

Property Council New Zealand

Submission on the Draft Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan

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For more information and further queries, please contact

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Draft Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan

1. Summary

- 1.1 Property Council New Zealand and its South Island Regional members (“Property Council”) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan (“the Plan”).
- 1.2 Comments and recommendations are provided on issues relevant to Property Council’s members.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 We recommend that Greater Christchurch Partnership:
 - Undertake a cost-benefit-analysis of Mass Rapid Transit (“MRT”), buses and rail to determine what public transport approach (or approaches) is best for Christchurch;
 - Provide more information regarding street designs along the MRT route; and
 - Engage with the private sector (especially with those who own property and operate businesses along the route) before implementing any proposed road changes.

3. Introduction

- 3.1. Property Council is the leading not-for-profit advocate for New Zealand’s most significant industry, property. Our organisational purpose is, “Together, shaping cities where communities thrive”.
- 3.2. The property sector shapes New Zealand’s social, economic and environmental fabric. Property Council advocates for the creation and retention of a well-designed, functional and sustainable built environment, in order to contribute to the overall prosperity and well-being of New Zealand.
- 3.3. Property is the largest industry in Canterbury. There are around \$160.5 billion in property assets across Canterbury, with property providing a direct contribution to GDP of \$4.7 billion (14 percent) and employment for 31,380 Canterbury residents.
- 3.4. We connect property professionals and represent the interests of 146 Christchurch based member companies across the private, public and charitable sectors.

4. **Opportunity 2: Reduce and manage risks so that people and communities are resilient to the impact of natural hazards and climate change**

- 4.1. Given recent weather events across New Zealand, it is important now more than ever to manage risks so that people and communities are resilient to the impact of natural hazards. While we agree that development should be moved away from areas particularly susceptible to natural hazards, we believe that in some locations, this risk can be mitigated through careful design, planning and infrastructure.
- 4.2. Investment in more resilient infrastructure means we can balance the need for urban development whilst protecting new and existing communities. The recent Auckland floods had many examples of good planning and design protecting medium density housing

developments.¹ Other examples include Stonefields and Northcote (Auckland) in which water was directed away from houses through good planning and infrastructure. In all examples, planning and infrastructure is critical to reduce the effects of climate change and protect communities.

5. Opportunity 4: Enable diverse and affordable housing in locations that support thriving neighbourhoods that provide for people's day-to-day needs

5.1. Property Council supports good, well-planned intensification as it enables housing affordability, provides greater connectivity to city centres, town centres or near key transport nodes, creates positive urban design outcomes and reduces transport related emissions. We are glad to see that the Plan similarly mirrors our position. We also support the introduction of Priority Development Areas as it will allow for accelerated development in locations that will support the desired pattern of growth.

6. Opportunity 6: Prioritise sustainable transport choices to move people and goods in a way that significantly reduces greenhouse gas emissions and enables access to social, cultural and economic opportunities

6.1. Targeted intensification in urban centres, town centres, and along public transport corridors is a first step towards encouraging people to mode shift. While we support building awareness through information and education initiatives as well as incentivising the use of public and active transport, reliability of transport is key. For mode shift towards public transport to occur, the public transport system needs to be easy-to-access, efficient, reliable and affordable.

An improved public transport system

6.2. There must also be viable alternatives to private vehicle use, particularly in public transport. The proposed MRT system is not a public transport solution for all of Christchurch. It does not offer anything in Eastern Christchurch and those near the airport or the university. Improving transport links to places such as the airport is critical, given it is a core asset which brings in visitors, tourists and business to the region.

6.3. Furthermore, we are also concerned that there has been a missed opportunity by looking to only focus as far as Belfast and Hornby. There is also little information on how the Plan will connect the Waimakariri and Selwyn Districts. Our members would like the Council to recommend that the Greater Christchurch Partnership undertake a cost-benefit analysis into a range of public transport services including MRT, buses and rail.

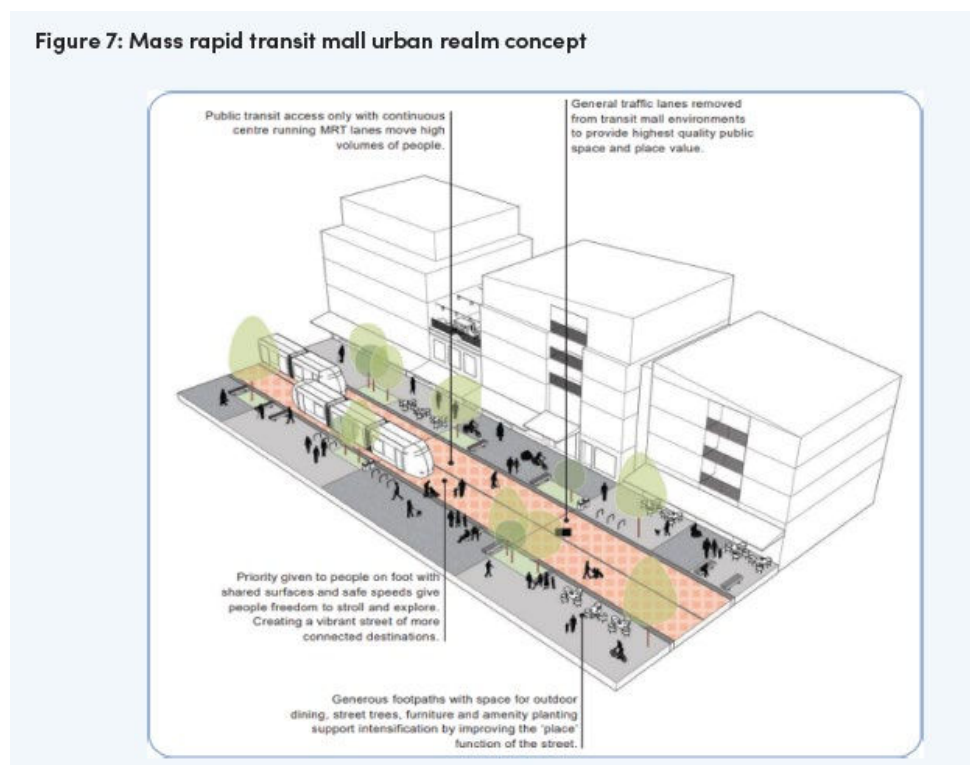
6.4. The Plan places some focus on greenfield development, to encourage positive change in our urban form and function. Property Council believes that well-planned greenfield development can deliver appropriate climate mitigations while also delivering types of housing at typologies and price points that may not be achievable in existing urban areas. It is therefore critical that those in areas such as the Waimakariri and Selwyn Districts have access to better public transport options, such as MRT, to encourage mode shift from private car use and thereby reduce carbon emissions.

¹<https://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/homed/real-estate/131559591/the-medium-density-housing-developments-that-defied-the-auckland-floods--this-is-how-they-did-it>

Future road changes

- 6.5. The Plan states that if MRT is introduced, this will require some changes to neighbourhoods and transit mall environments, located along the preferred route. Some of these changes include creating wider streets to provide for green spaces and dedicated lanes for active travel. It also includes the removal of general traffic lanes (Figure 7).
- 6.6. The Plan does not provide any information as to whether car parks along this route will be removed and if so, how many. Removing private vehicle access completely, will limit foot traffic to businesses along the route. Furthermore, the Plan does not go into any detail regarding the impact these proposals will have on the surrounding street network. We are concerned that if new residents choose to live in higher density housing and therefore choose to use MRT, this will see existing traffic shift to surrounding streets.
- 6.7. More information is needed to illustrate how these streets will be designed so that the proposed road changes do not interrupt business continuity and create congestion in the surrounding areas. Early engagement with the private sector to help shape the thinking of these designs, is critical.

Figure 7.



7. Conclusion

- 7.1. Overall, Property Council supports aspects of the Plan. However more investigation needs to be undertaken to ensure that the introduction of MRT is the most appropriate for wider Christchurch. Furthermore, early engagement with the private sector is critical so that businesses along the MRT route are not negatively impacted by future road changes.

- 7.2. Property Council members invest, own, and develop property across Christchurch. We wish to thank the Greater Christchurch Partnership as this gives our members a chance to have their say in the future of our city. We also wish to be heard in support of our submission.
- 7.3. Any further enquires do not hesitate to contact Sandamali Ambepitiya, Senior Advocacy Advisor, via email: sandamali@propertynz.co.nz or cell: 021 045 9871.

Yours Sincerely,



Katherine Wilson

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