

## Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the purpose of the Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan?**

The Spatial Plan sets out the Partners' shared vision for the future of Greater Christchurch. It is a plan for action, for starting now to make the transformational shifts needed to secure the future of Greater Christchurch. This includes a clear pathway for how the city region will create prosperous and well-functioning urban environments and build greater resilience in the context of the changing environment. It sets out what the priorities are and what needs to happen to achieve them.

Its overarching directions include a focus on targeted intensification in centres and along public transport corridors, along with the prosperous development of kāinga nohoanga on Māori Land and within urban areas.

The strategic direction set out in the plan is supported by commitments across central government, local government and mana whenua to partner and invest in shared priorities for Greater Christchurch, to ensure the city region remains a great place to live for all. The implementation of the plan will form the ongoing work programme of the partnership.

### **How does this fit with / inform the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (CRPS) review?**

Canterbury Regional Council is reviewing the regional planning framework for Canterbury. A new Regional Policy Statement is expected to be notified at the end of 2024. This process seeks to align the regional planning framework with national direction such as the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020, including Te Mana o te Wai. It also includes a review of the noise contours relating to Christchurch International Airport, mapping of highly productive land, and development of significance criteria for new greenfield areas; This review will also continue to consider, and direct, how to manage urban growth in balance with activities that occur in the rural environment.

The integrated planning framework will provide a region wide approach to restoring, protecting and enhancing our environmental taonga, whilst the Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan will provide direction to the growth and development of the Greater Christchurch sub-region.

The CRPS is a statutory planning document under the Resource Management Act, and the review of the CRPS will have regard to the Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan. Therefore, both the integrated planning framework and the Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan will guide and shape how the Greater Christchurch sub-region will enhance the natural environment and grow.

You can find out more about the regional integrated planning framework [here](#).

### **How does this work fit with Environment Canterbury's airport noise contour review?**

The noise contours relating to Christchurch International Airport as shown on Map 9 of the GCSP represent the contours operative in the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement 2013. As part of the review of the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement, an update of the airport noise contours was completed by Christchurch International Airport Limited and independently peer reviewed by a panel of experts appointed by the Regional Council. In June 2023 a final set of remodelled air noise contours was made publicly available in a report published by Christchurch International Airport

Limited. The updated noise contours will be a key input to the review of the Regional Policy Statement, and this is the process by which changes to the spatial extent of the operative contours and the associated policy framework will be considered. The final report from the expert panel reviewing the noise contours is expected in the first half of 2023.

### **What is a blue-green network?**

A blue-green network is a connection of blue and green spaces. Blue elements include all waterways: streams, rivers, wetlands, stormwater basins, swales etc. Green elements include trees, parks, forests, greenways, reserves etc.

An enhanced blue-green network will promote integrated management of the natural environment and provide connections of land and water with our people and urban environment, and help to reduce the impacts of extreme weather events (such as flooding) and the effects of climate change.

### **What is the greenbelt concept?**

A greenbelt is a planning tool used to maintain areas of green space around our urban areas, often to act as a transition between urban and rural areas. Greenbelts can be implemented through a range of tools.

Greenbelts can help to prevent urban areas expanding onto important farmland, maintain areas for parks and recreation, improve air quality, and help to mitigate the effects of climate change.

### **Why is there an increased focus on intensification?**

Targeted intensification refers to accommodating housing and business growth through greater intensification around key urban and town centres, and along public transport corridors.

While to date Greater Christchurch has accommodated growth through outward expansion, urban sprawl is not a sustainable solution for ongoing growth. We cannot afford to operate and maintain an ever-expanding road and infrastructure network, nor the traffic congestion that results, nor its encroachment on highly productive land or the blue-green network.

Intensified urban centres well-linked by public transport are a necessary complement to the greenfield development already planned. Investment in public transport is essential to enable intensification, while investment in intensification maximises the return from investment in the public transport network. Medium to high density living around existing centres is key to reducing our reliance on private vehicles to get around. By shifting more of our urban population into proximity to centres will not only reduce the number of vehicles on our streets and therefore traffic congestion, and also improve participation of communities, able to provide better/ more concentrated services from local amenities and improve air quality.

### **How does this work fit with Christchurch City Council's intensification plan changes?**

The City Council's plan change is intended to implement the government's direction in the National Policy Statement on Urban Development and enabling housing legislation, which provides capacity for housing and business across the urban area. The spatial plan seeks to focus intensification within defined areas where we want growth to occur by proposing the use of regulatory and non-regulatory tools.

**What is the definition of quality in relation to housing?**

Quality developments and quality housing are intrinsic to successful intensification and lie at the heart of thriving neighbourhoods. This includes the quality of each house, and the quality of the overall design of neighbourhoods. It involves a variety of aspects including housing choice (household size, typology, sustainability of design - warm, dry, accessible), avoiding adverse outcomes (susceptibility to flooding and other hazards, traffic) and promoting positive outcomes (connectivity to education, work and amenities). Quality developments support neighbourhoods to develop and change over time in response to the diverse and changing needs of people, communities, and future generations.

**What is the relationship and timelines between the GCSP and District Plans?**

As commonly occurs, the development and adoption of the GCSP is occurring alongside other planning processes including Plan Change 14 to the Christchurch District Plan (PC14), the Selwyn and Waimakariri District Plan Reviews and multiple Private Plan Change Requests. The GCSP has been prepared in a manner that is cognisant of these parallel processes, and provides an overarching focus on the future development of Greater Christchurch, setting the direction for growth to guide future District Plans and Plan Changes.

Selwyn and Waimakariri District Councils are reviewing their district plans. For Selwyn, appeals are under way following decisions in August 2023. For Waimakariri, hearings will run from May 2023 to May 2024 with decisions expected late-2024.