

[reference Yeates,M (1994) "Housing in Brisbane ..." unpublished Brisbane]

Housing in Brisbane : A response to *Brisbane 2011*, *SEQ 2001*, and proposed Town Plan Amendments (Spring 1994) including "character buildings", "streetscape character" and Residential B R4 in Brisbane.

A problem of "character" or environmental issues and economic growth?

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Brisbane has for many years been characterised as a large country town changing almost unnoticed into a city. An alternative view is much more useful. Whilst "character" is often assumed to be unchanging, it is the product of continuous small, and often relatively large, social and cultural changes which are accepted as normal and therefore pass unnoticed. Current emphasis upon "character retention" can therefore be viewed both as a defensive reaction against economic growth and development and as a concern about continuing change. As an outcome of such responses, "character retention" may also be adopted as a "solution".

Such solutions are evidence of intellectual inertia relying upon nostalgia for circumstances past but failing to address current and future problems and their causes. Reliance upon "character retention" therefore demonstrates an inability to address and provide solutions to current circumstances and problems. It is best considered as a deliberate "do nothing" policy. But what of the causes of the problems? Should "character retention" include the adjoining streets and original transport systems? Would this lead to the pedestrian orientation with reduced car dominance so often implied by strategic planning theory and current redevelopment sketches? Would this indicate a more realistic future?

Regional and historic factors

The unique size and political situation of Brisbane City Council has, since the formation of Greater Brisbane, meant that the benefits of locally responsive government which were available through small genuinely "local" authorities were replaced with the benefits of a large regional authority. After amalgamation, transport, electricity, water, sewerage and main road responsibilities provided the opportunity to combine both regional and local authority roles to allow the development of a well planned and serviced city. Has this potential ever been achieved?

Competition for political and economic control has removed the control of water and electricity interests. Transport and road network planning responsibilities and control have been divided and shared amongst various conflicting interests in local councils and state departments. The benefits of regional scale planning and servicing have thus been substantially reduced, as have the benefits of the original, locally responsive, small councils. What is the outcome? Residents of Brisbane have effectively lost the ability to control their local community interests whilst the interests of Brisbane have similarly been eroded.

In the absence of any previous adequate regional planning structure for the future of South-east Queensland, surrounding councils have remained strongly independent until the recent SEQ 2001 process was adopted by both levels of government. However, the Regional Organisations of Councils appear to be maintaining their independence, in particular, in their ability to negotiate where development occurs and to what extent. Brisbane has effectively "become" surrounded by dormitory councils. It is now "threatened" with a much increased share of the growing residential

development which, until recent times, it has avoided. Where and in what will all the extra people be housed?

Brisbane 2011 suggests that the population predicted by *SEQ 2001* should be much reduced from 980,000 to 900,000, a substantial increase from the relatively static population of 763,000 in 1991 (BCC,1994,90-91). In addition to this growth in population in Brisbane, some 200,000 people will commute daily from outside Brisbane (p90). What do such predictions indicate for the future of Brisbane beyond 2011? What processes of locally responsive politics offer current residents the opportunity to influence or challenge the outcomes of *SEQ 2001* and *Brisbane 2011*? Are the predictions genuine or are they assumptions upon which to continue to promote and develop South-east Queensland in the same unchallenged and uncontrollable way as has occurred in the recent past? Are there alternative scenarios upon which to create a vision of a future "mature" Brisbane? How will such predictions influence changes in housing and transportation when environmental concerns about air quality for example, are comprehended and applied by those currently planning and controlling the future of South-east Queensland? One prominent and experienced planner has stated that there are no effective planning mechanisms for South-east Queensland (Queensland Planner,1989,1). Where is there evidence that this situation has meaningfully changed?

Changing design requirements

Changing demographics are well recognised as causing an increased number and decreased population of household units. The addition of 200,000 commuters suggests the need for radical changes in living, transport and work location behaviour rather than the continuation of current forms of development on a massive and increasing scale. These current predictions only extend to 2011. The outcome of a failure to adequately address the need for a radical behavioural shift with respect to housing and transport systems will be the reality of the continued extension of current development from the coast to Toowoomba and from northern New South Wales to current and threatening intrusions into the Great Sandy Region, north of Noosa. Is avoidance of such outcomes elsewhere one reason that people are coming into the region now?

The detection of thresholds in regional environmental terms is also essential. Air quality and water supply are two critical indicators. Both require extensive undeveloped areas together with sensitive minimal abuse of the base resource. Their continued availability is currently being tested by drought and fire which also threaten various forms of primary industry throughout the region. Whilst demand on such resources is increasing, the extent and security for the long term of suitable and available areas for their continued protection and provision continues to be reduced by current planning which is further expanding urban areas following currently acceptable, historic models in this region.

Dominance of the assumed availability of effectively unlimited quantities of land for potential urban land development ensures that any current concerns for the protection or depletion of resources remains of either little, or of future, consequence and not of current relevance or effect. Current planning processes cannot satisfactorily address the fundamental issues of basic resource supply without addressing the causes of the pressures upon them. In particular, implementation and demonstration of adequate and successful strategies must demonstrate alternatives which substantially reduce

the pressures on these fundamental resources. Meaningful and substantial choices between current behaviours and alternatives which model behaviours which offer better solutions are essential. Larger behavioural shifts may then occur.

Such shifts do not depend on major changes in behaviour. These changes will occur in the same way as other unnoticed changes which are assumed to be normal and therefore essential. Thus whilst many "problems" are caused by such incremental changes, most beneficial changes also occur incrementally over very extended periods of time, if the opportunity exists and it is not constrained. Failure of the processes of decision making, planning and development management to include the changing and more diverse attitudes and increasing knowledge of the community is one outcome of an increasingly ineffective system for dealing with rapid change. Current planning, growth and development management systems are now more often seen as unworkable by more broadly and better informed communities (Yeates, 1994).

Whether consideration is being given to proposed freeways as transport solutions or to particular housing types as new solutions to new housing needs, current and future concerns and predictions are important to the design outcomes. Failure to address air quality outcomes, for example, in either of the above design problems will ensure that the outcome is regarded as inadequate by those concerned by the future threats of current and deteriorating air quality. Incorporation of changing design requirements into current processes is essential such that outcomes are most beneficial for the future. Nostalgia therefore, has only a minor role.

Transport and housing

With a decreasing number of occupants in each household and an increasing population which is likely to continue growing well beyond 2011 unless some forms of constraint are applied, continued reliance on current forms of suburban housing indicate that car transport will remain dominant. If public transport is currently more economically viable, for example, why is there not more of it now? Provision for car transport will continue to dominate transport infrastructure provision despite increasing concerns about more major roads, air quality, noise and general reduction in social, cultural and environmental amenity. Why and when will this current situation change? Why not now?

Any proposition based on the ability in the future to respond to the need to change to other forms of transport or alternative planning strategies will face the same political and other difficulties which face current decision makers and their advisers, probably enhanced by an increased urgency due to deteriorating conditions and amenity. Have conditions already deteriorated beyond a satisfactory amenity and the symptoms are now beginning to occur or perhaps have not yet even been noticed? Why risk ensuring further deterioration in deteriorating conditions?

One approach to increasing demand for more transport capacity is to make more effective use of existing infrastructure rather than expanding it. Capacity of existing two and four lane roads can easily be increased by provision of transit priority lanes rather than total priority for cars as at present. Most existing road reserves and arterial routes are suitable. Therefore the effects on streetscape and character of existing developed areas and non-developed areas are minimised. Why is this approach not used? The

majority of Brisbane still addresses old public transport routes and therefore demonstrates urban transit oriented development.

Supporters of transit orientation have no difficulty locating the old tram stops and the service facilities such as shops and schools which were part of that orientation. It is only the dominance of car based planning that has threatened and continues to threaten Brisbane. Policies prohibiting strip shopping centres and therefore "requiring" new regional shopping centres continue to threaten the existing character and streetscape of Brisbane. Current road scheme proposals by both Brisbane and Queensland governments continue to threaten the character of Brisbane. What is the cause of the need for these threats? How does continuing to accommodate the need assist in addressing the cause? What do the proposed outcomes of these continuing threats mean for the reality of character retention and streetscape protection? If the concern for Brisbane's character is genuine, why are so many areas selected to be excluded? Who benefits and who loses? Who decides?

There is a necessity to stabilise the "mature" structure and character of the city as a whole to provide security for residents and owners. The recent O.E.C.D. Workshop in Brisbane suggested the need to develop a "vision" rather than a marketing plan for the future of cities. What parts of Brisbane will remain as character references if car dominance continues to threaten the older public transit oriented suburbs. Without amalgamation to form the Brisbane City Council, these towns or shires would have represented the local community interest against the power of the regional interest, in this case, the need for more car infrastructure.

Car based planning too often provides the reason for redevelopment. Wider roads, more parking and, in the case of Kelvin Grove, the provision of transit lanes threaten suburbs throughout Brisbane. The first positive steps to explicitly redress the car dominant planning of previous and current town planning are essential. These positive steps are not to be found in the emotional and nostalgic appeal of retention of selected areas of character buildings or by selective use of streetscape provisions unless these concerns are explicitly applied to the cause of the problem.

Brisbane is old enough to be predominantly "formed" before car dominance. It strongly retains this character as a city. Whilst planning continues to ignore the character changes wrought by the increasing dominance of car based planning, retention of character by streetscape or building preservation provides only the important opportunity to preserve the items out of context for another, perhaps more enlightened, government. Selective application of such policies provides the opportunity to create inequitable enclaves of protected people who benefit. Many others bear the social, cultural, health and environmental costs.

A policy to protect the physical objects and their context and recognise and protect the need for enhanced conditions which encourage people to live, walk, work and shop along roads will preserve the functional relationships between street, road, adjoining uses and the built form whilst addressing the overall character of Brisbane from a social justice perspective. Abandonment of all current road infrastructure proposals which have the purpose or potential to increase car dependence is therefore essential to the preservation of the character of Brisbane. The major threat to the character of many Brisbane suburbs would thus be removed. Such a decision would have a major effect on the reorientation of land-use, emphasise the importance of more effective

and efficient use and re-use of existing public and private infrastructure, and require the return to the previous transit orientation which is essential to the reduction of traffic blight. Small sections of Brisbane which have "survived" and many "authentic" urban tourist destinations provide confidence through examples. Failure to act on this potential suggests that current emphasis on character retention is essentially rhetoric.

Current housing

As has been previously suggested, much of the character of Brisbane emanates from its early transit orientation and from housing and other urban forms that were generated during that period. This character has been diminished previously. It remains severely threatened at two levels.

From a metropolitan and regional perspective, the character of Brisbane remains threatened by the seemingly endless accommodation and therefore encouragement of more and more cars throughout all areas of the city. Thus, despite location beside a major public transport interface, "redevelopment" of South Brisbane is encouraging both the increased and easier use of cars through that precinct as well as a vast increase in car parking capacity. While this might allow reduction in car use in the CBD, very large numbers of cars are encouraged onto the roads. Congestion inconvenience is overcome by excessive design capacity, reducing the potential of public transport expansion as an essential, competitive alternative with better current and long term outcomes.

The continuing dominance of cars requires a metropolitan and regional road network with equally high and continuing expectations of speed, safety, utility and connectivity. Throughout the city, the existing road network has destroyed various precincts. Current proposals continue to threaten others. Without certainty about current and future decision making, there can be no certainty that such decisions will not effect all areas of the region. Thus many areas potentially threatened by such proposals are effectively blighted to the advantage of proponents and beneficiaries of the road schemes but at the social, economic and cultural loss of inhabitants. Their loss is not the only loss. Erosion or blighting of such areas and therefore their effects on the current character and the retention and care of those areas is a loss to the "city character", of which the "new" Spring Hill is an example. This approach to city planning "requires" the continued use of cars and provision for road schemes is inevitably made at the expense of public transport.

Thus, car dominance is also a local and individual issue. With a limited public transport system and a highly efficient car based system, people rationally choose cars as the preferred means of transport. Those who can choose to avoid the outcomes may reside in a cul-de-sac. Those who do not, however, may receive severely reduced health, amenity, economic and environmental conditions. Those without cars and those who are unable or choose not to use a car are positively discriminated against with much reduced housing choice, mobility and accessibility. Current dominant housing forms are encouraged and accommodate these inequities. Street layouts with cul-de-sac patterns provide a "vision" of ideal conditions but only if provided for the whole population.

Current housing and town planning do not suggest a vision of a mature Brisbane form or character. They accommodate current needs for cars whilst failing to address alternatives. Current market orientation depends on growth and economic development. No changes which threaten current development patterns are likely for fear of reducing growth and economic development. Whilst current rhetoric addresses proposed changes, the reality is a process of slow incremental change but without threatening dominant development. Character retention is an example.

Current new housing remains totally dominated by concerns for traffic layout, parking provisions and access times by car to nearby facilities or the CBD. Despite decreasing populations per household, houses still provide accommodation for the previous typical family with two cars, but on a smaller site, further from the city, with narrower streets and the provision of often token walkways and bikepaths. Great emphasis is placed on the appearance of the new housing with streetscape issues such as character, hidden car accommodation and historical stylistic references dominant. However, these houses depend on cars which must use the metropolitan road network in the older areas and thus add to the demand for major road projects to threaten the older suburbs.

Similar concerns affect new housing in existing areas. Removal or conversion of larger houses which are representative "real" artifacts of previous cultural, economic and social values, is resented. The new housing destroys "character" and increases car usage effects. Increasing density also increases these effects. But are the same people in these new or existing areas concerned about the effects and outcomes of their use of cars on other areas? Do any of these "solutions" address the problems or in fact do they in turn cause even more problems which are of increasing significance as resources and space diminish? How do these "solutions" address the near and more distant future based on current predictions? Should they? Are current concerns such as *Building Better Cities*, *Brisbane 2011* and *SEQ 2001* mere rhetoric whilst the reality continues unabated? Who decides? Review of current decisions suggests there is little or no evidence of actions reflecting the rhetoric.

Given the current dominance of various forms of the single detached house and the apparent current political need to continue to provide for car dominated transport in support, one way to consider the possibilities for alternatives involves review of another competitive housing sector and to review the underlying concerns which provide both opportunities and constraints to the development of alternative housing forms which offer potential to address current concerns, many of which have been raised previously. If there are potential benefits in this form of housing which better reflect the current rhetoric than does current reality, what effort has been and is being made to encourage this sector?

Residential B R4 and the future of Brisbane housing

Much of the inner and middle suburbs together with some areas along railway lines have been zoned to allow forms of higher density housing for many years. These areas offer the opportunity to address many of the issues which threaten the character of Brisbane. The areas generally contain a wide range of houses given that the subdivision pattern is often the creation of earlier reductions in lot size. In many suburbs, this has created a pattern in the age and style of houses. Later and smaller houses usually occupy the newer, cheaper land. Into this pattern, flats and unit buildings have been inserted, initially in any Residential zoned area and later only in

Residential B and mostly on the cheapest sites. The more expensive, usually larger, houses remain as neighbours.

The three storey building comprising two floors of units over a floor of carparking was derived directly from planning models which were already being criticised in 1971 as the impact of whole areas of complete single use planned development became obvious (McKay et al, 1971, 49,51). Overseas examples such as at Tapiola in Finland (p18) offered much higher amenity and often much higher densities. Over a period of twenty years, planning regulations altered various design requirements such as the location of carparking and led to the highly refined minimal solution known as "the sixpack". The "sixpack" benefits from a static, well developed market in land value, construction cost and selling price. It represents excellent value in the housing market with purchases of well placed units still being made at \$110 000, providing both economical rental and first purchase housing at relatively economical population and household densities. The "sixpack" therefore provides an important dwelling form in the household housing choice. Units are usually two bedroom and self contained, with good potential for views and environmental and climatic performance. It remains in strong demand.

However, unlike the earlier 1930's style three storey apartments with garages at the rear, the sixpack integrates the carparking into the building and faces sideways on the site thus causing overlooking and privacy and noise problems. Why the cars were integrated and the orientation changed is not clear. These two factors are crucial to the long term performance attributes of such housing.

Before considering the benefits of this form of housing further, the strategy of insertion into areas of existing housing requires consideration. There appears to be no available records of the detailed rationale for selection of locations for the Residential B and later R4 "zoning". However, it is clear that the intent was to provide a housing choice. With a history of home ownership, low rise units and particularly flats have never been considered to be a preferred choice of "home".

It now seems obvious the expected uptake was much underestimated. Locations were not sufficiently responsive to topography, services and facilities. However, there remains little wrong with the original concept of housing at this intensity, in particular if increased public transport and retention of local facilities such as corner stores can be achieved. The R4 intensity and scale is extremely common and remains very sought after in many cities, cultures and economies throughout the world. It predates car transport dominance. Is it inherently correct?

Council's proposed amendments are not related to the long term, equitable benefits of provision of housing choice. Concerns about character retention, excessive traffic generation, inappropriate streetscapes and character of new development confirm that the perceived threat of change is much stronger than the need for relatively low cost housing. Without the much higher densities and household intensities provided by equitable housing, the character of existing suburbs will inevitably be changed by increasing demands for more road space to carry those who will live further out at lower density. Certain exclusive enclaves may be able to successfully claim protection from both forms of intrusion.

Current claims for character retention provide the opportunity to increase the inequities

present in housing and transport as currently supported by various levels of government. Selected responses to local traffic problems demonstrate this potential for inequity as compared with adoption of holistic approaches using public transport and whole of city speed reductions to improve amenity generally whilst improving the relative convenience and competitive performance of public transport. Authorities remain very committed to dedications, purchases and resumptions for road purposes but remain unwilling to implement traffic restrictions or require fully developer funded public transport or the improvements necessary to protect or return street character in an original or equivalent historical context. Should car dominance in the guise of character retention for housing encourage the destruction of the broader functional context of the same and other precincts?

The housing type required in Brisbane to accommodate a decreasing household population and rapidly increasing total population is unlikely to be the housing of previous eras, in particular because car dominance in transport choice which is now required, did not exist. Adoption of character retention supports the development of protected precincts causing additional threats and likely destruction to other similar precincts due to the acceptance of the need to accommodate increasing car based transport. Committed consideration of all the existing Residential B R4 areas is therefore necessary. Outcomes which better address the concerns of previous and current usage whilst best providing for current and future predictions and requirements are essential.

Is Residential B R4 the future housing for Brisbane?

Three storey housing is an essential ingredient in housing mix, providing substantial housing choice without control of the market through excessive scarcity and therefore price. Any alterations to the constraints within which such development occurs should improve overall future outcomes as best determined at the appointed time. There is a need to be future oriented rather than problem-solution oriented, recognising that considerable time is necessary to develop and adopt new concepts. During the period of adaption and development, the intent of the concepts must be nurtured and promoted to encourage long term acceptance or if necessary, modification leading to further improvement.

The single detached house dominates the housing stock of Brisbane and accordingly is regarded as a cultural icon and as a social essential. These values are further enhanced by current character retention and streetscape concerns based on the image of "timber and tin" and of the new and old "Queenslander". Are these values applicable in the future as Brisbane moves towards maturity? Are they sufficiently important that they form the dominant cultural characteristic which defines the future planning of Brisbane? If the effects of car dominance can be constrained such that the housing of the future residents of Brisbane remains the single attached house and car usage is not further accommodated, then such a city based once again on walking, cycling and locally accessible public transport would indeed be appropriate. It would be a return to the functional design of Brisbane as a transit oriented city of the 1920's but with limited well behaved intrusions by cars when and where necessary. Is this "the solution" given that Brisbane has no history or culture of genuine attached housing for comparison? Why can it not be done now?

The attached housing form predates car transport by at least a century although the

first three storey terraces drawn in London date from before 1768 (Muthesius,1982,15). Attached two and three storey housing forms occur in many city cultures in the tropical dry and sub-tropical to temperate zones of the world. They are therefore likely to have inherent long term qualities and housing attributes which are yet to be recognised in Brisbane. The sixpack form in Brisbane exhibits many of these long term attributes. These benefits are substantially offset by the integration of carparking, and the failure to efficiently use the site area and to address the street and courtyard as do most other attached forms of housing. Satisfactory resolution of these issues potentially offers a substantially tested, popular, long term, flexible form of housing. Why then is the apparent possibility of success of this housing form being "celebrated" by restrictions which constrain further development of the form and reduce amenity for the occupants, the neighbours and the city? Were future residents of R4 developments represented in this decision?

Proposed Amendments to the Residential B R4 provisions

Higher density housing had not been positively promoted in Brisbane until former Lord Mayor Atkinson determined to improve the design characteristics. This was an essential move to establish an appropriate design quality for this zone. Reduction in the total area zoned R4 was not considered although moves had been made to allow so-called "back zoning" from R4 to R3 intensity. R3 has never been popular in the marketplace and major design problems similar to those of the R4 provisions exist. The most common effect of back zoning was to allow residents to remove the threat of R4 development.

The mature intent of the R4 zone was raised in a draft report to Brisbane City Council (Yeates,1991a). Council has never addressed the question of the "vision" of the fully developed R4 zone. However prominent Brisbane architect, Rex Addison, contributed a proposal based on substantial conceptual development of previous projects in Canberra. The Addison proposal demonstrated a new approach to R4 which addressed the shortcomings of the "sixpack" and considered incremental or partial infilling and completed maturity of the R4 zone.

The pilot project at 60 Hassell Street, Corinda is known to those interested in the R4 issue and to those who are threatened by R4 redevelopment. There has been no public promotion of the conceptual intent of R4. The community therefore remains very aware of concerns about higher density due to the unfortunate politicising of the issue of the future design of Brisbane by the "sardine city" campaign of the recent Council election, whilst remaining relatively unaware of the many attributes despite publication of promotional material (Green Street, 1993), reviews (Judd,1993;Yeates,1991b) and two design awards.

None of the above provides any substantive basis for restricting the Hassall Street model. Current concerns for a more environmentally conscious approach to city design requires additional consideration be given to the R4 zone. From this perspective, R4 medium density, by providing housing choice at affordable cost with more economic public transport and reduced environmental impact, is essential as it will always perform better than detached housing and low, car dependent densities.

Public availability and assessment of the reasons for the "new" R4 provisions is of fundamental importance. Hassall Street has long term potential to adapt and

demonstrate future environmental directions. Why constrain the Hassall Street model and replace it with a potentially inferior model without public debate or reference to the Hassall Street project and published or public research on the attributes, benefits and disbenefits of the "new" model for residents, neighbours and the city?

Sixpacks, "old" Hassall Street and the next "new" preferred option

It is important to recognise that most developers and investors who own land expect to maintain highest and best use. In many R4 areas, this aim becomes quite complex. Many owners bought a residence in the R4 zone, hoping to take advantage of the often optimum services and facilities which are attributes of most R4 areas. While it is possible that people purchased without knowing the zoning, it is most likely that in the past, many people owned land that they did not consider would be threatened by development, that is, not until many years later when they or their neighbours decided to sell or redevelop.

Many residents object to R4 development because developers have almost as-of-right development rights based on many years of Council practice. During this period, Council paid little or no attention to development conditions or to the ongoing effects of neighbouring R4 development on residential houses. The failure of Council to support local objectors has developed to the point where, as in recent times, objections seeking higher levels of conformity with development provisions remain a waste of time unless taken to court, where it is best described as a waste of money. Why should local residents have to take developers to court in order to obtain higher levels of consistent conformity with statutory requirements or planning policies? Is the local authority role to obtain the best possible outcome sought by residents?

Material associated with the Spring 1994 proposed Town Plan amendments is on public display in the Brisbane Administration Centre. The display shows "old" and "new" R4 forms although these descriptions were not included when Council provided copies of the display material. The so-called "old" model is not the Hassall Street model proposed by Addison Yeates Architects but the version preferred by developers and approved by the Council against objections by many residents and others. It did not achieve the aims of the current draft guidelines for R4 development but relied on relaxations which substantially reduced the design outcome. This subterfuge exemplifies a Council which has little commitment to establishing or improving standards for those who wish to live in and take advantage of the attributes of the R4 areas.

The interests of the residents of the new apartment buildings are always essential. Good design must also seek the best solution for neighbours and the broader community as demonstrated by 60 Hassall Street. Thus the extent and rate of deterioration in the allowable development standards which has seen the model deteriorate from the standard proposed by the draft guidelines and demonstrated by 60 Hassall Street to that now described as the "old" model, is both deplorable and predictable, given previous Council practice with R4 design standards.

But what process has allowed this deterioration in standards to continue to occur since the new draft guidelines were released for trial use? A report on R4 housing (Yeates, 1991a) described and showed many examples of the effects of inappropriate and "illegal" completed projects of which there appear to be many examples. Is this simply a system failure allowing occasional projects to slip through or is it evidence of the approvals process being incompetent and unable to comprehend the complexity of issues represented and often misrepresented by the many development applications? Has this situation been changed?

The strong influence of the development industry and the community's lack of opportunity and inability to influence the design quality of applications is certainly one answer, which continues to be raised, most recently at public meetings regarding *Brisbane 2011*. Fundamental therefore, to any further attempts to improve and safeguard the interests of both the new residents and the neighbours is a substantive method of ensuring that these interest groups are equitably represented in the process of design and approval of R4 developments. One suitable model for this process was utilised in the approval of 60 Hassall Street.

Council, by displaying the devalued form of the Hassall Street model, has confirmed the failure of the administration of the intent and aims provisions of the draft R4 guidelines. Under what conditions can this failure be prevented? The "new" proposed R4 model is also liable to the same administrative problems. How will a "new" model assist? Is that the intention? Or is it the intention to reduce the popularity of the R4 zone for developers such that the concerns of residents in those zones can be accommodated by reducing pressure for redevelopment in the R4 areas through reducing the design outcome potential of R4 sites in the interest of character retention and old, low density housing?

How do these possibilities address the need for economic, high density housing which integrates the needs of new residents, neighbours and the interests of the city through high performance low cost housing close to existing services and facilities? Under what circumstances does a large old relic of a previous era dictate the current lifestyle aspirations of people seeking the benefits of living in the R4 zone but living in current responses which address the needs and concerns of the present and the future? While there is no doubt whatever that there is some value in retaining an understanding of lifestyles of previous times, anthropologists in the future may be puzzled about the cause of the period when old was better than new and new copied old except in transport. In the R4 zone, however, "old" was replaced by regulation by another "new". Comparison of the "sixpack", the Hassall Street model and the "new" R4 model may increase this potential for being puzzled.

Some cost comparisons

The efficiency in the design and construction of the "sixpack" has been achieved over some twenty or more years. One of the issues of the R4 zone is whether it is appropriate to seek a standard design as a baseline, with relaxations and concessions only if circumstances and design performance merit. However, this process has no credibility at present due to existing residents' views of the ability of Council to achieve and ensure best possible outcomes. Too often, Council has approved development exceeding normal guidelines. In doing so, it fails to maintain design standards for both residents and neighbours. These "relaxations" are inevitably for the sole benefit of the initial developer.

Accordingly, there is considerable merit in having a standard design. The inability to achieve that design standard raises questions of urban texture, scale, homogeneity and certainty of outcome for developers, Council, neighbours and potential residents. Standard design also provides a vision of the mature form such as is much admired in many old urban cities. Most importantly, a standard design provides certainty and cost effectiveness through repetition. Thus at the time of developing the Hassall Street model, it was not possible to compare its ultimate cost once developers and builders adapted to the design and the design was adapted to accommodate regulatory changes necessary to adjust regulations which at that time were based on the "sixpack" form.

However, the popularity of the "easier to build" modified form favoured by developers, approved by Council and now described as the "old" form is clear. There is some dispute about the original Hassall Street form being more expensive although there is little dispute that the current dominant form is easier to build. However, this dominant form, the "old" form of R4 building now to be constrained by the proposed amendments, severely reduces the environmental and social outcome and the amenity of the neighbours when compared with the Hassall Street model, despite remaining popular with the developers and the purchasers. Should they be the decision makers?

The proposed "new" R4 form is reputed to be less costly, in particular because it allows framed and sheeted construction. This was not the case in the two cost comparison studies carried out during design of the Hassall Street model. The comparative cost detail most likely remains very similar although costs for all models have risen. Irrespective, impending amendments will allow such benefits for three storey construction as is common in North America. Thus the proposed "new" form reduces resident amenity without improving neighbours' amenity or community, environmental, or cost outcomes. The debate is therefore not only about cost. Is 60 Hassall Street incorrect? Should it be promoted?

Some social and amenity comparisons

The "sixpack" demonstrates the social and amenity outcomes of planning by boundary setback provisions. The building becomes located at the maximum distance from all sides of the site to increase the distance from it to the side boundary. There is no apparent reason for this. The outcome is that the three storey building is in the middle of the site. It dominates adjoining spaces, all of which are 50% less width than the building height. The spaces are inadequate for social or other activity other than use for cars. Almost half of the available space is concrete driveway or parking area, solely the province of cars except for ball games for children. The spaces are overshadowed by the scale of the building and therefore are difficult to landscape or garden, whilst overlooking from above is directly into the adjoining yard or building rather than into the subject site. This combines with the layout of the units with three per floor facing front, back and sideways, to reduce security by overlooking from the individual units. Access routes to the carparks and to the two stairs are not secured by maximum overlooking from the units. The "sixpack" does not provide secure and visible access.

The Hassall Street model sought to maximise the utility of the outdoor space and prevent the sideways overlooking of neighbouring houses by minimising the side boundary setbacks to zero. The rear setback is maximised to 225% of the standard "sixpack" providing a useful space between buildings, nearly equivalent to a vacant

block between "sixpacks". This space allows for all the activities and amenity of a typical backyard, including retention of the character of the typical Brisbane backyard: mango trees, pool, barbecue and clothes drying, overlooked by all units. It is a social space albeit able to be shared or exclusively used. As Brisbane develops a new culture of community housing, potential exists to combine the backyards of adjoining developments to provide a very large shared space with room for large trees and extensive opportunities to develop communal facilities. By locating the carparks at the front and on the side boundaries, access to the carports and the front and rear of the units is extremely difficult and obvious because all the units overlook these areas. The only easy access to the carparks and the building is up the central driveway in full view of all units. The single central stair with through access to the rear provides security and interaction, with privacy. The progression from the public street through the public-private property/public access zone of the driveway-courtyard through the public-private access zone of the central stair and unit entrances to the private-community zone of the backyard provides an optimum response to security, community, public space and privacy requirements for the neighbours and the residents.

The proposed "new" model provides similar setbacks to the "sixpack" to the rear and front boundary and between the two sections, thus providing both poor privacy and little community space. There is inadequate space for retaining substantial trees although some will be able to be kept by allowing them to overhang the two storey height. Security by overlooking from the units is much reduced compared with the Hassell Street model due to the all round access. Access to the various units has been criticised for providing many hiding places along the external route between the garages and the side boundaries. In addition, the garage access route is not easily overlooked and therefore provides little security as an alternate access, in particular when any of the garage doors are open or as in some projects, are not fitted on all carparks.

Security is possibly the major design and amenity issue. Purchasers are seeking design models which maximise overlooking by the units whilst eliminating hiding spaces and unviewed access routes. From the security perspective, the success of the modified "old" model and the even better performance of the Hassall Street model when compared with the proposed "new" model suggest that the issue of security has not been adequately addressed in current Council considerations. The Hassall Street model however, also improves the amenity for neighbours by almost completely eliminating alternative access routes to the rear of neighbouring sites whilst at the same time providing minimal overlooking from the units into the adjoining houses or units. This model provides both security by overlooking as well as privacy by separation by distances of up to 25m, which is 5m wider than the typical 20m frontage R4 site, rather than the current 11-12m between "sixpacks" and similar or reduced amounts between neighbouring and on site units in the proposed "new" model.

The almost total provision of single detached housing and "sixpacks" as the popular housing choice for Brisbane denies the possibility of enhanced design models which seek to develop and encourage a community within the R4 building. Similar community oriented design intentions have resulted in "co-housing" developments in Europe and the U.S.A. where the social support and common interests of cohabiters nurtures a small self-supporting community beyond the family/household unit but much more strongly bonded than neighbours. Whilst little or no research has been publicised in this field in Queensland, overseas and interstate examples indicate that

provision through design for the development of social interactions and security are important design issues favouring the development of a culture of co-housing in medium density housing. The Hassall Street model provides more potential for the important social interaction by providing better security, higher quality access spaces and much higher quality external spaces than any of the other models. It also performs best for the neighbours.

Some environmental comparisons

A recent study of Red Hill and adjoining areas has identified the importance of the backyard and the street, in addition to the importance of the buildings. Current emphasis on character retention and streetscape centres on appearance rather than outcome and content. The emphasis on the building as an object requires redirection to enhance the relative importance of the precinctual qualities of the street and the backyard in improving overall precinctual qualities which include character. Many areas of Brisbane could be substantially "improved" simply by major street tree plantings and local speed reductions to enhance environmental conditions. Improved noise levels, air quality, temperature, shade and humidity encourage pedestrian, cycling and recreational use of streets. In those areas where such conditions exist, the quality of individual buildings is both increased and diminished.

The higher the quality of the setting, the less relative importance is the quality of the individual building as an object. Improvement of the ambience of the precinct thus reduces the relative value of an individual element in the total setting. The whole setting however, adds to the qualities and values of the individual object thus integrating the various values. Current character retention policies cannot achieve such outcomes. The emphasis on the individual object rather than the social and cultural values which support the functional need for the building encourage retention as a "museum piece", a process which has been relatively unsuccessful in other places. Maintenance of the quality of the precinct in changing cultural, social and economic conditions requires the continuing process of redevelopment to continue to provide for current and future needs whilst improving the current precinctual qualities of which character is only one. Thus, the conditions for continuing development are inclusive of future and current needs rather than exclusive, as is the proposed application of character retention.

The Atkinson Council administration sought to improve the design quality of R4 housing whilst improving the outcome for neighbours and the city. However, the current "new" model seeks to more protect the neighbours amenity. In reality, the "new" model reduces resident amenity whilst reducing the outcome for neighbours and the city. The most valued role likely of a deficient model is a reduction in demand for redevelopment. Neighbourhood amenity is preserved with regard to redevelopment but not in regard to the necessity to accommodate more car based transport and accompanying outcomes. This approach also fails to address increasing population and increasing numbers of smaller households for whom existing houses and car dependence are not suitable, practical, desirable or economical. It assumes that more smaller housing units can or will be provided somewhere or somehow else.

The location and provision of these smaller housing units is fundamental to the issue of character retention and streetscape at the precinctual, metropolitan and regional levels. These are issues that *SEQ 2001* and *Brisbane 2011* ought to address. The proposed "new" R4 model cannot contribute positively to housing choice if it only provides a means to reduce or control the supply of high quality medium density housing for which there is both a need and a keen market. The proposed "new" R4 model is an incorrect strategy because it is a negative approach. It will prevent best possible R4 development projects responding to current market demands. It fails to indicate where and how the necessary additional small housing will be located and provided.

Therefore because there is need for more R4 type housing as demonstrated by demand, the use of the existing R4 suburbs should remain unconstrained other than by improved design performance standards. The quality and appeal of R4 developments must be improved for their prospective residents whilst addressing the need to improve the precinctual character with the best possible outcome for adjoining neighbours and the city. There is therefore the need to promote the development of better R4 design models. There is, however, no need to constrain the Hassall Street model. It and various derivatives approved by Council are successful in the marketplace in the zone for which Council has determined such development should take place over the previous 20 or more years. There are further issues of importance in the housing choice debate.

Transport is a fundamental issue in that increasing population density provides the opportunity for facilities and services including public transport to be more closely spaced thus reducing the length of trip to such services whilst influencing decisions involving choices. The social opportunities during a pleasant walk or a regular bicycle trip to local shops may shift buying patterns away from a car trip to the regional shopping centre, in much the same way that more frequent or closer public transport encourages a shift in transport habits.

Development of R4 areas or equivalent strategies providing similar outcomes are essential to accommodate both increasing population and smaller household populations if population density in existing housing areas is to be maintained or preferably, increased. *Amcord Urban* amongst other current design perspectives provides the opportunity for reduced carparking requirements based on access to facilities. All medium density models that integrate carparking into the main structure as is the case with both the "sixpacks" and the proposed "new" model, pay very high construction and amenity costs in the provision of parking in the most expensive part of the building. Prospective owners with and without cars are therefore heavily and unavoidably penalised.

In addition, having accommodated carparking, these design models are also unable to respond to changing circumstances. As car use decreases, as increased on-street parking is recognised as a more integrated and viable land use and as demand for public transport for housing further out at the margins increases, only the Hassall Street model and derivatives can return part or the whole of the front of the site to people, reflecting a strong derivation from the attached housing models which provided for people oriented needs predating both car dominance and town planning control orientations as currently practiced.

Thus, regional issues such as transport choice, noise and air quality are also fundamental to the consideration of the R4 zone and mature visions of Brisbane. Similar concerns emerge in regard to water use, sewage disposal, energy use and the ability to incorporate "urban farming".

Development requirements for houses have progressed from a small house on a large block of land with many trees beside an unsurfaced road and open drains. Larger houses and buildings cover more of smaller site with less or no trees beside more, larger sealed roads and parking areas with required, fully piped drainage. The results are less absorption, more water use for gardening, more rapid and vastly increased amounts of run-off, ever increasing drains, more floods and more pollution of streams and rivers. All new housing forms should offer the potential to reverse these outcomes by providing less coverage of the site, more opportunity for on-site sewage treatment, absorption or reuse and reduced paved and roofed areas. Large useful areas of the site with maximum exposure to sun and sky offer the potential for urban farming. Major improvements to integrated environmental consumption and living conditions are provided by reduction in building materials, massing of housing units, maximising external space to accommodate sun control devices and indoor-outdoor rooms whilst minimising energy consumption through these and centralised large scale service units such as water heaters.

All these matters require detailed assessment and consideration before decisions are made to alter the most popular form of housing in Brisbane other than single detached houses. Energy use, resource consumption and environmental deterioration are issues which if ignored, allow current practices to continue unchallenged. If addressed as important for the successful achievement and sustainability of current and future conditions for the residents of Brisbane, these issues provide the basis for an integrated approach to planning housing for this city. These issues should therefore be included in the development of design standards, not as separated unrelated single-sector domains but as fundamental requirements for the further development of the popular R4 housing forms which provide an alternative future to that of car based planning.

Some design considerations

Most Brisbane residents have little or no experience of attached and medium density housing. Even if they do, the choice of such housing is often less attractive currently than the opportunity for a single detached house. Despite the apparent assumption of endless land for more single houses, there is increasing awareness that the economic and environmental cost of such a housing pattern is rising rapidly. Many diverse sections of the community are seeking a halt to current development and growth management promotion. Citing current political rhetoric implying concern for the future, they encourage adoption of alternative solutions which will allow the commencement of social change (Yeates, 1994).

Current debate about the need for massive expenditure on road network improvement and expansion reflects similar issues to the debate about housing. Majority democratic political systems are generally unable to encourage change because it reflects minority concerns and interests in conflict with current, dominant majority interests. In environmental and social issues, this system requires demonstrable failure to impose on the majority before change occurs. Recent examples include blue-green algae

episodes, polluted surf beaches and rivers and episodes of dangerous air pollution. Is it necessary to proceed in accordance with the dominant majority and ensure the occurrence of failure by excluding the opportunity for alternatives which reflect current minority concerns whilst demonstrating long term government and bureaucratic rhetoric and challenging and educating the dominant majority?

The need for the proposed amendments to the current draft R4 design guidelines or the need to pursue and develop better design standards is a typical and important example of this kind of problem. Such problems seldom have simple answers. They are not mutually exclusive. Accordingly resolution is unlikely to be achieved by removing a successful model and substituting a less adequate model as is proposed. Has evidence of failure emerged? Who decided? On the contrary, the popularity of the Hassall Street model and derivatives is now challenging the assumed right for people to continue in low density single detached housing whilst depending on a car for transport.

Is this the time to be constraining the popularity of socially, economically and environmentally better, higher density housing models which demonstrate a possible future? Why produce rhetoric concerned for the future in *Brisbane 2011* and *SEQ 2001* ? Proposed new housing models, particularly where based on lower densities, should perform better on social, environmental and economic assessment criteria rather than reflect concerns of the current dominant majority for political or other reasons which threaten the long term maturity and vision of the city.

There is now little debate about the implications of continued support for the development of the "sixpack" model. After more than twenty years of requiring medium density housing to conform to this model, the mature vision is unacceptable. But are R4 alternatives necessary? The debate has shifted to concerns about the repetition of standard forms. This ignores many successful and admired historic and current forms of this housing form. The current debate is about the object and it's context. The context includes current and future, social and cultural influences rather than including only previous and current influences. Thus context must disregard nostalgia and seek the development and encouragement of new housing forms which continue to improve equitable living conditions for the future whilst reflecting and developing current rhetoric. Detailed consideration of the designs of the Hassall Street model and the "new" model provides an assessment of their performance using such criteria.

Exposure to prevailing breezes and views and opportunities to obtain optimum benefits from sun orientation are principal design elements. The "new" model fails by comparison with the Hassall Street on all three criteria. Views from each unit are one-sided due to the site configuration where the two parts of the complex face each other approximately 6m apart. This is about half the distance between two "sixpacks" and a quarter the distance between two Hassall Street models back to back. For similar reasons, prevailing breezes are severely curtailed to the downwind part of the "new" model. Sun orientation is also very restricted by the design of the "new" model. There is insufficient space between the two parts of the development to project balconies or sun control devices. The proximity of the two parts and of neighbours restricts the use of large open windows and doors due to privacy constraints.

The Hassall Street model provides all units with two sided exposure to views, breeze and optimum sun control and exposure as well as space for adequate balconies and

sun control. This is not only an environmental issue. The opportunity to allow the provision of external living areas with large useable decks, the partial provision of shading and weather protection and screening reflects similar design opportunities to traditional and current responses to climatic, privacy and security conditions in detached houses. The Hassall Street model is therefore never unduly constrained by orientation. Neither the Hassall Street nor the "new" models can achieve the optimum conditions available to a development in the middle of a site however.

The "new" model shows a much lower profile in elevation to the street. However, the apparent visual mass from the middle of the street is very similar to the Hassall Street model due to the differences in setback from the street. Entry definition in the Hassall Street model is very significant to the design configuration compared to that of the "new" model.

The lower side elevation profile of the "new" model shows twice the length of effective elevation to the side boundary. It is a little lower than the Hassall Street profile for the main building while the Hassall Street garage walls are above the normal maximum fence height and considerably lower than the walls of the "new" model. Building on the side alignment provides a positive "fence" compared to the need for a fence with a two storey wall another 1-2m inside the boundary. These side boundary spaces waste up to 10% of the site width, equivalent to one site in every ten. Such space and frontage width is too valuable to waste. The central entry mews connection between front and back of the Hassall Street model uses this space rather than wasting it in setbacks.

Building on the side boundary may be considered to be an issue. It is not an issue in most other zones. In R4 areas therefore, it is more related to a perspective which favours existing neighbours rather than the new residents. It is not an issue of construction, legal or technical ability although it is clearly easier for the builder to build with a setback. Rather it is an issue of establishing political priorities which favour and encourage the construction of new R4 buildings which provide optimum outcomes for the long term interests of the new residents thus placing less emphasis on protecting the interests of the existing neighbours. This is the case within all other redevelopment zones. This view would obviously encourage and promote more new development. Where essential, negotiated setbacks for particular circumstances are possible as demonstrated on the western boundary of 60 Hassall Street.

With more rapid social and economic change, building forms which allow for easy change of use are more suitable rather than one-off structures which require extensive structural modification or demolition for adaption to new uses. The Hassall Street model provides the potential for both total internal retro-fit as well as bare-shell sale, thus emulating the early forms of two and three storey terrace which have proven to be extremely adaptable. Shop-top housing and house-over-work provide well tried historic alternatives which are now reappearing as components of maximised amenity and convenience with minimal trip distance and enhanced urban conditions. The Hassall Street model again demonstrates the derivation from the traditional three storey terrace by the easy adaption to retail, commercial or mixed use of part or all of the building form. The problem of old building uses being threatened by changes in street or precinct functions but unable to be easily changed can also be accommodated as easily as for the old pre-car terraces and shop-top house forms, except that there is no necessity for owner occupier requirements due to the mews design.

Whose interests are being served?

Current concern for "the environment" demonstrates the difficulty of converting rhetoric into reality. The current R4 amendments demonstrate this gap between the rhetoric of *Brisbane 2011* and *SEQ 2001* and the reality of increasing car dominance and continued support for current forms of car dominated urban development. Many commentators and supporters of the need for alternatives to be considered in a committed rather than token manner express this view.

Governments continue to support ... low density greenfield suburbs and new, large capacity roads. Worse, the notion that public authority and resources *could* be directed to 'better' ends is *scorned* and the transition to a more compact, transit oriented city which is more vital, sustainable, equitable and lively is *delayed* (Newman et al,1993,23) (emphasis added).

The regard given by both the Queensland Government and the Brisbane City Council to those using current government rhetoric such as *Brisbane 2011* and *SEQ 2001* to encourage current adoption of alternatives confirms that public authority and resources cannot be directed to 'better' ends and thus the transition, sought by the rhetoric, will be delayed.

Whose interests are being served by such decisions? These are deliberate, considered decisions not to do what the rhetoric suggests. Clearly, governments keep a watchful eye on the electoral balance. Why not explain the reasons behind the rhetoric? Concern about increasing costs of road transport in health, air quality and noise are supported by concerns seeking retention of the character of Brisbane and South East Queensland. It is clear that a much enlightened population is now much more cynical of the intentions of government with respect to the reality of implementation rather than the marketing of the rhetoric. Thus, the gap between community and government grows and proposals by government are more likely to be resisted and subjected to expert critique. Is that not what is sought by community consultation? There is an expectation that government will move to implement the rhetoric supported by and in continuous consultation with an informed community. Such consultation assumes a two-way iterative process rather than a current market survey as at present (Yeates,1994). The aim is to avoid repetition of the mistakes of other times and other places.

The local level - the level of the individual, community and locality - is where ecosystems are conserved or destroyed, needs are met or frustrated, and ecological, social and economic factors are integrated Communities and individuals need to be empowered to adopt sustainable living (I.U.C.N.,1990,17).

The current proposed amendments to R4 illustrate the tendency for government to respond to political pressures with reactive, negative controls rather than considered, pro-active processes which encourage recognition of the need for community involvement and commitment to new processes and outcomes which address in an integrated way, the complex multidisciplinary problems facing urban and rural communities now, and more importantly, in the future. That future is being created now. It should not be based on the past.

The problem is an educational one. We cannot hope to achieve transition to a sustainable world order unless and until most people come to understand why fundamental change is essential, and come to see that alternative ways not only make sense, but represent an attractive way to live (Trainer,1989,209).

The proposed "new" model does not achieve any of the above. It may assist in pacifying those who have failed to address the implications of the Town Plan. Character retention may also help in this process while possibly delaying removal or demolition of existing houses. However, if the "new" model proves even more successful than the "old", character retention will prevent provision of necessary medium density housing and thus increase transport problems, which threaten many similar areas now. How has this come about? Who designed such an outcome? Were the current and prospective residents of new R4 developments asked?

The Hassall Street model represents the outcome of good design. Previous "design" was constrained by town planning restrictions which paid no attention to social, economic, environmental or cultural and community values. The "sixpack" was the result. Design provided by planning constraint without a commitment to performance indicators.

The Hassall Street model emerged through the extensive experience of architects with knowledge of how to integrate the many issues in combination with an understanding of the performance requirements of buildings such that people can enjoy living in alternative and attractive ways. It and derivatives have proved popular and perhaps necessary to the choice of high performance housing available in Brisbane.

The "new" model has been developed to provide a response to concerns emerging in designated redevelopment areas. Character retention cannot be achieved by the "new" model. It provides deficient housing and, although several of this model have been built in the period since the Atkinson administration, there is no evidence to suggest that it is as popular in the marketplace or that it provides a better form of housing for the future. There is, therefore, no evidence or need to constrain the Hassall Street model. That is a return to planning design.

Summary

Council should review the future of housing in Brisbane in an holistic and future oriented manner that addresses high quality outcomes rather than in a nostalgic, negative and backward looking single sectoral manner as represented by the character retention and R4 amendments proposed.

The Hassall Street model should not be restricted or constrained. It is a high performance design concept which reflects several centuries of testing whilst meeting all R4 requirements and intentions. It provides a high quality residential amenity for both neighbours and residents at a population and household density which will contribute substantially to shifts to more efficient integration of facilities, services and transport as sustainability becomes increasingly more recognised as important. It represents a similar stage in the development of housing choice as did the 1930's three storey apartments with garages at the rear. Such developments do threaten the "rights" of existing residents. These "rights" are described in the Town Plan. Council

may wish to reduce the overall intensity and population and household density by altering the Town Plan. Such a move is completely counter to the current rhetoric suggesting the need for higher densities. Improvements to the R3 and R4 standard designs may overcome concerns of existing neighbours but these should not reduce the potential amenity of the new residents. In a redevelopment zone, clear intent is necessary as to the priority of the new residents and their amenity as compared with the existing. All new developments should provide best possible conditions rather than deficient standards. Council should investigate why design standards are inevitably reduced by the approvals process.

The proposed "new" model is one of the original Council "planning" suggestions from the late 1980's. Some examples have been built. It has not proved popular. It has many characteristics which are inherently deficient. It was not more cost effective when compared with the Hassall Street model. Current changes to allow lightweight framed and sheeted construction will also be available to the three storey. The "new" model provides no inherently outstanding qualities sufficient to support the reduction of the amenity of the new residents of R4 areas in the interests of existing neighbours as proposed. It also has too many deficiencies.

Council should review current processes for decision making in regard to critical issues such as housing policy to ensure that proposed amendments provide improvements and protection of all of the qualities of not only existing residents in old areas but all residents. Increasing population requires more housing. It must be provided in ways that move current rhetoric towards the reality of implementation. Character retention as a means of preventing more, high performance, higher density housing is not a solution to current and future housing needs.

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