

Property Council New Zealand

Submission to Hutt City Council on Rautaki Whakatipu, Sustainable Growth Strategy 2025 - 2055

13 March 2025

For more information and further queries, please contact
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Submission on Hutt City Council's Rautaki Whakatipu Sustainable Growth Strategy 2025-2055.

1. Summary

- 1.1 Property Council Wellington Branch ("Property Council") welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on Hutt City Council's ("Hutt City") Rautaki Whakatipu Sustainable Growth Strategy 2025-2055 ("Growth Strategy").
- 1.2 We wish to congratulate Hutt City for the development of their Growth Strategy, of which Property Council strongly supports. It is important that we plan for 30 years of growth and encourage a vibrant and resilient city and region.
- 1.3 We support Hutt City's collaborative approach in bringing stakeholders and decision-makers together to define future outcomes for an economic development strategy and would be interested in lending our support where appropriate.
- 1.4 Despite our strong support, we would like to see a more pragmatic and collaborative approach around developing future national adaptation and natural hazard plans. This is outlined in more detail within our submission.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 At a high level, we recommend that Hutt City:
 - Work closely with the development community and its own employees to encourage a collaborative and welcoming approach to future intensification and desired outcomes are met;
 - Investigate options for mix-use development around the upgraded Waterloo Station;
 - Investigate alternative funding and financing options for water and waste infrastructure prior to the Long-Term Plan 2026-2036. This could include a similar model to Wellington City Council's Sludge Minimisation Levy;
 - Takes a whole-of-system approach to housing affordability by reviewing their resource consent and building consent timeframes, ensuring their development contribution fees remain balanced and consistent with growth pressures to ensure Hutt City Council can appropriately provide services that support growth;
 - Take a pragmatic individual location approach working closely with communities when developing an adaptation plan in high-risk areas; and
 - Amend page 83 to highlight Greater Wellington Regional Council's mapping is indicative and will not be used specifically for flood forecasting (as stated on their website).

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 Council is the collective voice of the property industry. Property is the third largest industry in Wellington. There are around \$223.6 billion in property assets across Wellington, with property providing a direct contribution to GDP of \$3.6 billion and employment for 24,820 Wellington residents.
- 3.4. We connect property professionals and represent the interests of 139 Wellington based member companies across the private, public and charitable sectors.
- 3.5. This document provides Property Council's feedback on the [Growth Strategy](#). Comments and recommendations are provided on issues relevant to Property Council's members.

4. Enhance the heart of the city

- 4.1. Property Council strongly supports the proposal to expand the CBD boundaries and enhance the heart of the City.
- 4.2. We note Hutt City's District Plan change in 2023 to rezone much of the Valley Floor for "High Density Residential" activities enabling buildings up to six storeys high in most places. We strongly support this initiative alongside the Growth Strategy to intensify the central and northern Valley Floor. Intensification near key amenities such as transport links, water services and employment opportunities are critical to the future growth of Hutt City. However, it is important to note that intensification will take time to eventuate, as it does not occur overnight. We recommend Hutt City work closely with the development community and Council employees to encourage a collaborative and welcoming approach to future intensification.
- 4.3. We strongly support Hutt City's proposal to turn the city towards the river, enhancing its natural amenities for the community. We are also very pleased to see Hutt City's strong plan to connect transport to current and future housing with the relocation of Melling Station and supporting Waterloo station.
- 4.4. The Hutt has an aging building stock, faced with feasibility challenges for developers. These challenges have flow on impacts to commercial tenants, thus, halting any new commercial developments. We question how Hutt City Council intends to encourage new commercial developments that will be necessary with increased residential development. We note that Hamilton City Council introduced a development contribution rebate scheme for commercial buildings within their CBD for a period of three years. This scheme was highly successful in creating vibrancy for their CBD that it was further extended for a number of years. We recommend Hutt City Council discuss this option with Hamilton City Council and take learnings from what worked well in Hamilton's CBD.

5. Build up the central and northern Valley Floor

- 5.1. We strongly support the proposal to build up the central and northern Valley Floor.
- 5.2. We support targeted investment in infrastructure and water within this catchment area and encourage Hutt City to investigate alternative funding and financing options prior to the Long-Term Plan 2026-2036. For example, Wellington City Council has implemented a sludge

minimisation facility levy as an alternative funding and financing mechanism that will be collected over a 33-year period. We encourage Hutt City to investigate a similar approach for future water infrastructure projects.

- 5.3. The Growth Strategy proposes an opportunity for mixed-use development around an upgraded Waterloo Station. We agree that a mix-use development should be investigated. There could be untapped potential to connect both retail and housing around the upgraded Waterloo Station, provide a greater transport and community hub. We encourage Hutt City to investigate options for mix-use development around the upgraded Waterloo Station.
- 5.4. We strongly support Hutt City ambitions to improve housing choices and affordability. There are many actions local government can take that either enable or stifle housing affordability. Firstly, reducing wait times for resource consents and building consents have helped reduce holding costs and the overall timeline for development. Secondly, setting consistent development contribution fees, across many years, will enable market confidence and increase development opportunities. Thirdly, ensuring planning regulations manage the risk of natural hazards on the potential for growth using accepted scientific modelling by applying a balanced approach that takes into consideration the need for growth and development in Hutt City. We encourage Hutt City to have a whole-of-system approach when viewing housing affordability to ensure that unintended outcomes do not occur.

6. Grow with Te Awa Kairangi Hutt River

- 6.1. We strongly support the proposal for the future city to embrace the amenity provided by the river corridor and have buildings facing towards the green corridor of the river. We note that this will likely take time to develop, and we encourage working closely with the development community to achieve the desired outcomes.
- 6.2. We strongly support the proposed approach of adopting a 'sponge city' principle in urban areas. For example, risks can be mitigated through careful design, planning and infrastructure. There were many examples of effective planning and design protecting medium density housing developments during the 2023 Auckland floods.¹ Many of these examples were housing developments delivered by Kainga Ora and we encourage you to use this resource to reflect on both the learnings and achievements within this space.

7. Develop adaptation plan

- 7.1. We support Hutt City developing an adaptation plan, however, we strongly recommend that this plan is developed in collaboration with the development community and property owners.
- 7.2. We are concerned with page 83 of the Growth strategy which outlines that sea level rise is anticipated at 1m-1.2m within Greater Wellington Regional Council Climate Change Mapping.² Greater Wellington Regional Council Mapping states:

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>

² <https://mapping1.gw.govt.nz/GW/SLR/#::~:~:text=This%20website%20shows%20a%20dynamic,per%20year%20in%20the%20region.>

“NOTE: The information presented in this mapping tool is indicative only and not to be used for flood forecasting. Site specific advice and/or analysis is required for individual locations within the overlays.”

- 7.3. We encourage Hutt City to take a pragmatic individual location approach working closely with communities when developing an adaptation plan. This will help reduce unintended consequences that a more widespread blanket approach to natural hazards would have.
- 7.4. We recommend amending page 83 to make clear that sea level rise is an indicative mapping tool and cannot be used for flood forecasting. Specific modelling will be required and used to manage the risk of natural hazards in growth areas.

8. Support neighbourhoods outside the Valley Floor

- 8.1. While we are supportive of intensification, we want to make clear that we support local authorities meeting urban growth pressures by building both up and out. We support the Growth Strategy to support neighbourhoods outside the Valley Floor, particularly given the 30-year timeframe within the growth strategy.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1. Property Council strongly supports Hutt City’s Growth Strategy. However, we would like to see a more pragmatic and collaborate approach when it comes to developing a future national adaptation and natural hazards plan. We are concerned that relying on Greater Wellington Regional Council’s mapping is not how it was intended to be used and encourage a more collaborative and individual locational approach to avoid unintended consequences of unnecessary development hurdles. We also encourage Hutt City Council discussing possible development contribution rebate schemes within the city centre to encourage commercial development in the Hutt.
- 9.2. Property Council members invest, own, and develop property in Wellington. We wish to thank Hutt City for the opportunity to submit on the Growth Strategy. This gives our members a chance to have their say in the future of our city.
- 9.3. Any further enquires do not hesitate to contact Katherine Wilson, Head of Advocacy, via email: katherine@propertynz.co.nz or cell: 0278708150.

Yours Sincerely,



Melissa McGhie

Wellington Committee Chair

Property Council New Zealand