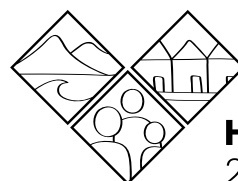




# A Community Driven Housing Action Plan

## Our Vision: 'Homes For All'

Adopted by Council 2 October 2019



**Horowhenua**  
2040 Vision



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Acknowledgements : This Housing Action Plan was prepared following a number of Council initiated and hosted multi-sector Housing Forums and Working Groups independently facilitated by Ree Anderson (Director, Ree Anderson Consulting Ltd). Participants in the forums included representatives from local iwi authorities, Fale Pasifika Horowhenua, local Pasifika Church leaders, regional and central government officials, Community Housing Providers, NGOs including Age Concern, local land developers and builders, together with the Mayor and elected representatives and members of Council's Community Wellbeing Committee and Council staff. The forums and working groups were chaired by Cr Barry Judd, Chair of the Council's Community Wellbeing Committee and supported by Council's General Manager H2040 & Partnership Development, Nicki Brady.

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# Foreword

## It is an exciting and challenging time for Horowhenua. Both our population and economy are growing.

Over the past few years Horowhenua's population growth has jumped to record levels, with Census 2018 confirming a 10% population increase since 2013.

Horowhenua's economy continues to grow faster than the national economy. As the economy expands, so does the attraction of Horowhenua as a place to live and work. Our District offers the advantages of rural small town living between hill and coastal settings as well as proximity to the city offerings of Palmerston North and Wellington.

We welcome this growth while at the same time we acknowledge that it brings with it increased demand for more housing. As our supply of housing is not keeping pace with this demand we are now experiencing:

- an upward pressure on rents, with an estimated 12.5% increase in mean weekly rent in Horowhenua in the year July 2018 - June 2019; and
- an increase in mean (average) house values, with an increase of 15.2% in the year September 2017 - September 2018; with the mean house value being \$341,310. (Source: webrear.mbie.govt.nz)

There is also anecdotal evidence telling us that some young people in the district (as young as Year 9 students) do not even know where they will be sleeping at night; that new migrants seeking to take advantage of the job opportunities here are not earning sufficient income to cover rental accommodation; that some of our older residents on fixed incomes are challenged by the increase in housing costs.

We also know that some of our residents are at risk from family harm, lower educational achievement and above average unemployment.

Central to all this and to having strong communities, are our homes – whether they be emergency, transitional, social, rental, assisted affordable or market homes. A home should be a place of shelter, warmth, safety and care – where individuals, families and whānau can grow strong.

Our strategy for the future, "Horowhenua 2040" has a vision 'Homes for All'. At the heart of the vision is a focus on creating communities that our residents can be proud of, where together we grow neighbourhoods that are vibrant and connected places to live, work, learn and play. Ultimately, the vision is to strive to create resilient and liveable communities across our district that deliver positive social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

To help us make this a reality the Council initiated and hosted three multi-sector Housing Forum during March to August 2019. These forums and associated working groups helped to inform this Housing Action Plan. It is a Plan that seeks to:

- drive immediate grass root actions and local solutions to meet our community's diverse housing needs;
- look to the medium and long-term to make sure we have sustainable housing solutions to meet everyone's needs.

We need to work together to ensure a diversity of homes are built to meet all our housing needs so that we have the foundations for individuals and families to thrive and strong communities are built.

We need everyone in our community, including central government, community housing providers, and the private sector, to play their part to build local relationships, connect with each other and help get homes on the ground. This Housing Action Plan is directed at achieving that.

**500**

**new residents  
to Horowhenua  
in 2018**



**4.4%**

**increase to GDP  
(2017-2018)**





# Executive Summary

In developing this Housing Action Plan, the Council has been guided by the views and advice of:

- Local iwi, marae and hapū representatives involved in the forums
- Local Pasifika church leaders and Fale Pasifika Horowhenua through a Pasifika Housing Working Group
- Local developers and builders through a Developers' Working Group
- Council's Community Wellbeing Committee, central government, a Youth Empowerment Project and Non-Governmental Organisation representatives involved in the forums.

The outcomes of these conversations and collaboration is our 'Community Driven Horowhenua Housing Action Plan' which is summarised as a 'Plan on a Page' on page 6 and 7 of this document.

The Council has also been guided by the Community Housing Aotearoa's 'Guidance on Developing a Housing Strategy', May 2018 and on international research such as that by the McKinsey Global Institute 'A blueprint for addressing the global affordable housing challenge', October 2014 and McKinsey 'Housing affordability: A supply-side tool kit for cities, October 2017.

What we have come to understand is that housing for residents in Horowhenua is severely unaffordable, based on measures of housing affordability within a market (our community). So, while relatively speaking housing in Horowhenua is affordable compared to other places in New Zealand such as the nearby city of Wellington, it is not affordable for many residents currently living in Horowhenua based on median household incomes and median house prices. Council is tackling these housing challenges by listening to community views and engaging with others with responsibilities and obligations in the housing industry, to lead this Housing Action Plan which is focused on meeting the needs of residents as expressed by them.

## Abbreviations:

<b>CHA</b>	Community Housing Aotearoa
<b>CHP</b>	Community Housing Providers
<b>CWC</b>	Community Wellbeing Committee
<b>DIA</b>	Department of Internal Affairs
<b>H2040</b>	Horowhenua 2040
<b>HDC</b>	Horowhenua District Council
<b>HLC</b>	Horowhenua Learning Centre
<b>LTP</b>	Long Term Plan
<b>MBIE</b>	Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment
<b>MHUD</b>	Ministry of Housing & Urban Development
<b>MSD</b>	Ministry of Social Development
<b>NGO</b>	Non-government organisation
<b>TPK</b>	Te Puni Kōkiri
<b>RMA</b>	Resource Management Act

## The Council has 5 key roles:

- F** Facilitator
- P** Planning Authority
- SP** Service Provider
- R** Regulator
- A** Advocate



# Our Horowhenua housing action plan on a page

## Our Vision – Homes for all

### Our Mission

-  Drive immediate grass root actions and local solutions to meet our community's diverse housing needs
-  Look to the medium and long term to make sure we have sustainable housing solutions to meet everyone's needs

### Our Housing Outcomes

-  Strong partnerships and relationships with iwi, agencies, developers, businesses and housing providers, working together to deliver a diversity of homes that more residents can afford
-  A connected and caring community

### Our Target Groups



#### Māori

Partnerships with local iwi and central govt to support the development of Māori housing and papakāinga



#### Pasifika Peoples

Partnerships with pacific churches, community housing providers, MSD, other central govt agencies, NGOs and HLC



#### Rangatahi (young people; 12-24yrs)

Have safe and caring places to sleep and are supported to independent living



#### Disability Community

Residents who identify themselves with a disability or have diverse needs



#### Older persons / low income households

Affordable rentals and/or assisted ownership for singles, couples and families



#### Developers / CHPs

Collaborative development and design to improve certainty and delivery of diverse housing types; partnerships



# HOW: What We Will Do

## Council's Role

The Council has 5 key roles:



What we will do	Council's Role
1. Establish housing outreach hubs – assist residents to know how to apply for accommodation supplements and benefits (e.g. Working for Family); provide capacity building opportunities (e.g. financial literacy courses, budgeting advice); hold 6-monthly housing information clinics (or similar) for all residents, partnering with central government to deliver these (fit for purpose, ensuring multilingual documentation availability).	 (See Action 1)
2. Continue to improve regulatory policy (District Plan) and delivery (collaborative consent assessment and processing); investigate the provision of infrastructure and funding to support development and growth; participate in the upcoming review of the Resource Management Act; monitor housing data and trends. Advocate for universal design options in our housing. Host a Developers/Builders Breakfast Meeting and discuss local growth opportunities for the sector.	 (See Actions 1-5)
3. Identify and investigate public land availability for potential partnerships and pilot projects (e.g. enter into joint ventures) with iwi, community and social housing providers to deliver co-housing, transitional housing, options for student and young people housing, or similar and innovative housing options and initiatives to improve the supply of affordable housing.	 (See Actions.7-8)
4. Facilitate partnerships between iwi/marae/hapū, pacific churches, industry, community housing providers (CHPs), NGOs, education and training providers to improve trade training, and support programmes for Māori and Pacific peoples' employment. Support whanāu and hapū with accessing Oranga Marae programmes and advice provided by Te Puni Kōkiri and the Department of Internal Affairs.  Continue the Pasifika Housing Forum to keep building relationships with Council, central government, Horowhenua Learning Centre (HLC) and those involved in the housing sector including landlords.	 (See Actions 6, 9-14)
5. Advocate for central government resources, including more public housing and wrap-around services to assist people to move through the housing continuum towards achieving private rental and private ownership; and ways to improve incomes.	 (See Actions 6,7,9)

## Measuring our progress

Quarterly reports to the Community Wellbeing Committee

# Introduction

## Housing development cycle and NZ housing trends.

- (i) Getting houses on the ground can be a lengthy process. There are many steps that developers and builders need to take to deliver homes. Even when the consenting and approval processes run smoothly, and financing and contractors are available, it can take anywhere from several months to 2-6 years to see finished homes, depending on whether these homes are in existing urban (brownfield) areas or greenfield areas (rural areas being converted to urban use). (See Attachment 1, Diagram 1A and 1B for an indication of the steps in the development lifecycle).
- (ii) As well, many factors affect the supply and cost of homes (e.g. the price of land, access to finance, certainty of consenting, land ownership patterns, labour supply, and relative costs of housing in other districts, cities and regions). We know that house prices across New Zealand have been increasing. This includes increases in house prices in the regions in response to housing becoming more unaffordable in our major cities such as Wellington. “Looking at the country as a whole, median (house) prices increased annually (to May 2019) in 11 out of 16 regions with strong growth (14.4%) recorded in...Manawatu-Whanganui.” [Source: REINZ Media Release 14 June 2019].

Within the Manawatu-Whanganui region, there is also an increase in interest to look to Horowhenua for more affordable housing, noting the advantages of its proximity to both Palmerston North and Wellington cities as well as its rural, small town and coastal environments. Additionally, the ratio of holiday homes to permanent residential homes in

Horowhenua is increasing slightly and the diversity of housing stock is limited (the average Horowhenua house is 3-bedrooms – source: Gladstone Green Design & Capability Statement, August 2018). This, along with population growth and changing demographics together with the growth of house values elsewhere, e.g. Wellington, is putting an increased demand on a limited existing housing supply to meet demand, helping to drive rents and house prices up.

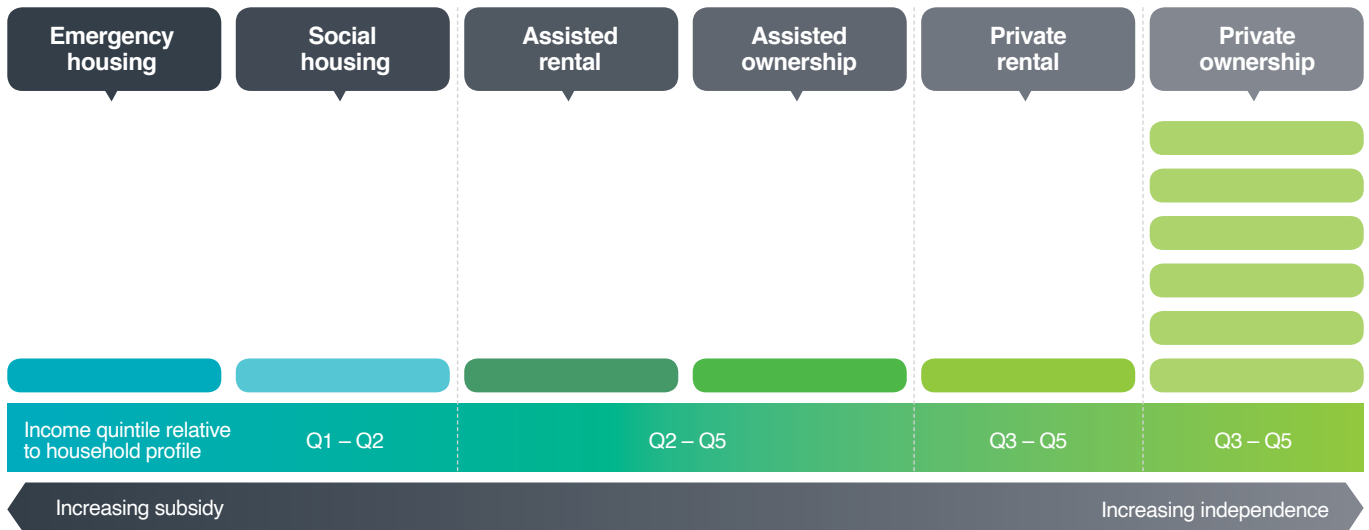
- (iii) The Council has been engaging with its communities and many stakeholders during the preparation of Horowhenua 2040 (H2040). This engagement is telling Council that housing and access to affordable housing options is an increasing concern for all. This includes local buyers and also those renting.

Data from MBIE shows an upward pressure on rent, with an estimated increase of 12.5% and an increase of 15.2% in mean (average) house values.

- (iv) This Community Driven Housing Action Plan, therefore, is Council's initiative to shine a light on the increasing unaffordability of housing for Horowhenua residents. It also identifies the undersupply of a diversity of housing stock, so proactive initiatives can be considered now to achieve the community's vision of “Homes for All”.



**Diagram 1: Housing Continuum**



Source: Community Housing Aotearoa Nga Wharerau o Aotearoa (<http://www.communityhousing.org.nz/>)

## Homes for All – the housing continuum

- (i) Participants at the Horowhenua Housing Forum identified goals to have the opportunity to own homes as well as a desire to have affordable rentals, in addition to identifying needs for vulnerable residents such as young people at risk. As such, a diverse supply of housing across the housing continuum is required as a stepping stone for individuals and families to achieve their goals of safe, warm and affordable homes. The housing continuum discussed at the Forum is described in the Diagram 1.
- (ii) “The (Housing) Continuum identifies the types of housing products typically needed to support households with different levels of financial and social resources. By choosing which components of the Continuum are the greatest priority, the specific programmes and interventions can be developed to achieve... goals” (see CHA Guidance on Developing a Housing Strategy, May 2018, p.2.)

## Measures of housing affordability and affordable housing

- (i) Measures of housing affordability and definitions of affordable housing must take account of local context. One measure used by Demographia to assess housing affordability is the median multiple. The median multiple indicates housing affordability in any given community. The median multiple is the ratio of the median house price by the median gross annual household income. Historically, this measure was around 3 to indicate what was affordable housing (i.e. a household doesn't spend more than 30% of its household income on housing costs). Where the cost is above this indicates the degree of affordability of housing. See Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Housing Affordability Ratings**

Rating	Median Multiple
Severely Unaffordable	5.1 and over
Seriously Unaffordable	4.1 to 5.0
Moderately Unaffordable	3.1 to 4.0
Affordable	3.0 and under

(Source: Demographia - 15th Annual Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey)

However, there is no common definition or shared definition of affordable housing in New Zealand. At its most simplified level it is housing that people can afford, be it key workers such as nurses, teachers, police or extended families requiring affordable larger homes.

- (ii) The McKinsey Global Institute define affordable housing “as dwellings that meet the economic requirement for affordability by low income residents of a particular city”. The Auckland Housing Action Plan Stage 1 – December 2012, noted that “Affordable housing is usually targeted at those in household income bands from 80% to 120% of the median household income (MHI), who are not eligible for social [State] housing, but still need assistance to either secure home ownership or a long term rental.” Auckland’s Housing Action Plan therefore base the definition for affordable housing “...on the international benchmark that households should not spend more than 30% of gross income on housing costs. This could include housing that assists home ownership or affordable rental and is generally provided by Community Housing Organisations.”
- (iii) In Australia, the National Affording Housing Summit Group developed their definition of affordable housing as housing that is “...reasonably adequate in standard and location for lower- or middle-income households and does not cost so much that a household is unlikely to be able to meet other basic needs on a sustainable basis.” Affordable housing in the United Kingdom includes “social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.” (Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affordable\\_housing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affordable_housing)).

## Housing affordability in Horowhenua

- (i) The Housing Forum participants identified the following factors influencing housing affordability in Horowhenua:



### Income

Percentage of income used on the cost of housing, whether it be costs associated with payment of mortgages or payments of rent. At the Housing Forum, it was suggested that the median household income would be around \$50,000 in Horowhenua and that the median cost of a home was approximately \$300,000. At the same time there was an informal breakdown of house costs as follows: that a section price of 400m<sup>2</sup> is approximately \$160,000 and that a basic 3-bedroom house (of approximately 100m<sup>2</sup> at \$2,000/m<sup>2</sup> to build) and land package would cost approximately \$360,000. At the workshop, \$360,000 was considered above the affordability threshold for many Horowhenua residents.



### House size and household size

The size and design of homes to meet different household needs was discussed. For example, Pasifika people enjoy living with extended family so the house size needs to be tailored to larger family groupings and still be affordable.



### Transport time to work

What is a reasonable ‘travel time to work’ to factor in within the Horowhenua context. Additionally, it was raised that there are limited public transport options in Horowhenua, which have a compounding effect constraining access to housing options and choices.



### Intangible social costs

There was a discussion that affordable homes need to include choices for different people at different stages of their life-cycle, including options such as ageing in place.

- (ii) Based on the median household price of \$324,000 (source: Gladstone Green Design & Capability Statement, August 2018) and a median household income of approximately \$43,600 (source: Adding up two 1-person median annual incomes of \$21,800 in Horowhenua from Statistics New Zealand data) the median multiple for Horowhenua would be 7.4. This indicates housing to be severely unaffordable in Horowhenua based on median household income and median house price. At the same time, it is noteworthy that 32% of households in Horowhenua are 1-person households and in 2013 46% of people in Horowhenua aged 15+ years had annual incomes of \$20,000 or less. (Source: Stats NZ).
- (iii) Assuming a higher household income of around \$50,000 as suggested at the Housing Forum held on 31 March 2019, the median multiple for Horowhenua would be 6.4, which still means housing is severely unaffordable for many in our community. Participants at the Housing Forum identified that one of the key housing issues for Horowhenua residents was the relatively low incomes earned in the district.
- (iv) There are different ways of responding to these multiple challenges. This Housing Action Plan is a community-driven response to addressing these challenges and has 6 priority areas.

### **Proposed Horowhenua Affordable Housing Targets.**

- (i) It is proposed that Horowhenua adopts the following generally accepted international housing affordability measure to inform its target for housing affordability in the district.

#### **Horowhenua housing affordability target**

**“Housing in Horowhenua has a median multiple measure of 3.0-4.0 by 2030”**

- (ii) It is noted that for those on low incomes, who may need public housing, that household spending should be no more than 25% of household income.

## **Horowhenua housing affordability target**

**“Housing in Horowhenua has a median multiple measure of 3.0-4.0 by 2030”**



# Actions for Council

## Our Responsibilities

Six priority areas have been identified in this Housing Action Plan, these are outlined in the following pages in no particular order.

### Priority area 1: Regulatory policy, delivery, infrastructure and advisory services.



**This section focuses on Council's core regulatory functions that have a direct influence on the development potential of land in the district, the consenting processes and the provision and funding of infrastructure. It also responds to the requests from the Housing Forum and Working Groups to hold housing information outreach hubs for residents.**

- (i) There has been much commentary on New Zealand's housing challenges over the last decade. It is fair to say that these commentaries acknowledge that housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable (sometimes severely unaffordable) across New Zealand and that there is "no simple answer" and no "silver bullet" to solve the housing challenges we face. (See recent articles include: PWC "NZ's affordable housing dilemma", June 2018; Panuku Development Auckland "What really is affordable housing?" July 10 2018; James Goodhue – guest writer, The Spinoff, September 9 2017).
- (ii) One of the leadership roles that the Council plays as a local champion is to act as a facilitator and advocate on behalf of Horowhenua residents and ratepayers. It can:
  - Help to connect organisations, agencies, developers, businesses and housing providers within the community, noting that local champions and leaders are critical to building communities. The Housing Forum and associated working groups are an expression of this (see Action 1);
  - Involve itself by commenting on behalf of residents on central government policies and legislative reform, e.g. the comprehensive review of the Resource Management Act (RMA);
  - Investigate and advocate for universal design solutions to meet diverse housing needs such as those with a physical disability.
- (iii) However, the Council is only one influencer in delivering homes – it does not build homes. The key roles where the Council can have a direct impact on housing delivery are:
  - To advocate for and practically support housing aspirations, and strategies of local iwi, hapū and whānau.
  - Setting its regulatory policy (e.g. the District Plan) in a way that incentivises development of homes while still maintaining acceptable residential and neighbourhood standards.
  - Continued focus and prioritisation of its regulatory functions (e.g. resource and building consents). The Council has been recognised by IANZ for its positive approach to continuous improvement and the way it undertakes its core functions in response to feedback received and in alignment with best practice.
  - By enabling and coordinating the financing, funding and programming of necessary infrastructure (e.g. water, wastewater, schools, parks, streets) that are necessary to support liveable neighbourhoods and strong communities.

(iv) In terms of a supply-side tool kit for improving housing affordability, the McKinsey Global Institute advise that getting more out of under-utilised sites, prioritising transit-oriented development, making public land available for housing where possible, as well as having delivery labs and integrated housing working events and/or agencies, are all means of contributing to improve housing affordability. (Source: McKinsey Global Institute – Housing affordability: A supply-side tool kit for cities, October 2017).

v) Additionally, the McKinsey Global Institute advise:

“A basic socially acceptable standard housing unit is defined by a particular community’s view of what is required for decent living and this varies by city. How much floor space is required in a standard unit reflects consumer choices, market conditions, and regulatory constraints. The definition should also include minimum standards for basic amenities (running water, a toilet) as well as access to essential social services such as schools and health clinics. An acceptable housing unit should

also place workers no more than an hour’s commute from centers of employment. Finally, as cities define affordable, socially acceptable housing to inform policy making, they should define which kinds of households will be the beneficiaries of policies, particularly which types of households will require direct government support. In our analysis, we focus on the affordability gap for households earning 80 percent of the area median income or less. Great care needs to be exercised when setting definitions for use in policy making. A floor-space standard for a housing unit that is set too high could result in overpriced units for low-income residents and push more households into the informal housing sector”. (Source: McKinsey Global Institute ‘A Blueprint for Addressing the Global Affordable Housing Challenge, October 2014).





## The Council has identified the following Actions 1-5 for itself:



### ACTION 1

#### Establishing a regular housing information outreach hub.

**One request from participants at the various housing forums held over 2019 was for the Council to lead and coordinate, with central government and others, the dissemination of housing and related wrap-around information that will assist residents into homes and onto the housing ladder.**

- 1.1 At the third Housing Forum held in August 2019, participants confirmed that they sought to have a housing information outreach hub that may focus on:
  - Sustaining tenancies to avoid those who are renting losing their tenancies
  - Connecting with property managers
  - Understanding the entitlements for different waged groups
  - Connecting potential tenants with landlords and developing relationships
  - Helping connect young people with developers/builders who may be future employers
  - Connecting residents with training opportunities such as those provided by Horowhenua Learning Centre
- 1.2 The housing information outreach hub would connect central government agencies, potential training providers and employers, and landlords with local residents. These include residents in work who may be on low incomes and are not receiving entitlements that they are eligible for as they do not seek to engage at Work and Income offices. MSD also advised that any such initiative should be held after 5pm (i.e. outside of general working hours). The Council agreed it would aim to hold the first housing outreach hub by the end of November 2019. Action 1 of this Housing Action Plan is an immediate response to these requests and suggestions.



### ACTION 2

#### Integrated, streamlined and improved consenting and approvals.

**Continuously improve Council's regulatory services (plan changes and consenting) through enhancements such as 'whole-of-Council' streamlined consenting service, including an online consenting processes, formalising pre-application meetings, for all housing applications working with applicants, infrastructure providers and utility operators to advance quality residential neighbourhoods.**

- 2.1 Multiple parts of Council input into consents and approvals for land and housing developments. Council encourages feedback from customers, in this case being those who interact with consenting processes. Feedback enables Council to continuously review, and improve consent processing to ensure ongoing collaboration, and consistency.



Feedback received through the Housing Forum for consideration includes:

- Relationship building
- Enhanced formalised pre-application procedures
- Best practice notes and advice
- Independent monitoring of actual outcomes on the ground of District Plan policy to assess whether it is achieving the stated outcomes, including affordable housing.

2.2 Effective consenting and approval processes include:

- clear policy direction (e.g. through advice notes on the interpretation of District Plan policy to ensure consistency in the interpretation of the District Plan (see Action 2);
- access to a user-friendly electronic resource consent system;
- saying 'no' quickly when necessary;
- early identification of notification options; and
- well-managed and expedient approval processes where consents are tracked for progress.

2.3 Participants at the Developers' Working Group were open to the collaborative development model for consenting (not dissimilar to the model set up for the Council's Gladstone Green plan change in Levin). This model requires a cultural change and a different modus operandi and again, can be considered as an option going forward for other significant developments in Horowhenua in the response to feedback received from the Working Group. A collaborative model means agents, developers and landowners being prepared to engage in a way that allows the development of joint solutions, as well as having people at the table who have the authority to make decisions.





### ACTION 3

#### Undertake necessary plan changes to the District Plan to incentivise housing and provide best practice notes on the interpretation of policy to ensure the consistent administration of the District Plan.

**Strategically assess District Plan policies to establish whether or not there is sufficient flexibility to enable innovative housing solutions, including shared living environments (e.g. common kitchen/ bathroom facilities), a variety of minor dwellings, incentives of smaller dwellings, greater densities (more houses on one site) and improved overall supply and provide best practice notes, e.g. for the integrated residential development provisions, to confirm flexibility for shared kitchens etc. and diversity such as 1-, 2-, 3-bedroom houses.**

3.1 Participants at the Developer's Working Group have suggested that density rules and other regulatory provisions are limiting development in places such as residentially zoned land surrounding the Levin CBD. One specific concern raised was whether or not there is a limited number of lots available at 500-900m<sup>2</sup> that could be used to infill at the approved (operative November 2018) density of 250m<sup>2</sup> net site area. In response, the Council has mapped key urban areas of the district (and without considering other constraints that may impact on the actual number of developable sites), the number of sites between 500m–900m<sup>2</sup> are as follows:

**Table 2: Availability of 500–900m<sup>2</sup> lots for infill development**

Location	Number of Lots 500–900m <sup>2</sup> (as at 2017)
Levin	3,981
Foxton	508
Foxton Beach	834
Shannon	335
Total	5,658

- 3.2 This number of sites is still a theoretical number of sites likely to be picked up by the market for redevelopment. Other factors influencing the number of developable sites include the adequacy and availability of infrastructure (e.g. water, waste water and water supply). The Council is in the process of reconfirming the level of stormwater infrastructure available across the district. In Levin, for example, the stormwater network is limited (it only takes stormwater off the road) and any new residential development is generally expected to deal with stormwater via an on-site solution. As a crude demarcation, land south of Queen Street in Levin is generally better suited to on-site soakage, while land north of Queen Street is generally more challenged.
- 3.3 Other constraints include a willingness of existing owners to sell property for redevelopment and the availability of alternative house/land packages (e.g. 1 or 2-bedroom homes) for those persons who may wish to downsize but still live within their existing community and neighbourhood.
- 3.4 A further concern has been raised as to the value of having, within the District Plan, a requirement for an average 600m<sup>2</sup> density for greenfield development as this limits opportunities for achieving higher levels of housing density across the residential areas.
- 3.5 An alternative option to manage density is through a package of controls in the District Plan which may include all of the following:
- Height restrictions
  - Minimum permeable private green open space on site
  - A non-notified restricted discretionary activity
  - Unlimited density.
- 3.6 These are matters for the Council to review and consider as it responds to concerns raised about the District Plan policy and its effects on the market feasibility of providing additional housing types at different price-points in Horowhenua.
- 3.7 As the Council is currently working with residents and businesses to develop community plans throughout the district, there is the opportunity to look at future needs associated with a growing community. In 2019-20, priorities are being given to the development of community plans in Waitārere, Ōhau, Manakau, Foxton Beach and Levin.





## ACTION 4

### Investigate the current state, capacity and funding options for infrastructure.

**The Council is in the process of updating and reviewing infrastructure provision across the district. This includes consideration of existing capacities and requirements to meet future growth and funding options. The Council currently doesn't have development contributions as a source of funding infrastructure. One proposal, based on feedback from the Developers' Working Group, was that any levies need to be at a level of around \$3,000-\$5,000 per lot to enable Council to advance infrastructure necessary to support infrastructure development. Until the Council has completed its investigations, there is the funding option of entering into private development agreements to advance the provision of infrastructure to support housing.**

- 4.1 The Council is currently mapping the district to identify spatially where there are potential areas of limited infrastructure such as stormwater (see paragraph 3.2). The information will also assist Council in determining gaps in infrastructure and how to forward-plan and fund for that as the Council reviews its development contribution policy.
- 4.2 There are a range of agreements that can be voluntarily entered into with developers to support the provision of infrastructure. These include:
- An Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA). This could be used to set a framework for developers to provide for stormwater or parks on behalf of Council. The developers can then enter into their own contracts to deliver the works which are to comply with Council's procurement, design and asset management requirements.  
*(Source: Auckland Council, Housing Project Office developer welcome pack 2014)*
  - Private Development Agreement (PDA). This could be used to increase the contributions paid by developers towards necessary infrastructure, allowing faster development

while development contributions are not in place.

- Sale and Purchase Agreements (SPA). This agreement can be used to consider the acquisition of land, e.g. for parks, that is ultimately vested in Council on subdivision.
- Affordable Housing Agreement (AHA). There is the option for developers to voluntarily enter into an arrangement with community housing providers who would be keen to purchase a percentage of homes which may be for assisted home ownership, e.g. shared equity schemes, or assisted rentals. This can help people get onto the independent housing ladder.



## ACTION 5

### Prepare submissions and advocate on amendments to the Resource Management legislation to improving housing and neighbourhood outcomes.

**The Developers' Working Group identified two key factors that impact on the housing delivery (i.e. getting houses on the ground, including impacts on costs and risks). These two factors are:**

- **Timing (i.e. certainty of process); and**
- **Funding**

- 5.1 It is intended that as opportunities arise to provide feedback or submissions on potential changes to the RMA, that Council advocates and prepares options to improve the certainty and timing of the RMA plan change and consenting processes and submit these for consideration as part of the Minister for the Environment's RMA Reform consultation processes.

# Priority Areas of Action

## Working with Others

### Priority area 2:

**Increasing supply of affordable housing (emergency, social, assisted rental, assisted ownership, universal design) for rangatahi/young people, older persons, those on low incomes and our disability community.**



This section describes key actions that stem from a discussion on the causes for insufficient affordable housing in Horowhenua. Each action identifies the potential role that Council may play in advancing the actions.



#### ACTION 6

**Investigate the age cohort for Horowhenua to understand the implications of an ageing population on the supply of housing and also the importance of housing for young people and the unique challenges they face in accessing housing.**

6.2 Additionally, the Pasifika Working Group sought to have more accurate data on their increasing population within the district. Based on data provided by a MBIE statistician, the Horowhenua Pasifika population in 2018 was 1290, or approximately 6% of the total population. All other data that appears to be currently available and accessible is across New Zealand, as opposed to district specific.

6.1 Participants at the Housing Forum identified that the market wasn't responding to the diversity of needs of the population. It was noted that the average number of bedrooms in a Horowhenua home is 3 and 36% of Horowhenua residents aged 50+ years live in detached houses, and it is difficult to retain young people in Horowhenua. As Horowhenua's housing values are relatively low, there may be challenges in "trading up or down within the same market...". Some form of incentive may be required to encourage different types of housing to meet different demographic needs.





## ACTION 7

**Develop partnerships to enable the development of affordable homes (emergency, social, student housing, assisted rental, assisted ownership and homes with universal design).**

- 7.1 There is an opportunity for Council to partner with central government, iwi, community housing providers, and others to undertake joint actions. A pilot housing initiative that includes alternative housing types, mixed housing or student housing could be instigated through a partnership model. Council may also be able to advocate for new policies such as 'rent-to-buy schemes'.



## ACTION 8

**Investigate the use of surplus Council land for housing.**

- 8.1 Council may have land that is now surplus in terms of the original purpose for which it was purchased. There are options to consider whether or not such land could be used for housing. Council can investigate whether it has any surplus land that it may be able to use as equity, partnering with a charitable housing trust to enable the provision of more affordable housing types (e.g. emergency, social, assisted rental and assisted ownership, student housing and transitional housing for youth).



## ACTION 9

**Investigate ways that incomes can be enhanced.**

- 9.1 There are a range of reasons why incomes are not keeping pace with rising costs. These vary from minimal wages and seasonal work where workers are having to undertake two jobs and getting 'hit' with secondary tax that reduces their overall income; tax rebates that happen at the end of the year; financial literacy.
- 9.2 Some participants at the Housing Forums indicated that it would be helpful to have more information around how to access housing support (e.g. accommodation supplements); liaise with landlords around maintenance needs, together with courses on financial literacy/budgeting. This includes such information being tailored to diverse population groups such as those with English as a second language. One initiative identified is for Council to work with relevant central government agencies to establish local housing information outreach hubs and packages of information that are delivered in a user-friendly way (see Action 1).

## Priority area 3:

### Māori and papakāinga housing

This section describes key actions that stem from a discussion on the importance to tangata whenua of the concept of whānau and whenua – a village to improve Māori wellbeing. There is the opportunity to partner with iwi, marae and hapū, connect with Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK) and consider opportunities to advance marae development, enabling housing for Māori, and the development of papakāinga.



#### ACTION 10

**Investigate the remission of rates on Māori freehold land where this supports the development of Māori housing and the land is inalienable Māori land.**

Currently the Council has policies for the potential temporary remission of rates on Māori freehold land if it assists in economic development of the land and the best potential use value. The Council will work to ensure that these provisions are well known to iwi, marae and hapū.



#### ACTION 11

**Support iwi in their engagement with Te Puni Kōkiri on marae, hapū and whānau planning for successful housing initiatives, that will allow for joint ventures to deliver homes for Māori on a sustainable basis, including ongoing servicing and funding arrangements.**

Te Puni Kōkiri Māori Housing Network supports individuals, whānau, hapū and iwi with information, advice and practical support to improve and develop whānau housing. In addition marae based initiatives are available through Oranga Marae which is a programme of support, advice and investment for marae. It gives whānau and hapū advice and support to help develop their marae and achieve their goals. This support may include building projects and activities to revitalise cultural knowledge. A key goal of the programme is to strengthen the ability of marae to pass on their ancestral knowledge of whaikōrero, karanga and local mātauranga, tikanga and kawa to descendants. Council has formed relationships with Te Puni Kōkiri and the Department of Internal Affairs who provide Oranga Marae. Council can support Te Puni Kōkiri and the Department of Internal Affairs with their provision of Oranga Marae programme presentations in Horowhenua to ensure opportunities for marae, hapū and whānau to understand how Oranga Marae may be able to help.



## ACTION 12

**Advance opportunities working with Te Puni Kōkiri, the private sector, Horowhenua Learning Centre and others to explore the ways in which trade training and pathways to employment can be provided for Māori centred around marae and housing development.**

The Council has been working with the Horowhenua Learning Centre (HLC) to better understand their concept of a local trades training programme through a 1-year introductory course. The course would have wrap-around pastoral care and transition to apprenticeships. In addition, Te Puni Kōkiri has engaged employers in growth industries to recruit, train, mentor and provide at least six months paid employment to Māori cadets. Te Puni Kōkiri provides funding to support the cadet's employment and development. Council will explore how the Te Puni Kōkiri programme might connect with the Pathways Horowhenua initiative to advance employment opportunities associated with the delivery of homes for Māori in Horowhenua.

## Priority area 4:

### Pasifika housing development

This section describes key actions that stem from discussions with local Pasifika churches, ministers and leaders. Key issues affecting Pasifika Peoples in Horowhenua that are impacting on their housing are low/seasonal incomes, overcrowding and house types not suited for extended families. Their goals are similar to other groups – to achieve home ownership, have dry, warm homes within a community, have employment opportunities and earn higher incomes. The importance of understanding their cultural values, respecting older persons and the need for cultural-friendly communications was also seen to be important to delivering housing solutions, so that Pasifika Peoples can gain an understanding of government assistance that is available, such as Working for Families, accommodation supplements and access it more easily.



#### ACTION 13

##### Maintain the Pasifika Housing Working Group forum.

- 13.1 The Pasifika Housing Working Group has been an invaluable way for the Council to connect to the Pasifika communities within Horowhenua and to understand how the Council can advocate for and target resources on behalf of its Pasifika community.
- 13.2 The Council took the initiative to apply for funding from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) Community Connects Grant, following the housing forums in March. Funding was sought to develop an Age Friendly Community Strategy and the review Councils Positive Ageing Action Plan targeting different population groups, specifically Māori and Pasifika. Council has been successful in receiving \$15,000 to help in development of the strategy, and review of the Positive Ageing Action Plan by June 2020.
- 13.3 A full stakeholder engagement plan will be developed for delivery of the Age-friendly Communities strategy and the review of HDC's Positive Ageing Action Plan. The approach to the project aims to address the identified cultural diversity gap and provide a targeted approach to include cultural groups in the way that best works for them. This will be discussed with the Pasifika Working Group to ensure that Council understands how to best partner with them.



#### ACTION 14

##### Improve opportunities for young people and local residents to gain employment through trade training and associated apprenticeships to enhance the labour supply for the delivery of homes and enhance opportunities for improved incomes for local people so that housing costs can be met.


- 14.1 The Council has been working with the Horowhenua Learning Centre (HLC) to understand their concept of a local trades training programme for various housing trades through a 1-year introductory course. The course would have wrap-around pastoral care and transition to apprenticeships. This action achieves multiple objectives.
- 14.2 Additionally the Council is also supporting the Horowhenua Learning Centre using the work from the Housing Forum to apply to the Tupu Aotearoa programme which includes pastoral support to assist young people with advice on training, preparing for interviews, selecting the right type of work, and career counselling.

# Housing Monitoring Framework

Council will report progress against actions in the Housing Action Plan, this includes monitoring data which Council collects such as a number of actual homes built versus the number of homes consented that allows outcomes to be monitored over time. The following framework relates to monitoring progress on the Housing Action Plan. A separate outcome-focused monitoring framework will be developed in time.

## Developing a Housing Action Plan monitoring framework.

Participants at the Housing Forums sought a clear framework for monitoring the delivery of the Horowhenua Housing Action Plan. It is suggested that this framework be based on a traffic light system against which each action can be monitored for progress. That is:

-  Not started
-  In progress
-  Completed

Monitoring can be undertaken monthly, with quarterly reports to the Community Wellbeing Committee (CWC).

**Table 1: Mock Monitoring Framework (to be supported with written explanation every quarter to CWC)**

	Quarterly Report		Quarterly Report		Quarterly Report	
	Aug 2019	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 2020
<b>Priority Area 1</b> Reg Policy/ delivery/ infrastructure						
<b>Action 1:</b> Housing information outreach hubs						
<b>Action 2:</b> Streamlined & Integrated Consenting/ Approvals						
<b>Action 3:</b> Plan changes/ best practice advice						
<b>Action 4:</b> Infrastructure investigation & provision						
<b>Action 5:</b> RMA Reform Submission & Advocacy						



**Table 1: Mock Monitoring Framework (to be supported with written explanation every quarter to CWC)**

	Quarterly Report			Quarterly Report		
	Aug 2019	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 2020
<b>Priority Area 2</b> Increase supply of affordable housing						
<b>Action 6:</b> Age cohort data						
<b>Action 7:</b> Partnerships						
<b>Action 8:</b> Use of Council land						
<b>Action 9:</b> Income analysis						
<b>Priority Area 3</b> Māori & papakāinga housing						
<b>Action 10:</b> Promote opportunity for remission of rates Māori land						
<b>Action 11:</b> Joint venture options						
<b>Action 12:</b> Employment opportunities around marae						
<b>Priority Area 4</b> Pasifika Housing Development						
<b>Action 13:</b> Pasifika Housing Working Group forum						
<b>Action 14:</b> Improve opportunities for young people and local residents through trade training etc. to enhance the labour supply for the delivery of homes.						

*Note: National Policy direction is currently being considered by Central Government, outcomes may result in other Priority Areas and Actions being included. For example, the National Policy Statement Urban Development.*

## 4.2 Using quality data.

Additionally, it is recognised that any monitoring framework needs to be informed by quality-rich data. The Council has confirmed that it has data that identifies the following information:

- Subdivision applications and lot sizes
- Completed residential building consents (building consents issued)
- Residential categories (e.g. retirement homes, transportable homes, refurbished/second hand buildings) and housing typologies (e.g. 1-, 2-, 3-bedroom homes)
- Section 224 certificates issued (when a lot is “ready to build”) to provide an indication of when a house is likely to be built
- Final inspections of residential buildings (dwellings ready to occupy)

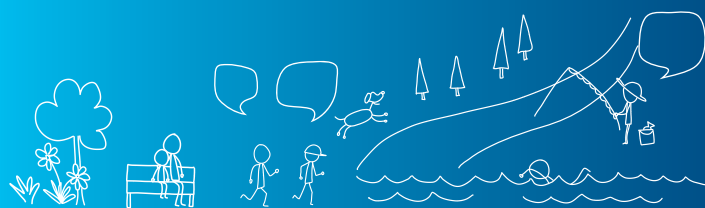
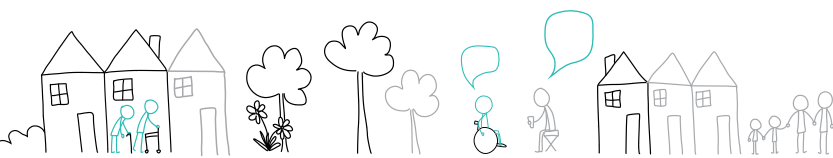
It is intended that the Housing Monitoring Framework:

- i. Incorporates the above data;
- ii. Compares data for the same period, e.g. the financial year, so that data is not confused with comparing calendar and financial years;
- iii. Is reported quarterly to the Council's Community Wellbeing Committee as an integral part of the Housing Monitoring Framework.

The framework, data and reporting will be reviewed to align to Central Government direction set i.e. National Policy Statement Urban Development.

# Conclusions

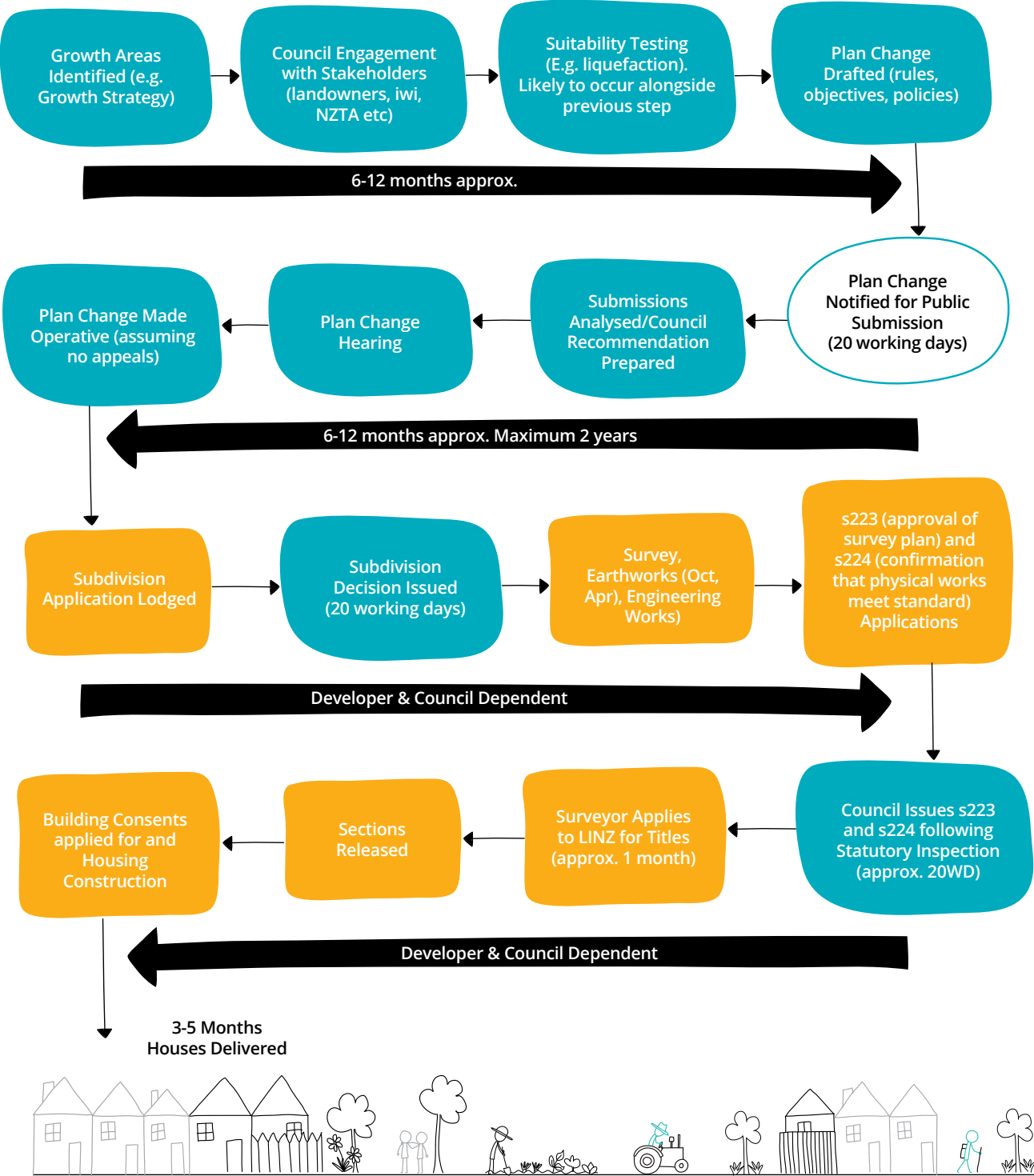
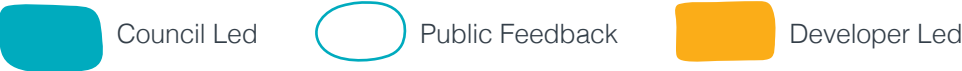
- 5.1 The Council is only one party that influences the delivery of homes in the district. Many other parties will ultimately play a significant part in the successful delivery of more homes in the district. This Housing Action Plan is an attempt to provide a comprehensive response working with other parties, to meet the multiple challenges of improving housing affordability for all residents. It looks at and beyond the development process to innovative housing solutions, and initiatives such as trade training, financial literacy, partnerships and pastoral care.



# Diagram 1A - Greenfields

## Generalised Development Cycle - Delivering Homes Greenfields (converting rural land to residential)

Total Duration: 2-6 years



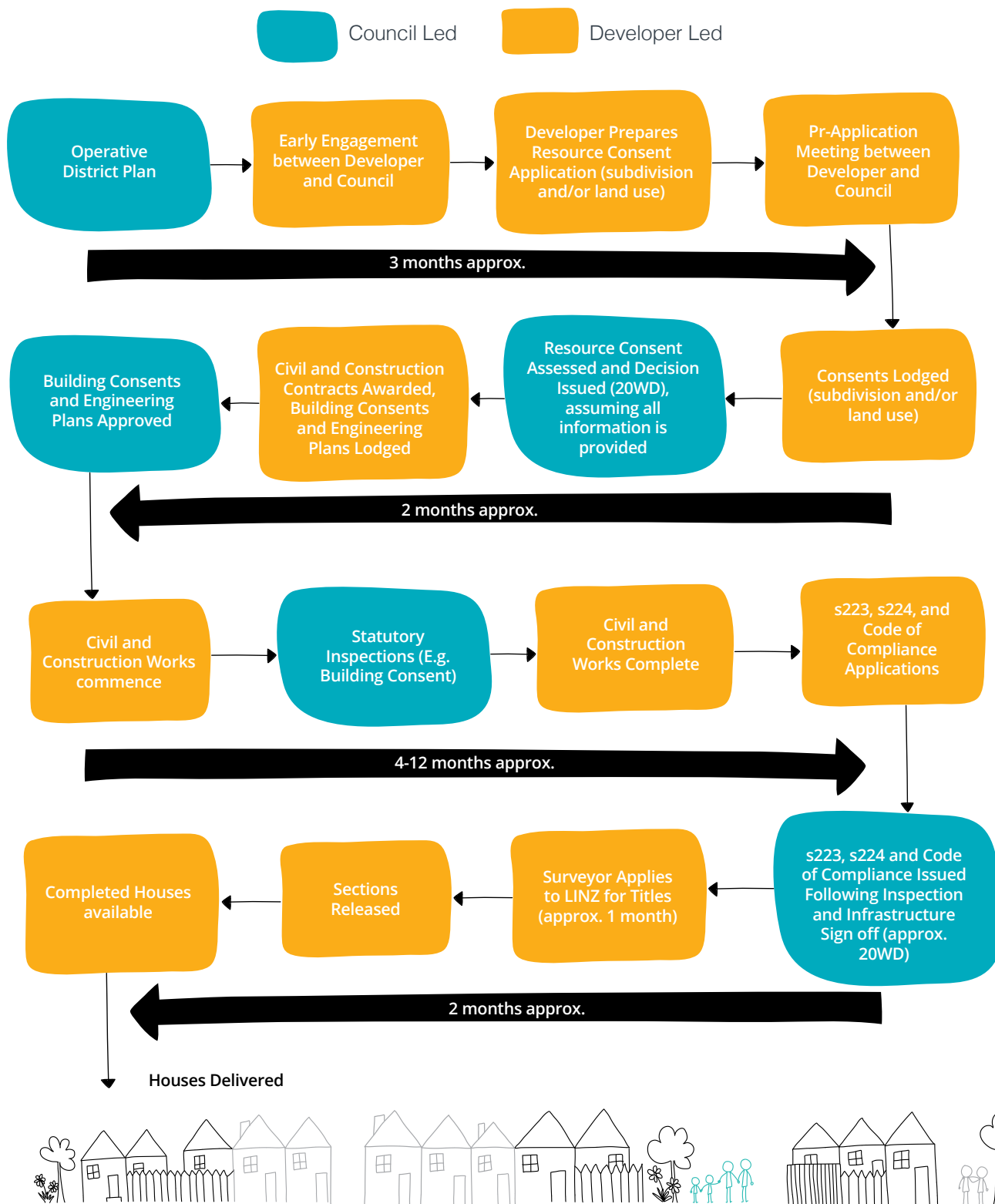
Since October 2017, RMA amendments came into affect which prevent public notification and appeals on residential activities/subdivisions unless a non-complying activity (very few activities are non-complying under the Horowhenua District Plan 2015) or there are 'special circumstances' (high legal test to meet).

## Diagram 1B- Brownfields

### Generalised Development Cycle - Delivering Homes

Existing Urban Areas (Brownfield Non Notified)

Total Duration: Approx. 12+ Months



This is a generalised process. Some steps may happen earlier or later. For example, s223 approval may be sought prior to the commencement of construction works or building consent may not be sought until s224 has been applied for and approved.



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