

Wellington City District Plan – Omnibus Plan Change	
Inserting a new section on the Lower Kelburn Character Precinct in the Residential Design Guide	
Scope of Proposed Change	
To insert a new section describing the Lower Kelburn Character Precinct in the ' <i>Character Precinct Appendix to the Residential Design Guide</i> '.	
Background	
<p>The '<i>Character Precincts Appendix to the Residential Design Guide</i>' contains descriptions of the streetscape and site level attributes for each of the character precincts.</p> <p>A character precinct was identified in the Lower Kelburn area in the notified Proposed District Plan but was grouped with and known as a larger Thorndon Character Precinct. The Independent Hearings Panel (IHP) recommended broadening the extent of character precincts in the surrounding area as well as separating the Lower Kelburn Character Precinct from the broader Thorndon area¹.</p> <p>The Councillor Proposed Amendments² sought to reduce the extent of the Lower Kelburn Character Precinct from what the IHP had recommended. This smaller Lower Kelburn Character Precinct was accepted by the Minister for RM Reform³.</p> <p>As a result, a Lower Kelburn Character Precinct is identified as Character Precinct within the 2024 District Plan.</p>	
Issue	
<p>The issue is that unlike all other Character Precincts there is no specific description contained in the Character Precinct Appendix.</p> <p>In addition, the ePlan Maps display the title of this Character Precinct as 'Kelburn Character Precinct'. This is not consistent with the text in the 2024 District Plan where the title is 'Lower Kelburn Character Precinct'.</p>	
Assessment of Options	
<p><i>Relevant Options</i></p> <p>For the purposes of this evaluation, the following options have been considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1: Status Quo – retain the existing Character Precinct Appendix without a description of the Lower Kelburn Character Precinct. • Option 2: Insert a new section describing the Lower Kelburn Character Precinct in the Character Precinct Appendix to the Residential Design Guide. Also amend the title in the ePlan Maps to display the title of the Precinct to 'Lower Kelburn Character Precinct'. <p><i>Cost/Benefit Assessment</i></p>	

¹ [Kelburn IHP Recommended Character Precincts & Notified Proposed District Plan Zones](#)

² [Letter to the Minister for the Environment - Alternative WCC PDP ISPP recommendations - Final](#)

³ [Decisions on Wellington City Council's District Plan | Beehive.govt.nz](#)

No social, economic or cultural costs or benefits have been identified for either option.

Option 2 has an environmental benefit of describing the attributes of the Lower Kelburn Character Precinct and aligning the title of the Precinct between the 2024 District Plan and the ePlan Maps. This creates consistency between Character Precincts and the environmental descriptions in the District Plan.

Better recognition of the Lower Kelburn Character Precinct within the Appendix will guide development outcomes and assessment of resource consent applications, and is expected lead to better design outcomes with respect to future development.

Recommendation

Option 1 is not recommended as it means there is no description of the physical attributes of the precinct and it is inconsistent with the other areas in this regard. Option 2 is recommended as it provides useful context and describes the attributes of the precinct. All other precincts have this level of context.

Effectiveness and efficiency

The amendment to include a section on the Lower Kelburn Character Precinct will provide a detailed description of the attributes of the area and provide consistency with other Character Precincts.

Risk of acting/not acting

There are no significant risks associated with any options identified above.

Consultation

The new section on the Lower Kelburn Character Precinct was drafted by Council's Urban Design Team.

The Urban Design Team is supportive of the changes.

Recommended Option

Following the assessment above, Option 2 is the preferred option.

Recommended Changes

Include the new description of the Lower Kelburn Character Precinct below into the end of the 'Character Precinct Appendix to the Residential Design Guide'. The text is provided below.

Also amend the title of the Precinct to 'Lower Kelburn Character Precinct' in the ePlan Maps.

Lower Kelburn

Lower Kelburn is a small precinct of around 30 buildings, where houses are close to the northern end of the central city. The precinct was physically separated from the city in the 1970s by construction of the Wellington urban motorway on its eastern side, with links comprising a series of overbridges for pedestrians and cars. To the north is public open space comprising Anderson Park and the Bolton Street Cemetery, an area with considerable heritage value.

Unlike many other areas of the inner city that have a substantial amount of small scaled early housing, Lower Kelburn is characterised by large houses on large sites. Elevation and orientation mean the area enjoys a relatively open and sunny setting, with outlooks eastwards towards the city and between tall city buildings to harbour. The precinct also sits under the watchful gaze of the Seddon Memorial. Much of the housing dates from the 1920s and is relatively consistent in style and character, giving the area strong visual cohesion.

The relatively small size and spacious layout of this part of Kelburn along with large private houses and gardens of a relatively consistent style give it a mature, relaxed and distinguished feel. Its visibility from both the motorway and central city means it is an integral part of the visual image of the central city, as well as being a transitional area between the rest of Kelburn and the city.

Although there is not a clear neighbourhood centre, Lower Kelburn's location on the edge of the central city enables convenient, walkable access to a range of services and employment opportunities.

In addition to the general character patterns, attributes that are specific to the Lower Kelburn Character Precinct to be taken into consideration when reviewing development in this area, include:

Streetscape attributes:

- The layout of Lower Kelburn responds primarily to topography. Bolton Street is steeply sloping between The Terrace and Salamanca Road, while side streets Easdale and Kinross Streets are more gently sloping to facilitate access to sites by being oriented along the hillside.
- A predominance of 'open ended' streets and pathways throughout the precinct, particularly for pedestrians.
- Mature trees are a feature of the area, both within private sites and adding a green setting from adjacent public land. Te Ahumairangi Tinakori Hill provides a backdrop in the views along both Kinross and Easdale Streets.
- Arrangement of buildings responds to 'upper' and 'lower' conditions on Easdale and Kinross Streets, with houses on upper sides having front facades and gardens more visible and houses on down sides below the street and oriented towards the views often displaying less open elevations and more roof surface.
- Houses generally have well-established gardens between the house and street, and there are a lot of mature trees on both private sites, public areas and in views.
- There is very little kerbside parking provided and onsite parking spaces or garages are predominant. On 'uphill' sides of the street this is often provided as garages within a high street wall.

Site level attributes:

- The area contains a high proportion of pre-1930 buildings, many of which have a high degree of architectural originality on the exterior.
- Dwellings are often aligned to site edges, with diversity of setbacks.
- Most of the houses are large two-storey detached dwellings on substantial lots, and many are oriented eastwards to enjoy city and harbour views.
- On sites that are elevated above the street, garages at the street edge below houses occur frequently.
- There is some variation in architectural style, but most dwellings in the precinct were constructed from 1920-1930, many in the English domestic revival architectural style.
- Bay windows are common. Decorative architectural detailing is also seen on most front elevations.
- The majority of houses are one to two storeys. On the uphill sides of streets where houses are elevated, this makes the houses appear particularly large.
- Exterior walls are typically painted weatherboard, and windows (either casement or sash style) have wooden frames.
- Red brick features prominently within the area and has been used for houses, walls and decorative detailing.
- Roof forms are complex, with some houses having dormer windows within roof forms. About half the roofs within the precinct are clad in terracotta tiles, which gives the precinct a distinctive and relatively unified appearance, particularly when viewed from the central city.