelling technical reason why these larger older properties, with modest improvements, should remain as the Single Housing Zone.

3.3 Are there areas of Papakura which should be upzoned from Mixed Housing to Terrace House / Apartments?

The Papakura Local Board have asked SD4 to review whether there are areas where the extent of the Mixed Housing zone proposed in the draft Unitary Plan, should be changed to Terrace House / Apartments.

SD4 Comments:

There are two areas which stand out as needing a close review:

1. The area immediately adjacent to the Takanini Rail Station
 2. The Gt South Rd area between Southmall and the Papakura Metro Centre
1. The area surrounding the Takanini Rail Station is all zoned Mixed Housing, with not a terrace house / apartment zoned property in sight. This is extremely odd, as the Unitary Plan is supposed to focus on residential intensification close to rail stations? If the Takanini Rail station is to be retained in its current location, SD4 would support up-zoning all the properties to the West of Takanini School Rd and east of Gt South Rd, to the Terrace House and Apartment zone.
 2. The area immediately south of Southmall along Gt South Rd has been zoned light Industry. This zoning is supported. The residential area to the north of Waterview Rd West is zoned Mixed Housing, where as the area to the south of Waterview Rd East, has been zoned Terrace house and apartments? This seems very odd, as the area to the north of Waterview Rd East is effectively “sandwiched” between two higher intensity zones. Having reviewed the area carefully, SD4 are of the view that the entire Gt South Rd corridor between the light industry area through to Coles Crescent should be zoned terrace house and apartments.

3.4 SD4’s comments on submissions made by and to the Papakura Board

Feedback	HSME Research	HSME Rec	SD4 Comment
UPASEP0507 4. Waterview West - not appropriate for terraced housing and apartments, mixed housing is more appropriate.	Agree that this appears to be an anomaly. Surrounding land is zoned for mixed housing under Unitary Plan. Need to determine why this zoning occurred.	Refer to residential workstreams 1.4 and 1.5 to investigate why land has been zoned for Terraced Housing and Apartments instead of for Mixed housing.	<i>SD4 agrees with the sentiment of the submitter, this upzoned block is surrounded by Mixed Housing and should probably also be Mixed Housing, unless the area to the north was also apartments</i>
6. All of this (mixed use, mixed use business and service/light industry) should be	Refers to uses on Great South Road between Waterview Road and Taka Street. Agree that future uses in Great South Road between Takanini Interchange and Papakura town	Refer to Residential and Business workstreams to review appropriateness of Great South Road zoning between Takanini	<i>SD4 assumes the Workstream will review fully and provide a sensible</i>

<p>mixed use business.</p>	<p>centre need investigating holistically to determine appropriate future zoning. Should also consider potential for additional station at Glenora.</p>	<p>Interchange and Papakura town centre holistically.</p>	<p><i>zoning solution.</i></p>
<p>7. Preference for more intensive residential and/or mixed use development along ASR between Takanini and Papakura. Papakura Private Hospital in this area should be zone - special use- for the hospital purpose.</p>	<p>There are two separate issues here. Issue 1 raises the preference for more intensive development and/or mixed use along Great South Road. This issue should be reallocated to 5.1 Transport General. This is complex and cannot be resolved with a recommendation in this spreadsheet. This should be escalated to senior management as it is a key land use transport issue for the south. Linked to consideration of additional station at Glenora. Issue 2 seeks to rezone the Papakura Private Hospital to special use for hospital purposes. This is now shown in the Draft UP as special use so no changes to the maps are necessary.</p>	<p>Issue 1 - more intensive development along Great South Road - needs to be reconsidered and escalated accordingly [orange traffic light].</p> <p>Issue 2 - Papakura Private Hospital - no changes necessary as a change to the UP map to rezone it for special purpose</p>	<p><i>SD4 consider this a more intensified use a sensible suggestion, and should also be considered by the Workstream as above.</i></p>
<p>UPASEP0647 (1269) Would like T&A zone extended to Res 2 boundary. (Op Plan). ie: to match boundary of existing Res 2 Papakura District Plan zone</p>	<p>Agree that the T&A zone should extend to the Operative District Plan Residential 2 Boundary. This is to avoid 'downzoning' this area as apartments are currently provided for as controlled activities, this area also provides for a denser form of development than the mixed housing zone. The T&A zone is more appropriate for the Residential 2 Zone, but an overlay to control some of the landuse controls may be an option to also ensure that the area is also not 'upzoned' too much. Mixed Housing Zone provides for range of housing types including terraces and apartments. No change required. Note: attached map has been created to show relationship of T and A Zone in UP to existing Central Area (which provides for apartment buildings) and to existing Res 2 Zone.</p>	<p>Extend the T&A Zone across all of the Residential 2 Zone - also investigate whether an overlay is appropriate to control some of the development standards so it is not 'upzoned' too much either.</p>	<p><i>SD4 agree that the T&A zone should be extended to avoid downsizing</i></p>
<p>UPASEP0656 1278 Great South Road between Tironui Road and Walter Stevens could be Mixed use Residential. Block between Takanini and railway and Glenora and Great</p>	<p>Agree that future uses in Great South Road between Takanini Interchange and Papakura town centre need investigating holistically to determine appropriate future zoning. Should also consider potential for additional station at Glenora.</p>	<p>Refer to Residential and Business workstreams to review appropriateness of Great South Road zoning between Takanini Interchange and Papakura town centre holistically.</p>	<p><i>The Workstream should consider the best uses, incorporating mixed use would seem sensible. SD4 does not believe that the Rail station at Station Rd</i></p>

South Road could be rezoned from Residential to mixed use residential			<i>Takanini is best located to be a catalyst for new development and should be relocated</i>
UPASEP0659 1281 Hingaia (Structure Plan) - future of southern part unclear	This is being investigated through the RUB team. How the Unitary Plan will reflect the southern part of the Hingaia Structure Plan has not yet be determined. Should be allocated to topic 12.2 Structure Plans or topic 12.1 RUB.	Allocate to correct topic and await outcomes from RUB investigation. We can then report back to the Local Board for their feedback once a decision has been made about incorporating the future stage of the Hingaia Structure Plan into the Unitary Plan.	<i>The entire Hingaia Peninsula has been contained within a Structure Plan as part of the UP</i>
UPASEP0646 1.30 Accessory buildings	Minor dwellings should be allowed. Freestanding - yes. Needs further investigation as to what other controls should apply to them. Whats the problems - visual? - carparking?	This submission is supporting an opportunity to provide for minor household units and there have been a number of others making the same point. A decision was made not provide for minor household units, but perhaps this issue needs to be reconsidered.	<i>Part 4 Rules>4.3.1, 3.3 allows the conversion of a dwelling into two units. Other than this the UP does not allow minor dwellings</i>
UPASEP0655 1.18 Height	Height in Metropolitan zone for Papakura 60 m = agreed		<i>60m limit set for town centre</i>
UPASEP0658 Height in Industrial Zones - consult with developers	The height limit for the industrial zones is a maximum of 20m where development is greater than 50m away from a residential, open space zone, or public reserve. If it is within a 50m distance, the maximum height limit is 10m.	Has there been any input from developers regarding the height limits for industrial zones? N but with other key stakeholders / industry professionals.	<i>SD4 believe that most developers are satisfied with the UP proposed height limits of 20m, with setbacks to 10m close to other zones</i>
UPASEP0911 1.4 Mixed Housing zone	Comprehensive development. No resource consent should be necessary within the mixed housing zone - these should be permitted. - Simplify the process.	Resource consent will not be required to build a dwelling that complies with the development controls where two or less dwellings proposed. Resouce consent will be required where these are infringed to ensure that a good design outcome is acheived. no alternative given by submitter.	<i>SD4 is satisfied with the proposed UP direction. As long as RC applications are processed in a streamline fashion, it is reasonable to apply for a RC when carrying out 4+ dwellings, to ensure strong urban design is achieved.</i>

3.5 SD4's comments on AC's Capacity for Growth Study 2012 (CfGS12), as it affects Papakura

In early April 2013, AC issued two background Technical Reports, TR2013/009 and 2013/010, which can be found on the Web at:

<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/PLANSPOLICIESPROJECTS/REPORTS/TECHNICALPUBLICATIONS/Pages/home.aspx#capacity>

The CfGS12 states in its Introduction on Page 3:

“The Capacity for Growth Study assesses the ability of residential and business land within Auckland to accommodate growth”.

So how well does the CfGS12 assess the capacity for growth in Papakura?

Appendix C, Map Series 2, Map N shows the Map for Papakura:

<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/planspoliciesprojects/reports/technicalpublications/Documents/tr2013010series2mapn.pdf>

The following are some of the key findings of SD4's review of the above Map:

The largest “Residential Vacant” and “Residential Vacant Potential & Infill” development sites in the Papakura Local Board area are (according to the CfGS12):

- The Manukau Golf Club
- The Caravan / Trailer Park at Cunningham Place, Takanini
- The Selwyn Oaks Retirement Village at 21 Youngs Rd
- 40-58 Boundary Rd, Papakura
- The greenfield land at Keri Vista Rise
- Substantial greenfield land, some covered with Structure Plan changes

Table 32, Page 118 of the CfGS12 Results, shows that Papakura has 14,499 existing dwellings within its Local Board Area. Table 32 states that Papakura has sufficient capacity for an extra 12,378 INFILL dwellings or 16,175 REDEVELOPMENT dwellings. The CfGS12 is forecasting that Papakura could increase its dwellings by 115.6%

This compares to SD4's detailed FGA analysis which states that a possible 18,756 greenfield dwellings could be developed and 4,681 brownfield.

SD4's professional judgement on the CfGS12 is that:

- AC's CfGS12 Report is a computer driven exercise, with practically no reality / sense checking “out in the field”. i.e. a check on: “Does this make sense”?
- AC's CfGS12 Reporting has counted most private schools, churches, retirement facilities and some parks in its sites able to be redeveloped.
- All sites that are “under-developed” (incl the schools, churches, parks mentioned above) are assumed by the CfGS12 analysis to be redeveloped to 100% of their maximum potential, within the 30 year period.
- Much of the CfGS12 Methodology and Background structuring is sound, it is the sense checking of excluding schools, churches etc; assessing the likely capacity utilization and development chance that has yet to be completed.

The end result for Papakura, is that the CfGS12 is likely to have over-estimated the infill development opportunities, however the greenfield opportunities are probably under-estimated, so overall the numbers probably balance for Papakura.

3.6 SD4's comments on AC's Unitary Plan 3D modeling videos, as it affects Papakura

As part of the Growth Study work, AC has also released a series of Unitary Plan 3D modeling videos. Instead of the normal Council process of posting these on the Council website so that they could be clearly viewed by all, they are tucked away on "YouTube", as below:

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNiuqKCzobSwwvxhdHPqawQy4GPEFW8R9>

So having reviewed the video simulations for Papakura, SD4 provides the following comments:

- The base information provided for the 3D modeling is outstanding. It provides very accurate 3D building shapes of all the existing buildings in the area.
- The 3D views are rotated across each of the town centres, the main features are marked and it is very clear to get a good context of each centre.
- The buildings and sites of historic character are clearly signposted before the growth projections commence.
- The manner in which under-developed sites are prioritized for redevelopment within each centre looks promising.
- The new building massing of each of the chosen redevelopment sites appears realistic.
- This is where the good news stops. The extent of the re-development shown in three 10 year time periods in a number of the lower socio-economic centres is totally unrealistic.
- SD4 carried out a detailed Fine Grained Analysis for Papakura in Nov 2012, considering the likely apartment take-up for Papakura with a re-zoning to an 18 storey height limit. SD4 considered it unlikely that a high rise would be developed in Papakura in Years 1-10, that 1-2 high rises could be developed in years 11-20 and a few more in years 21-30. SD4's FGA Analysis forecast the total apartment dwelling numbers within the Papakura Centre would be approx. 1,500 dwellings over the 30 year period.
- The AC 3D video for Papakura show 8 buildings of 18 storey developed in years 1-10, another 10 in years 11-20 and a total of 40+ (yes forty+) 18 storey buildings developed in Papakura by year 30+. These numerical projections by AC are totally unrealistic.
- SD4's major concern is that AC are grossly over-estimating the likely apartment take-up in lower socio-economic town centres, such as Papakura.
- For an 18 storey apartment tower, it is realistic to assume approx. 150 apartments per tower. The CfGS12 analysis thus assume that approx. 6,000 dwellings would be created within the Papakura town centre within 30 years, whereas SD4's assumptions are that less than ¼ of this is still optimistic, but far more realistic.

4.0 Further Issues for the Papakura Local Board to form a view on

4.1 The Papakura Area Implications of the Housing Accord

1. *What are the implications of the Govt's Housing Accord on the Papakura Local Board?*

SD4: The purpose of the Housing Accord / Act is to enhance housing affordability by facilitating an increase in land and housing supply in certain regions or districts, identified as having housing supply and affordability issues.

Central Govt has ratified the Housing Accord, and for the Accord to take effect in Auckland, Auckland Council needs to do the same at the time the new Unitary Plan is notified, likely in Sept 2013.

The Housing accord covers greenfield and brownfield developments. Papakura will be affected by Greenfield development within the Hingaia and Takanini areas. The accord will cover brownfield intensification projects upto a maximum of 6 storeys in height. The intention is to apply the Housing Accord provisions in areas where there are substantial housing affordability problems.

In SD4's view, the Papakura area is "relatively affordable", so the Papakura area will be less impacted by the Housing Accord, relative to some of the higher priced Auckland areas.

In Auckland, the intention is for the Unitary Plan "to take effect" from Sept 2013, when development applications are submitted in accordance with the Housing Accord processes.

The Housing Accord will be for generally larger scale projects. Council can decide whether to notify the project, if the activity's adverse effects are considered more than minor, to the owners of the land adjoining the land subject to the application.

There is a huge amount of detail around the notification process, timescales, hearings etc.

Conclusion: The main issue for the Papakura Board, is that after the Housing Accord becomes operational (from Sept 2013), there is the potential that a land owner will use the Housing Accord Provisions to apply for Consent using the new notified Unitary Plan Rules. It is likely that only medium-larger projects will apply, although the initial project applications will likely set a precedent for future applications.

4.2 Auckland Council early decisions on Heights in intensified areas

At an Auckland Council meeting attended by SD4 and other Local Board Advisory Consultants, on 27th May 2013, The Auckland Council Planning Manager Penny Pirrit, advised that Mayor Len Brown has just initiated a 19th June Workshop to discuss key issues of the Unitary Plan, so that these could be dealt with “early”, with an early public announcement. The main issues centred around height within town centres and heights within the apartment / terrace zones. Specifically which areas should have which height applied?

Up until now Council Planners have provided a classification to various town centres, calling them Principal Centres, Town Centres, Neighbourhood Centres etc. Council Planners have classified each Centre and then applied the relevant height to each depending on their classification. The heights have also then been applied in a general uniform fashion across each centre, excepting height buffering at the interface to residential areas.

Penny Pirrit relayed that it was likely that Council Planners would be applying greater discretion to the application of the heights within various town centres. i.e. There maybe height variances within a centre, if there is a good reason for doing so. Some heights maybe increased, some heights may decrease.

The height in the Papakura Town Centre is proposed at 72.5m max, or 18 storeys. The Apartment zone adjoining the Town Centre is proposed at 4-6 storey. SD4 strongly recommend that the 18 storeys is maintained. The focus should be on encouraging quality development to the Metro Centre, in a similar manner as which the Manukau Centre is. Any reduction of the height limit will make rejuvenation of this area more difficult.

It is important that the Papakura Board take a view on all the proposed heights within the Local Board area, prior to the 19th June workshops. Mayor Brown intends to invite the Local Board Chairmen to this Workshop.