

# Johnsonville Community Association

## Submission to WCC District Plan

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The following is the Submission of the Johnsonville Community Association (JCA) to the Wellington City Council (WCC) 2021 public consultation on the draft District Plan (DDP). The JCA make this submission following previous submissions on the WCC Spatial Plan and multiple discussions at monthly meetings.

The JCA supports the WCC long term objectives to provide more affordable housing in a city with a growing population. However, the JCA must point out issues with the overall approach as well as a number of specific points in relation to the proposed changes to our suburb.

### Executive Summary of JCA Positions

The follow is the JCA list of feedback on the DDP:

1. The JCA requests that the DDP permit more rural land to be rezoned as Outer Residential to expand the area available for new housing.
2. The JCA supports the proposed change to permit 3 dwellings up to 3 storeys in all residential areas.
3. The JCA requests that SNA provisions being applied to private property are removed from the DDP.
4. The JCA requests that the WCC more clearly outline the criteria under which Planning Officers will permit non-compliant housing developments on a non-notified basis.
5. The JCA requests the WCC complete an independent review of the MDRAs to determine if the objectives in DPC72 have been met and confirm the WCC has successfully permitted "Density Done Well" developments. This review should provide a clear list of Do's and Don'ts for future housing development within the city.
6. The JCA rejects the proposed City Outcomes Contributions and requests these provisions are removed from the DDP and the Design Guides.
7. The JCA recommends the DDP include a compensation framework for neighbouring residents who suffer a loss of value and amenity due to nearby high density accommodation housing developments.
8. The JCA requests the DDP be updated to include the specific criteria used to determine if a public transport service is a rapid transit service.
9. The JCA requests, prior to finalising it's DDP, the WCC release, to JCA and other Wellington community associations, the criteria used to determine which public transport stops are rapid transit stops and/or "commercial centres and with good public transport accessibility" deemed suitable for a MDRZ.

10. The JCA requests the DDP specifically identify which public transport stops are rapid transit stops and/or “commercial centres and with good public transport accessibility” deemed suitable for a MDRZ.
11. The JCA requests removal of Johnsonville Station and Raroa Station as rapid transit stops and/or “commercial centres and with good public transport accessibility” from the DDP
12. If the WCC is to insist that that Johnsonville Station and Raroa Station as rapid transit stops and/or “commercial centres and with good public transport accessibility”, the WCC must provide the criteria and supporting independent evidence that proves the rail service from Johnsonville stations is rapid transit. The JCA requests rule LCZ-R11 Integrated retail activity be removed from the DDP.
13. The JCA requests rule LCZ-R11 Integrated retail activity be removed from the DDP.
14. The JCA accepts the Metropolitan Centre maximum height limit of 8 storeys but strongly opposes any development that is higher than this height limit as proposed in the DDP.
15. The JCA opposes the statement that residential development is to be a key focus of Metropolitan Centre and requests that such statement in the DDP be reduced to Residential Developments can also be supported as long as they do not compromise the core purpose of the centre as outlined by the current District Plan.
16. The JCA requests the WCC adopt a 5 Minute Walking Catchment from the Edge of the Metropolitan Business Zone as the area for the Johnsonville MDRZ.
17. The JCA requests Johnsonville East be excluded from the Johnsonville MDRZ.
18. The JCA requests Middleton Road be excluded from the Johnsonville MDRZ.
19. The JCA requests Woodland Road/Prospect Terrace be excluded from the MDRZ.
20. The JCA also requests that Woodland Road/Prospect Terrace be added to the DDP as a registered Ridgeline and be made subject to DDP Ridgeline rules.
21. The JCA requests Cortina Avenue be excluded from the MDRZ Residential.
22. The JCA requests the WCC fund and complete the planned roading improvements for the Johnsonville Triangle to support planned population growth.
23. The JCA supports the Green Space Review for Johnsonville and requests it be completed as soon as possible.
24. The JCA requests that development of the Old Library Site be postponed until the Green Space Review is complete.
25. The JCA requests the WCC outline the specific planned investments in each of the above areas that require further investment in facilities and infrastructure.

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# General Approach

The final Spatial Plan and the Draft District Plan targeted of specific suburban areas for “Medium Density Residential Zones” (MDRA) will result in significant loss of amenity value for residential home owners, located in Wellington’s outer suburbs that are subject to 6 storey or more building height zoning requirements.

## Some Rural Land needs to be Zoned Greenfields

For over a decade, WCC has proceeded with an Urban Development Strategy stating that the distribution of population growth should be:

- one third central city and inner suburbs, including apartments
- one third suburban in-fill, and
- one third “greenfields”.

Despite this, in the last decade the WCC has not increased the land area zoned for urban residential growth. The lack of additional urban land is a key reason for the skyrocketing costs of Wellington housing and the chronic lack of affordable housing in our city.

The WCC has the opportunity to increase the amount of land in the DDP by expanding the outer residential zones into Takapu Valley and Ohariu Valley. Unfortunately, for reasons still not fully explained, the WCC DDP continues to restrict land available for housing to the benefit of land-banking millionaires and no one else.

The JCA again recommends the WCC continue that long-standing and fundamentally sound spatial planning approach supporting the current District Plan. WCC needs to ensure that this pre-existing strategy can work, such as following these recommendations:

- **More Greenfields:** Rural land close to the city boundary should be considered for rezoning for residential development. This would include rezoning Takapu Valley and parts of Ohariu Valley from rural to good quality residential development.

Land currently zoned for residential development has been land-banked by developers. WCC should work with the central government to change policies to enable swift greenfields development in Takapu Valley and Ohariu Valley. The potential for these two areas to take perhaps 25% of future population growth reduces the massive pressure for suburban in-fill and may permit the return of affordable housing to Wellington City.

- **CENTRAL/INNER CITY:** All international best-practice points to more and higher-density residential developments within walking distance of the city. This should be expanded in Wellington to allow the highest possible residential intensity in areas within a 10-minute walking distance of the city’s two biggest employers, Wellington Hospital (Newtown) and Victoria University (Kelburn campus).
- **SUBURBAN/INFILL:** the Spatial Plan/DDP proposes that over 2/3rds of population growth be absorbed into selected outer suburban areas while inner suburbs will take a much smaller impact. The experience of the Johnsonville MDRA shows that simply

zoning residential areas for denser development does not lead to more housing or affordable housing. This is simply unsustainable to focus growth on a few suburbs as population growth needs to be supported across the city.

Increasing the available residential accommodation close to the city centre is more likely to be attractive to new residents, as inner suburbs are more accessible by active modes and have more frequent and faster public transport services. Living in inner suburbs is attractive to many because they can access the vibrant city centre – including its work cultural and sporting opportunities – easily and efficiently, without clogging roads or wasting resources on transport unnecessarily.

- 1. The JCA requests that the DDP permit more rural land to be rezoned as Outer Residential to expand the area available for new housing.**

## Support the new Medium Density Residential Standards

On 20 October 2021, the Government has proposed new Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) that must be incorporated into the District Plan. They are contained in the Resource Management (Enabling Housing and Other Matters) Amendment Bill.

The standards would permit 3 dwellings up to 3 storeys in height in all residential zones. This would enable higher levels of development than is currently proposed in the Draft District Plan in the General Residential and Medium Density Residential Zones.

- 2. The JCA supports the proposed change to permit 3 dwellings up to 3 storeys in all residential areas.**

## Remove SNA Restrictions from Private Property

The WCC DDP includes a major extension of Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) to apply restrictions to private property. The JCA recognizes and supports the protection of significant natural areas in our city. Indeed, the major JCA project this year has been to complete the building of a walking track through Totora Park in Johnsonville West.

The JCA discussed the proposed SNA changes to apply development restriction to identified natural areas on private property at our November meeting. We unanimously agreed that having WCC officers unilaterally take over control of private property is a major intrusion on the rights of property owners. Extending proposed SNA development restrictions to private properties is not only an objectionable usurping of private property rights but will only lead to the eventual removal of major natural areas on urban property in our city.

- 3. The JCA requests that SNA provisions being applied to private property are removed from the DDP.**

## The DDP Rules are just the starting point for Developers

The residential planning rules in the DDP are more permissive than current rules, especially in MDRZ areas where developments will now be permitted to 6 storeys or even higher. It is the role of WCC Planners to apply these rules and, in doing so, protect the interests of neighbours from significant intrusions and loss of amenity.

Johnsonville has experience with WCC Planning officers applying MDRA rules on residential developments in Central Johnsonville. When the MDRA was imposed on Johnsonville under District Plan Change 72 there were concerns that the interest of neighbouring home owners would not be protected or even consulted if the development breached the MDRA standards. In response the WCC stated in 2008:

*Under the proposed rules if a development proposal meets the standards outlined in the District Plan then the resource consent will only consider impact on street character and neighbours approval will not be required. However if the proposal does not meet a standard relating to site coverage, height or building recession planes then neighbours may be consulted depending on the effects created by the breach.*  
Areas of Change Questions and Answers 2008

However, since 2013 about half the multi-level developments in Johnsonville have been built in breach of these MDRA planning rules, but WCC Planning Officers have still permitted every one of these developments on a non-notified basis claiming “effects are less than minor”. The promise made when the MDRA was created that neighbouring home owners would be consulted on residential developments that do not comply with DDP planning rules has been consistently broken by WCC Planning Officers. This has been a breach of those WCC Planning Officers fiduciary duty – their duty of care – to genuinely consider and genuinely act to protect the best interests of home owners where residential developments do not comply with Council planning rules.

The Council has now set expectations with developers that they will regularly issue non-notified permits for developments that are planned to exceed the limits for DDP rules. The proposed changes to enable more intense and, especially, higher residential developments greatly increases the likelihood of a loss of amenity of neighbouring properties. That developers can also expect to be permitted to exceed these rules means current residents cannot have any faith in the WCC Planning Officers to protect their interest even when non-compliant developments are proposed.

#### **4. The JCA requests that the WCC more clearly outline the criteria under which Planning Officers will permit non-compliant housing developments on a non-notified basis.**

## Evidence from Johnsonville is that the MDRA does not deliver quality housing

Johnsonville has had its central residential area zoned as a Medium Density Residential Area (MDRA) since 2013. Since then a number of non-compliant and substandard multi-unit developments have been built in the Johnsonville MDRA area.

It is notable that the WCC has failed to review the current Johnsonville MDRA to confirm if it is meeting the objectives claimed in District Plan Change 72 (DPC72). The WCC likely decided to not review the MDRA because the WCC knows any review of the current MDRA would show DPC72 has not achieved promised levels of high quality, high density housing. It is also likely that any review will reveal the high proportion of poor quality development that is already taking place under WCC permitted development.

- The JCA requests the WCC complete an independent review of the MDRAs to determine if the objectives in DPC72 have been met and confirm the WCC has successfully permitted “Density Done Well” developments. This review should provide a clear list of Do’s and Don’ts for future housing development within the city.**

## Oppose the City Outcomes proposal

The DDP is based on the UPS-UD requirement to permit up to 6 storey residential developments in MDRZ areas. However, buried at the back of the draft [“Design Guide Residential”](#) is the “City outcomes contribution”:

*The aim of this assessment is to incentivise “density done well” by giving density-related development concessions in return for publicly beneficial outcomes.*

Table 2: Metropolitan Centre Zone (MCZ), Neighborhood Centre Zone (NCZ), Local Centre Zone (LCZ) and Medium Density Residential Zone (MRZ) - Thresholds for any over height development comprising 25 or more units or any comprehensive development

Threshold	Points required				Comments
	MCZ	NC	LC	MRZ	
Any development that exceeds the maximum height limit by 25%-49%	20	10	10	20	Developments that are within the 25% height threshold do not need to meet the outcomes, however they need to satisfy the relevant guidelines in this guide.
Any development that exceeds the maximum height limit by +50%	30	15	15	25	-

The City Outcomes Contribution uses a points system which, if met by the development, permits developments “*comprising 25 or more units or any comprehensive development*” in most residential zones to exceed the maximum permitted zone heights:

Table 3: City Outcomes

Outcome	Points	Comments
<b>Contribution to Public Space and Amenity (1-10 points)**</b>		
For every 10% of the site vested as public open space	1-10	The range in points depends on the quality, extent and level of amenity that each solution provides.
Any lane-way or through block connection	1-10	The range in points depends on the quality, extent and level of amenity that each solution provides.
Provision of appropriate communal gardens, playgrounds, and roof gardens	1-5 [1-10 for MRZ]	The range in points depends on the quality, extent and level of amenity that each solution provides.
Provision of permanent public amenities, i.e. public toilets	1-5	The range in points depends on the quality, extent and level of amenity that each solution provides.
<b>Universal Accessibility (5-10 points)</b>		
Lifemark 5-Star or equivalent or higher	10	
Lifemark 4-Star or equivalent	7.5	
Lifemark 3-Star or equivalent	5	
<b>Sustainability and Resilience (1-10 points)</b>		
Green Star 6 or Home Star 9 or equivalent or higher	10	
Green Star 5 or Home Star 8 or equivalent	7.5	
Green Star 4 or Home Star 7 or equivalent	5	
Adaptive reuse of buildings	1-10	The range in points depends on the quality, extent and level of reuse and regeneration.
Additional seismic resilience measures, including base isolations, seismic dampers, etc.	1-5	The range in points depends on the quality, extent and level of amenity that each solution provides.
<b>Housing Affordability</b>		
For every 1% floorspace that is affordable	1	Affordable is: - Social or assisted housing delivered by a government entity, the Council or a community housing provider - Residential units that are sold under a government's affordable scheme; or - Paying a financial contribution to the Council for assisted housing provision that is equivalent to the average market value of 0.3% floorspace.
<b>Urban Design Panel (1-10 points)</b>		
Urban Design Panel Approval	1-10	The range in points depends on the development's response to all the design guides as decided by the Panel.

The City Outcomes Contribution goes on to justify these provisions:

*The thresholds defined in the [above] tables reflect the extent of the impact certain forms of large-scale development can have on the city. For example, the higher or larger the development, the greater its potential impact on public amenity and urban living in the city. Consequently, it is anticipated that larger developments will positively contribute to addressing future challenges confronting the city in terms of access to public and green space, sustainability and climate change, accessibility, and affordability.*

The key issue is, while large scale residential developments *will positively contribute to addressing future challenges confronting the city*”, such developments will also likely have a severe adverse impact on the neighbouring properties. Having a 6 storey development under NDRZ zone rules occur next door will have a major impact on neighbouring home



owners and having a 7, 8 or higher development under City Outcome Rules will only have a greater adverse local impact.

It is particularly objectionable that a development can increase its height by simply “satisfying the relevant design guide”. It is totally unclear what would enable a development to meet this criteria but the design guide does not include any significantly onerous requirements ... in fact “*The guidance that follows here is ... to ensure best practice design approaches and encourage built outcomes.*” This one provision essentially increases the maximum height in these zones by 1 storey to 7 storeys for MDRZ and 2 storeys to 10 storeys in the Metropolitan.

The JCA supports the encouragement of significant residential developments but it is totally unfair to support this by rewarding such developments with height increases beyond DDP maximums. This permits developments that can be totally out of scale to the area in which it is built with major local adverse impacts on amenity and property values.

**6. The JCA rejects the proposed City Outcomes Contributions and requests these provisions are removed from the DDP and the Design Guides.**

## Amenity Values and Injurious Compensation

The new MDRA proposed in the District Plan includes the requirements of the 2019 Urban Planning Statement – Urban Development (UPS-UD) and the 2021 WCC Spatial Plan to permit at least 6 story housing in MDRA designated zones. The JCA is concerned that a significant loss to neighbouring home owners will occur when developers build their 6 storey (or higher) high- density accommodation buildings next to residential homes that are either 1 or 2 storeys high.

That significant loss is due to the significant loss of amenities (i.e. sunlight, light, privacy, views, tranquillity) and financial value from residential home owners’ properties. In legal terms, neighbouring home owners incur injurious affection if there is a loss of amenity value from their properties.

### Effect on Property Value of Losing Sunlight Hours

The New Zealand Motu study identified the effect on a property’s value for each hour of sunlight a property loses. The Motu study was carried out on Wellington properties during 2008 to 2014. It found that for each hour of sunlight loss, a property’s value decreased by 2.4%.

The JCA notes the lack of other supporting data in the proposed District Plan and is concerned that the amount from the Motu Study may be an under-estimation of the actual loss of value. The JCA requests that the WCC undertake independent monitoring of what happens to market prices in the Wellington property market to properties that surround High Density developments of over 3 Storeys versus those properties aren’t close to these developments. The market price differential between the zones should provide a clear guide of the value placed on loss of amenities such as sunlight for a property. The JCA notes that

rateable values are not relevant to this calculation as they are set by Quotable Value and that QV are also the Council's valuer so there is a potential for conflict of interest to arise.

### **Effect on Government's Requirements for ALL Homes to be Warm & Dry**

The JCA is also concerned that permitted developments above 3 Storeys in suburban areas will render neighbouring homes less warm and dry. The reduction in warmth and dryness, which are government goals for ALL housing raises the question as to whether the government and council has fulfilled its fiduciary duty, its duty of care obligation, to affected residential home owners significantly and adversely impacted by these new building height zoning requirements.

### **Current Legal Protection for Amenity Values**

Amenity values are currently protected under the Resource Management Act. And there has been case law precedents set which can be used to protect amenity values. Implicit in the UPS-UD issued by the then Minister for the Environment is that amenity values don't need to be protected even though they are valuable. Notwithstanding the latter, implicit in the current Resource Management Act protection and case law precedents is the fact that amenity values for a property are valuable. This infers that any loss of amenity value, and particularly if significant, should be compensated for.

## **Wealth Transfer from Property Owners to Developers**

Neighbouring properties losing amenities and value because of nearby 6 or more storey high density accommodation housing located in the outer suburbs is essentially an economic wealth transfer from those residents to the developer without compensation.

### **Compensation Justification, Question and Mechanism**

These unfair outcomes should require the developer to compensate affected neighbouring residents from high density accommodation housing who incur injurious affection.

### **7. The JCA recommends the DDP include a compensation framework for neighbouring residents who suffer a loss of value and amenity due to nearby high density accommodation housing developments.**

Any compensation mechanism should include the following:

- a) An agreed framework that calculates a fair and equitable compensation amount for outer suburb residential property home owners who incur injurious affection from 6 storey or more high-density housing accommodation developments.
- b) The Council should collect the compensation amounts from developers. Otherwise, residential home owners may have a battle on their hands trying to collect it from developers. Developers have to maintain good relations with Council. This should encourage and help to ensure compliance with compensation payment requirements from developers.
- c) Councils should set firm deadlines and ensure strong monitoring of compensation payments and strong follow-up of any outstanding compensation payments.

d) Council should place the compensation payments from developers into a separate trust account for each housing development. The council should have firm deadlines for paying compensation amounts from each housing development's trust account to affected residential home owners.

e) Prior to the Council providing approval to a developer for each high-density housing accommodation development, the Council should require the developer to personally guarantee in writing the payment of compensation to affected home owners and provide the information confirming the assets that are in place to underwrite that guarantee. This requirement is to avoid a developer just closing up his development shell company and saying that there are no funds to pay compensation to affected residential home owners.

## Johnsonville and Raroa Stations are not Rapid Transit Stops

The proposed also states a Medium Density Residential Zone (MDRZ) "*encompasses areas of the city located near commercial centres and with good public transport accessibility.*"

The DDP also states "*Metropolitan Centres ... have excellent access to public transport, including existing and planned rapid transit*" and defines "Rapid Transit Stop" as "*a place where people can enter or exit a rapid transit service, whether existing or planned*".

However, the DDP fails to define the criteria used to decide if a specific public transport stop is "good public transport" and/or "a Rapid Transit Stop" as the basis for establishing a MDRZ. Despite this, the DDP has proposed MDRZs around all the railway stations and has **not** proposed MDRZs around other commercial areas with good public transport such as Karori, Miramar or Kelburn.

Unfortunately the DPP is also not clear that suburban MDRZs are based on the presence of Rapid Transit Stops and that WCC planning officers have determined that all railway stations on the Johnsonville Line are Rapid Transit Stops. This is confirmed in a LGOIMA response to the Spatial Plan:

*On 30 November 2020 you rang and asked for further clarification regarding the Rapid Transit Stop and/or Rapid Transit Service. You asked what was the prescribed Government rules and what decision the Council made. The Council had a brief discussion with the Ministry for Environment prior to the release of the Draft Spatial Plan where the Tawa and Johnsonville lines were discussed as Rapid Transit Service/Stop. The Council then modelled either a five or ten minute walking catchment from the stations along these train lines to apply Policy 3 of the NPS-UD.*  
WCC Response to LGOIMA Request IRO-10626 Spatial Plan - Rapid Transit Lines

## The WCC DDP does not have any evidence that the Johnsonville Line is Rapid Transit

As outlined above, the basis of the MDRZ around Johnsonville and Raroa stations is because the WCC has decided that all Johnsonville Line stations are rapid transit stops.

The JCA has undertaken an 11 month long investigation to find the criteria and supporting evidence used to support the claim that the Johnsonville Line is a Rapid Transit Service. In terms of who has the criteria for rapid transit the JCA can now confirm the following:

- The WCC does not hold any specific criteria for MRT services under which the Johnsonville Line would be deemed "Mass Rapid Transit". Instead it relies on the following:
  - A single phone call with the Ministry of the Environment where they apparently stated that the Johnsonville Line is MRT.
  - Specific statements by the Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) in The Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP); the Regional Public Transport Plan and The Wellington Regional Growth Framework.
  - General statements in the Waka Kotahi "One Network Framework" which claims "All metro rail" is MRT.

Even though it meets all the criteria of the One Network Framework, the WCC has also determined that the Wellington Cable Car is not deemed Rapid Transit. The criteria used for this decision is unknown.

- The Ministry of the Environment (MfE) does not hold any specific criteria for MRT services under which the Johnsonville Line would be deemed "Mass Rapid Transit". Their most specific statements are in the "[Understanding and implementing intensification provisions for the National Policy Statement on Urban Development](#)" that has the following statements:
  - **Existing rapid transit stops**  
The NPS-UD defines a rapid transit stop as a place where people can enter or exit a rapid transit service. Rapid transit services are fast, frequent, reliable and high-capacity public transport services, which operate on a permanent route (road or rail) and that are generally separated from other traffic. Examples of existing rapid transit stops include train stations on the commuter rail services in Wellington and Auckland and bus stations on Auckland's Northern Busway.  
...
  - **Planned rapid transit stops**  
The NPS-UD defines a planned rapid transit stop as one that is planned in a regional land transport plan (RLTP) under the Land Transport Management Act 2003.

The MfE informed the WCC by Email:

*Ultimately it is up to local authorities to determine if a route is a rapid transit network. You should discuss with GWRC to confirm what is likely to be a complete RTN to J'ville by 2025.*

Email from MfE to WCC 13 November 2020 released under LGOIMA

MfE advice to the WCC was that "it is up to local authorities to determine" which public transport services are rapid transit services and this should be decided by the WCC in conjunction with the GWRC.

- The GWRC does not hold any specific criteria for MRT services under which the Johnsonville Line would be deemed "Mass Rapid Transit". In fact:
  - when asked for the definitions of "frequent" and "quick" they replied *"Greater Wellington and the national guidance do not define the individual terms you have listed. As there are no specific definitions for the terms you have listed I am refusing this part of your request under section 17(g) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act) as the information is not held."*
  - Even worse, in drafting the rapid transit section of the RLTP, we have emailed comments by transport planners such as:
    - *"... but the problem with this is what do those words in their definition actually mean. E.g. 'Frequent' - every ten minutes, fifteen, twenty at peak?? Not sure if can or should drill down any further than the current GPS definition (other international definitions are similarly vague)." GWRC planner*
    - *"While the ONF's declaration that "all metro rail is rapid transit" is helpful, the ONF and the Regional Growth Framework do not have decisive legal weight for RMA plans – decision makers just have regard to them. This means a rapid transit service will still need to be justified by using measuring its frequency, quickness, reliability and capacity relative to the relevant location (as per NPS-UD and GPS definitions), and if it supports NPS-UD's objectives of providing well-functioning urban environments, competitive land and development markets, and having more people living near public transport." WCC Planner*
    - *"Some parts of our [ie Auckland's] rail network we've said don't meet the definition as they aren't/won't be frequent enough. ... I'm curious as to how you tackled the issue of some train lines having low frequency – it looks like you're still considering this rapid transit, and leaving it to the local council to determine if they'll change the zoning around the stop?" Auckland Transport Planner*
  
- In contrast to the Wellington RLTP, the Auckland RLTP does **not** rely on the One Network Framework to define what PT services are or are not Rapid Transit but instead seem to have their own criteria. This is seen because under the Auckland RLTP, the Onehunga Line is not MRT. This fact, just by itself, makes a lie to the statements in both the UPS-UD and the ONF that "all metro rail lines are rapid transit".

In the Wellington RLTP, the definition of rapid transit services *"... corresponds with the classification of Class PT1 in Waka Kotahi's One Network Framework. The One Network Framework provides a common language for the transport system, land use and urban planning."* In other words the our rail services are defined as rapid transit under the One Network Framework that says all metro rail services are rapid transit services.

- The One Network Framework produced by Waka Kotahi (WK) states all metro rail services are rapid transit services but does not contain any specific criteria for MRT services under which the Johnsonville Line would be deemed "Mass Rapid Transit". Instead:
  - WK provided a draft copy of the One Network Framework which was provided to them in September 2020 by an "external" party which is ["The Road Efficiency Group"](#).
  - WK noted that *"In developing the One Network Framework (ONF) design, an international review of movement and place frameworks was completed. As a result, the model layers (including public transport) are included as an element of*

*a complete movement and place framework and therefore encompassed in the design document. "*

- When asked for a copy of this "international review of movement and place frameworks", WK stated "The international review of movement and place frameworks you refer to was completed by a third party... Therefore, I am refusing your request under section 18(e) that the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist." **In other words, WK does not have the evidence or criteria under which the One Network Framework defines all metro rail lines as rapid transit services.**

- 8. The JCA requests the DDP be updated to include the specific criteria used to determine if a public transport service is a rapid transit service.**

## The DDP does not define Rapid Transit Stops or Supporting Criteria

While the Wellington RLTP designates the Johnsonville Line as a rapid transit service, it does **NOT** designate any railway stations as rapid transit stops. Instead the Wellington RLTP specifically states:

*However, whether or not intensification is appropriate around rapid transit stops will be considered as part of each council's district plan processes.*

Wellington RLTP Section A.3.2

Therefore the decision to designate any Railway Station on the Johnsonville Line as a Rapid Transit Stop is **not** supported by the Wellington RLTP or any of the other documents provided by the WCC. The Wellington RLTP specifically states it is up to the WCC District Plan to define this ... and the WCC DDP doesn't do it!

- 9. The JCA requests, prior to finalising it's DDP, the WCC release, to JCA and other Wellington community associations, the criteria used to determine which public transport stops are rapid transit stops and/or "commercial centres and with good public transport accessibility" deemed suitable for a MDRZ.**

- 10. The JCA requests the DDP specifically identify which public transport stops are rapid transit stops and/or "commercial centres and with good public transport accessibility" deemed suitable for a MDRZ.**

## The Rail Service from Johnsonville is not Rapid Transit

The UPS-UD defines rapid transit as:

*any existing or planned frequent, quick, reliable and high-capacity public transport service that operates on a permanent route (road or rail) that is largely separated from other traffic*

The JCA, ORCA and many others have claimed that the Johnsonville Line cannot be considered as Rapid Transit as it does not meet any reasonable definition of being

“frequent”, “quick” or “high-capacity”. The information provided by the WCC to date still has not provided either the criteria or supporting evidence that supports this determination.

The Johnsonville Line was built in the 1880’s as part of the original main trunk line connection Wellington to places north. On becoming a 10Km spur rail line in 1937, the Johnsonville Line used English Electric passenger trains which had a travel time of 21 minutes to/from Johnsonville to Wellington Station. These were replaced in 2012 by Maitangi electric units but the steepness of the line meant the travel schedule had to be slowed to 23 minutes and 28 Minutes to ensure reliable service.

In support of its assertion that the Johnsonville Station and Raroa Station are not rapid transit stops as defined in the DDP the JCA makes the following general points:

- The Johnsonville Line service is not attractive to most commuters from Johnsonville.
  - The 2018 Census Travel to Work/Education for North Wellington Suburbs (Excluding Tawa & Grenada North) Car 66%, Bus 16% Rail 9%, Bicycle 3%, Walk 4%
  - Overall, (excluding Tawa) more North Wellington Commuters travel by bus than by train.
  - Where there are both bus and train services, such as in Johnsonville, more people choose to travel by bus.
  - Of all the areas of Wellington, Wellington North has the highest car usage indicating the poor level of alternative mode services to this area.

### **The Rail Service from Johnsonville is not fast**

Best practice standards would say that rapid transit services must offer time-competitive travel with private vehicles, particularly at peak times. This does not require rapid transit to always be faster than travel by private vehicle. It does mean travel times must be close enough that other advantages of rapid transit (such as its reliability) make it a highly attractive option. To achieve this characteristic, rapid transit is generally faster than other public transport services, through provision of a dedicated corridor and wider spacing between stops.

The Johnsonville Line is not fast compared to the other Wellington Rail Lines:

	Distance (Km)	Time (mins)	Avg Speed Km/Hour
Train from Porirua	20	21	57
Train from Waterloo	18	20	54
Train from Johnsonville	9	23	23
Jville Bus (Off-peak)	9	15	36

The rail service from Johnsonville Stations is also much slower than driving, especially when the walking time to and from the railway station is taken into account. The main reason why some still take the train is because it is significantly cheaper than taking the bus ... a factor that is not related to the rail service performance.

In fact the rail service to Johnsonville is so slow that, most of the time the bus service between Johnsonville and Wellington Station is much faster than the train.

## The Johnsonville Line is Not Frequent

Best practice standards would say that rapid transit services form part of the frequent public transport network, and therefore operate at frequencies that enable users to 'turn up and go' at most times of day, seven days a week. A true 'turn up and go' frequency would be a minimum of every 10 minutes but the minimum would be at least every 15 minutes, between 7am and 7pm, 7 days a week.

These high frequencies enable rapid transit to quickly shift large numbers of people and allow for efficient connections between different public transport services.

The Johnsonville Line does not meet these standards of being a frequent PT service. It is only 4 services per hour at peak and 2 services per hour off-peak. That these low service frequencies would not be considered rapid transit was even noted by council transport planners:

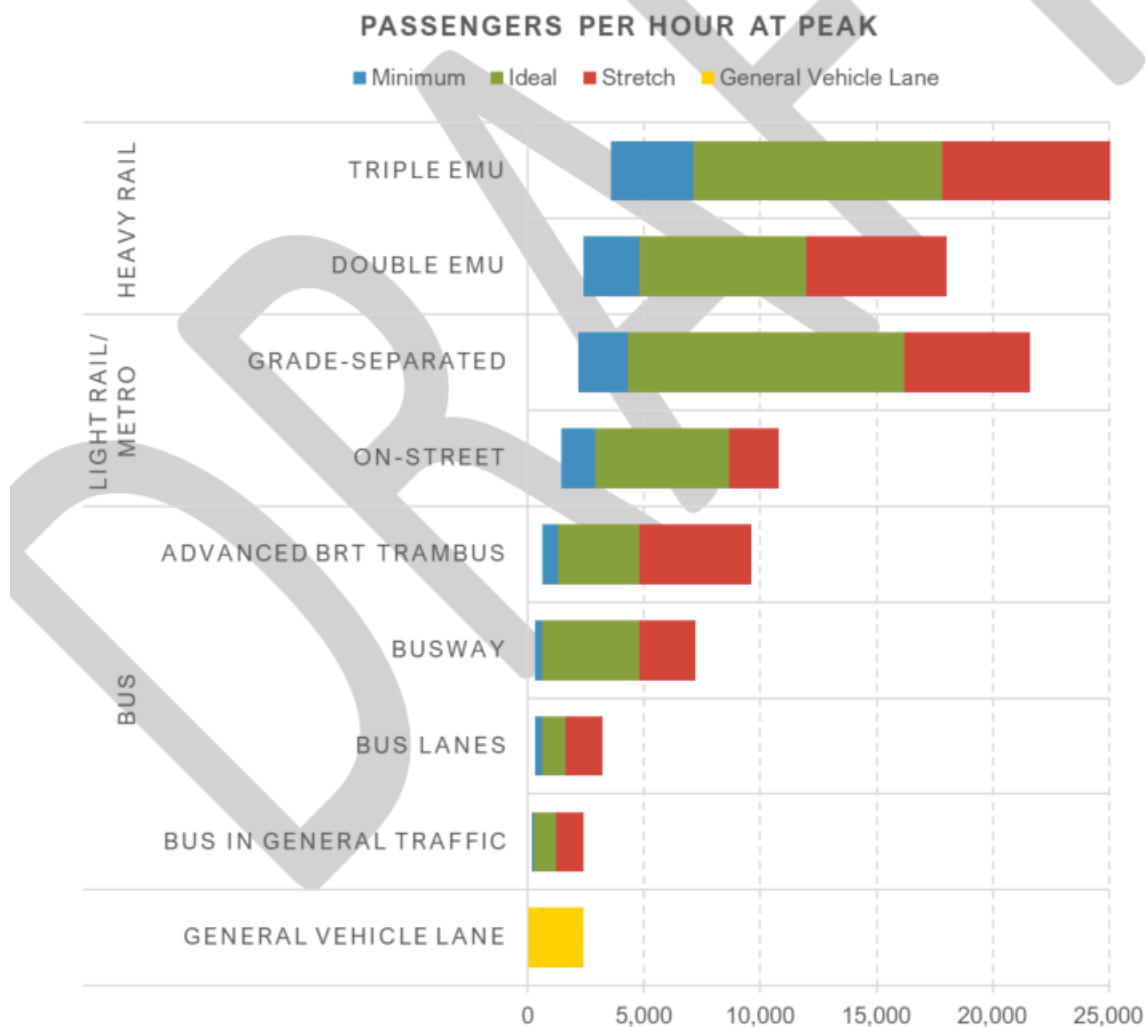
- *"This leads me into a couple of thoughts around definitions and the geography that we are dealing with and a struggle I have with the phrase 'rapid transit,' which by international standards Wellington does not although we have parts of our PT network which tick some of the boxes. ... 'Frequent' – most research say minimum 10 minute headway rising to 15 in limited circumstances such as late evening. The point is that the service still has to be there to use when people want it. I think this is reasonably absolute."* GWRC planner
- *"In the Wellington Region we need to agree some definitions around rapid transit for inclusion in the RLTP which will be used to support the Wellington Regional Growth framework. ... Research indicates that for PT to be attractive it generally needs to be fast (faster or as fast as alternatives), frequent (less than 10 minute headway), reliable (ie runs throughout the day – it's just not MRT in peaks and then every 5 minutes)." same GWRC planner*

Even worse, because of the numerous single track tunnels, it is not feasible to increase the Johnsonville Line service frequency without essentially rebuilding most of the line. This inability to increase service frequency is also the main reason why the Johnsonville Line is not high capacity.



## The Johnsonville Line is not High-Capacity

Best practice standards say that, compared to the capacity of a single lane of traffic (800-2,000 vehicles per hour), rapid transit offers the potential to move vastly more people. The numbers possible vary depending on the mode's capacity, and service frequency. This is outlined in Figure below. The bars show the approximate numbers of passengers per hour that can be moved on different systems at a given number of vehicles per hour (the numbers within the bars). These numbers are a guide only and vary depending on the specific vehicle technology used.



The WCC has completed a Capacity Assessment Report for the Johnsonville Line that found there was sufficient room to cater for future growth. However, the Johnsonville Line does not meet the minimum capacity standard for Heavy Rail rapid transit due to restrictions on the rail service frequency and size of vehicles.

The inability of the Johnsonville Line to support rapid transit levels of capacity raise the serious risk that the proposed major population increase planned for North Wellington will not all be able to use the rail service.

In addition, although the WCC Capacity Assessment report for the Johnsonville Line stated there was, nearly enough capacity to support future population growth, a review of the analysis model used by this report has highlighted three major errors:

- The baseline patronage of 299 for the peak hour was based on the average for the whole month. But the Johnsonville Line train usage varies with at least one peak hour service exceeding 320 at least once per week. The correct approach to determine if a PT has capacity is to ensure that all passengers can get onto the service and the amount selected as the baseline is clearly too low.
- The baseline patronage is based on the Johnsonville Line May 2021 patronage. However, as reported by the Regional Council, the Johnsonville Line patronage for that month was less than 90% of pre-Covid levels. This means the baseline significantly underestimates the current normal level of Johnsonville Line patronage and the lack of future capacity growth.
- The future usage of the rail service was also not correctly applied. The WCC model assumed that the current population would use the rail line at the current rate while the additional population would use the rail line at three times the current rate. However, the Regional Land Transport Plan on which future transport planning is based states the goal is to increase non-driving mode share by 40%. This means that the WCC model is not aligned to the RLTP and underestimates future use of the railway line.

In addition, the RLTP includes several other plans including a reduction in general traffic lanes (such as on Hutt Road), the introduction of congestion charging, and increasing the costs of CBD commuter parking which aims to reduce car usage from all suburbs.

Because the WCC Johnsonville Line capacity model assumes the current population will continue using rail at the current level. But future transport changes outlined above are aimed at reducing car usage and so many current residents will be incentivised to use the rail service meaning this model assumption is incorrect.

When adjusted for the above errors, any accurate model for the future Johnsonville Line patronage will clearly show that, post-Covid, the peak hours Johnsonville Line services will likely be at capacity within a few years and cannot support the patronage growth.

### **Remove the Johnsonville Stations as Rapid Transit Stops**

The JCA accepts and supports the principle that locations with rapid transit services are the best places for high density housing. However, it is vital that the quality and extent to which a specific rapid transit stop **is** served by a fast, frequent and reliable PT service matches the extent to which it is targeted for high density development.

In Johnsonville the risk is our suburb is being targeted for high density housing when it does not, in fact, have the attractive, rapid transit service to locations across the city. The Spatial Plan and DDP has Johnsonville accept the highest percentage population growth presumably on the basis that we have the best, highest quality passenger rail service yet the above information shows this is simply incorrect.

The WCC is yet to show that the rail service to Johnsonville meets any best-practice standard of being rapid transit. Without resolving the gap between the DDP assumption that the rail service to Johnsonville is rapid transit and the reality of the actual service, there is a risk that the Johnsonville MDRZs will fail and only lead to poor quality cheap housing being built in an unsuitable location. This would be a massive failure of the Council not carrying out its fiduciary duty – it's legal duty of care – to genuinely and carefully consider whether it's assessment that Johnsonville Station and Raroa Station are genuine rapid transit stops leading to inappropriate classification of the areas surrounding these stations as being suitable for high density housing.

**11. The JCA requests removal of Johnsonville Station and Raroa Station as rapid transit stops and/or “commercial centres and with good public transport accessibility” from the DDP**

**12. If the WCC is to insist that that Johnsonville Station and Raroa Station as rapid transit stops and/or “commercial centres and with good public transport accessibility”, the WCC must provide the criteria and supporting independent evidence that proves the rail service from Johnsonville stations is rapid transit.**

## On Proposed Changes to Johnsonville

The JCA's primary focus is to represent the interest of the Johnsonville suburban community. In the DDP, Johnsonville is more than a normal suburb because the Johnsonville Town Centre is designated as a Metropolitan Centre. As outlined in the DDP:

*The purpose of the Metropolitan Centre Zone is to provide predominantly for a broad range of commercial, community, recreational and residential activities. The zone is a focal point for sub-regional urban catchments and provides significant support to the City Centre Zone by offering key services to the outer suburbs of Wellington City and the wider region. This is identified in the Wellington Regional Policy Statement.*

...

*Metropolitan Centres contain a wide range of commercial, civic and government services, office, community, recreational, entertainment and residential activities and have excellent access to public transport, including existing and planned rapid transit. Residential activity is a key focus of Metropolitan Centres, and is enabled above ground floor.*

As outlined previously, the WCC has long targeted Johnsonville for high density residential development and, in this light, Johnsonville is significantly affected by a wide range of changes in the DDP.

## DDP should not block Suburban Retail Development

The most important project for Johnsonville is the redevelopment of the Johnsonville Shopping Centre as a large, modern and attractive retail and service centre. The JCA is very frustrated with the lack of development which is partially as a result of the WCC restrictions.

The JCA is especially concerned that the DPP continues the WCC policy of restricting large retail developments outside of the CBD under its “Integrated retail activity” rule:

***LCZ-R11 Integrated retail activity***

*1. Activity status: Permitted*

*Where:*

- a. The total gross floor area does not exceed 20,000m<sup>2</sup>*

*2. Activity status: Restricted Discretionary*

*Where:*

- a. Compliance with the requirements of LCZ-R11.1 cannot be achieved.*

*Matters of discretion are restricted to:*

- 1. The matters in LCZ-P1, LCZ-P2, LCZ-P3, and LCZ-P4.*
- 2. The cumulative effect of the development on:
  - i. The viability and vitality of the City Centre Zone and Golden Mile*
  - ii. The safety and efficiency of the roading network, including providing for a range of transport modes*
  - iii. The hierarchy of roads travel demand or vehicle use; and**
- 3. The compatibility with other activities provided for in the zone.*

*Council will not apply a permitted baseline assessment when considering the effects of integrated retail developments that cannot comply with LCZ-R11.1.a.*

The above rule was introduced by the WCC to block the original Johnsonville Mall development and was retained in the DPC72. The WCC does not have either the responsibility or capability to regulate the normal market process. It should not impose its own centres hierarchy that restricts where and when retail businesses can locate.

The incorporation of the rules specifically protecting retailers on the Golden Mile from legal competition is not only specifically part of the strategy of the WCC, it is even specifically prohibited under the Resource Management Act !

*(3) In preparing or changing any district plan, a territorial authority must not have regard to trade competition or the effects of trade competition.*

Resource Management Act 1991 (as at 15 November 2021), Part 5, Section 74

It is also noted that, while the Golden Mile is the only retail with specific protection under the proposed policies and rules, there is no supporting justification for why this huge retail area needs such protection under the district plan.

The continued presence of this economic protection rule is a significant reason why the Johnsonville Mall has not been developed. The continued inclusion of this rule in the DDP essentially ensures any future Johnsonville retail development is restricted or even blocked when such development would have a major positive contribution to North Wellington City and the city in general.

**13. The JCA requests rule LCZ-R11 Integrated retail activity be removed from the DDP.**

## Johnsonville as an Opportunity Site

The current role and function of Centres is defined in the current District Plan (as outlined in DPC72):

### *OBJECTIVE – ROLE AND FUNCTION OF CENTRES*

*6.2.1 To provide a network of accessible and appropriately serviced Centres throughout the City that are capable of providing goods, services and facilities to meet the day to day needs of local communities, residents and businesses, and of accommodating anticipated population growth and associated development whilst maintaining Wellington's compact urban form.*

...

### *Regionally Significant Centres*

*Serves a significant part of the City and/or region and provides a significant retail offer. These centres are based around a main street and contain one or more large supermarkets and department stores. A wide range of retail goods with some specialist stores is available. A range of civic and government services, employment, office, community, recreational, entertainment, residential activities can be found which are supported by a sub-regional transport hub. These centres have high levels of pedestrian activity, together with significant on-street and off-street parking facilities. These two Centres are recognised as Regionally Significant Centres in the proposed Regional Policy Statement.*

The 2021 WCC Spatial Plan identifies Johnsonville Centre as an Opportunity Site stating:

*These are sites with significant potential to be part of comprehensive new development, infrastructure improvement, or redevelopment of existing urban areas.*

...

*We'll work closely with external partners to plan and invest in these areas and maximise the benefits to the city.*

The JCA also notes the following DDP statement about Metropolitan Centres:

*Residential activity is a key focus of Metropolitan Centres, and is enabled above ground floor.*

And the JCA is aware of a proposal, by Johnsonville Centre owners, Stride Properties, to include very high apartment towers as part of any redevelopment. While the JCA is a strong long term supporter of redeveloping the Johnsonville Shopping Centre, it is very concerned of any development that is out of scale to the Johnsonville Suburban Centre.

The key purpose of the Johnsonville Shopping Centre is to provide the range of retail and services required to support surrounding residential areas. The JCA is concerned the WCC emphasis on building residential development within the Johnsonville Shopping Centre will compromise the focus of the centre and possibly further delay redevelopment of the Johnsonville Mall.

**14. The JCA accepts the Metropolitan Centre maximum height limit of 8 storeys but strongly opposes any development that is higher than this height limit as proposed in the DDP<sup>1</sup>.**

**15. The JCA opposes the statement that residential development is to be a key focus of Metropolitan Centre and requests that such statement in the DDP be reduced to Residential Developments can also be supported as long as they do not compromise the core purpose of the centre as outlined by the current District Plan.**

## Expanding the Johnsonville MDRZ Walking Catchment is not justified

The Johnsonville MDRZ is required, under the UPS-UD to be calculated based on a walking catchment from the edge of the Metropolitan Centre Zone. It is also important to note that the 2019 NSP-UD Guidance states “*it is up to each local authority to determine the size of walkable catchments appropriate for local circumstances*”.

In 2013 the WCC presented evidence to the Environment Court that the MDRA was the 10 minute (800m) urban walking catchment for Johnsonville. Note that, at the time, the JPA (now JCP) claimed that a 5 minute (400m) catchment was appropriate. In response, the WCC Officer evidence<sup>2</sup> presented to the court stated, under oath:

*6. It is important to note that it is access to a range of facilities (shops, library, recreation centre, swimming pool, train station, etc), not just bus stops, which was the primary consideration when the council identified suitable areas for medium density residential development. The Hearing Decision response, quite rightly in my opinion, puts 'proximity to centres and employment' at the top of the list of such considerations.*

...

*8. The UK's Urban Design Compendium states that 'Local facilities bring residents together, reinforces community and discourage car use. [...] There should be local shops, the bus stop, the health centre and perhaps a primary school within walking distance of (say) 10 minutes (800 metres).*

...

*21. Accordingly, I disagree with Ms Fraser's recommendation that the boundary should be based on a 400m walking distance to commuter bus stops because:*

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<sup>1</sup> Also see JCA Feedback on City Outcomes on page 6.

<sup>2</sup> Johnsonville Community Association Incorporated v Wellington City Council [2013] NZEnvC 159. - Rebuttal Evidence of Lucia Desrosiers – 24 May 2012

21.1 *It is the proximity to the town centre, subject to the availability of frequent public transport services ... which is sought.*

...

21.3 *Council has used sophisticated computer modelling analysis to define the extent of the area accessible within 10 minutes walk including consideration of slope, presence or absence of footpaths and delays at road crossings. In my professional opinion, the work undertaken by Council to determine walking times to the town centre is sophisticated and sound and provided a good starting point in defining the boundaries of the MDRA.*

Rebuttal Evidence of Lucia Desrosiers – 24 May 2012

In 2019 the WCC, again using its "sophisticated computer modelling analysis", but chose a "10 minute walking catchment" for the MDRZ that is much larger than the 10 Minute Walking Catchment of the MDRA.

The WCC recently released its 18 page "[Johnsonville walkable catchment testing](#)" report that claims to explain the differences between the District Plan Johnsonville MDRA (2014) and the Spatial Plan (2021) walkable catchments and Draft District Plan (2021) MDRZ.

It first should be noted that, amongst all the reasons in this report for the larger walking catchment, significant improvements in the walking accessible infrastructure is **not** mentioned ... mainly because the WCC has not implemented any significant walking improvements to Johnsonville streets and walking pavements since 2013.

The Johnsonville Walking Catchment report does state the important point that:

*The differences in where the walkable catchments are calculated from. The catchment for the operative District Plan MDRAs in Johnsonville in 2014 was calculated from the "Johnsonville Triangle" of Moorefield Road, Broderick Road, and Johnsonville Road. By comparison the NPS-UD 2020 requires the walkable catchment to be calculated from the edge of the Metropolitan Centre Zone (MCZ). The Johnsonville MCZ encompasses a larger area than the "Johnsonville Triangle"; the difference between these boundaries is up to 300m along the southern area of Johnsonville Road.*

Unfortunately, this report still does not answer the key question of why the Johnsonville Walking Catchment is now to be based on the 10 minute walking distance from the edge of the Suburban Business Zone **instead of 5 Minutes walking from the edge** which would better align to 10 Minutes walking from the location of "Local facilities".

This report cites the UPS-UD and the supporting document "Understanding and implementing intensification provisions for the National Policy Statement on Urban Development" but missed quoting the following from this guidance document:

*5.5.3 Different locations will have different-sized walkable catchments*

...

*The 800-metre distance was determined by assuming most people would be happy to walk 10 minutes **to access services and amenities**, and that they walk at a walking speed averaging 1.3 metres per second across the journey (Munro, 2009)*  
Page 23 (**Bold** added for emphasis)

The centre's size can also affect the size of the catchment. For example, **a smaller metropolitan centre with fewer services and amenities than a larger centre, will also be likely to have a smaller walkable catchment.**

"Understanding and implementing intensification provisions for the National Policy Statement on Urban Development" Page 24 (**Bold** added for emphasis)

Instead of following the guidance in setting an appropriate walking catchment measured from the edge of the zone, WCC Officers **have arbitrarily decided to define the Johnsonville MDRZ as a 10 minute walking catchment from the zone edge** even if there are few community destinations located at the edge of the Johnsonville Business Zone.

Examples of zone edge locations used as the starting point for the Johnsonville 10 minute walking catchment include:

- Corlett Street - The Z Petrol Station and Burger King (4 more minutes walking to the nearest supermarket according to Google Maps)
- Broderick Road Bridge - Literally nothing there ... the nearest business is a motorcycle repair shop (3 more minutes walking to the nearest supermarket according to Google Maps and further to other facilities)
- Moorefield Road - Funeral Directors (7 more minutes walking to the nearest supermarket according to Google Maps)
- Frank Johnson Street - Fire Station and KFC (5 more minutes walking to the nearest supermarket according to Google Maps)

How bad is the officer's lack of understanding this fundamental point? Well the recent WCC report starts by stating:

*What is a walkable catchment?*

*The implementation guidance produced to support the NPS-UD intensification requirements defines a walkable catchment as "the area an average person could walk from a specific point **to get to multiple destinations**".*

Johnsonville walkable catchment testing Report Page 2 (**Bold** added for emphasis)

WCC officers quote in their own report from the UPS-UP Guidance that literally defines "a walking catchment" as the area a person could walk from "to get to multiple destinations" yet, unlike the MDRA, have chosen not to use these destinations as the starting point for measuring the 10 minute walking catchment. For 99.9% of people, the edge of the Metropolitan Zone is not a destination. Irrespective of whether the person's destination is the supermarket, the doctors, their favourite pub or the pet store, in Johnsonville it will be another 5 minutes' walk from the edge of the zone to get there? The MDRA 10 minute walking catchment is the area a person within the catchment can get to multiple destinations by walking up to 10 minutes because it is measured from the location of the town centre facilities.



WCC officers also claim "*The calculation of walkable catchment areas is consistent with the guidance provided by the Ministry for the Environment on the implementation of the NPS-UD intensification requirements*" yet they set the same 10 minute walking zone size for Johnsonville as for the massively larger CBD<sup>3</sup>. This ignores MfE Guidance that "*the centre's size can also affect the size of the catchment*". Johnsonville is small for a Suburban Centre with a less employment than other "lesser" suburbs such as Newtown or Kilbirnie.

By deciding on 10 Minutes as the size of the Walking Catchment as measured from the edge of the Metropolitan MDRZ under the UPS-UD, the WCC officers are actually claiming Johnsonville residents within 15 minutes walking to facilities should be in the MDRZ and permitted for high density housing. The Johnsonville Walking Report has officers claiming that "*The use of walkable catchments is a planning tool required by the NPS-UD to ensure intensification is located close to amenities and services; ...*" but the report does not provide any evidence or justification that the residential areas beyond the Johnsonville MDRA 10 Minute Walking Catchment are now walking accessible when they were excluded from the WCC's own analysis in 2013.

In its submission to the 2021 WCC Spatial Plan, the JCA requested the proposed MDRZ walking catchment be reduced from 10 minutes to 5 minutes from the edge of the Metropolitan Business Zone for this reason. This is based on a correct and complete application of the MfE Guidance on setting the Walking Catchments and on the WCC's previous evidence to the Environment Court that the current MDRA is the 10 Minute Walking Catchment for Johnsonville.

#### **16. The JCA requests the WCC adopt a 5 Minute Walking Catchment from the Edge of the Metropolitan Business Zone as the area for the Johnsonville MDRZ.**

### **Specific Areas should not be in the MDRZ**

The WCC "Johnsonville walkable catchment testing Report" also admits:

*The walking network model **does not account for the quality or perceived safety of walking routes and pathways**. Path quality is a subjective measure that is not defined within the NPS-UD 2020 or the associated implementation guidance.*

"Johnsonville walkable catchment testing Report" Page 3 (**Bold** added for emphasis)

The associated MfE Guidance on the UPS-UD does not define walking catchment size or "path quality" as these are for the local council to determine. However, **the MfE UPS-UD guidance does recommend the factors to be taken into consideration in setting the walking catchment**. More specifically, MfE Guidance states:

*Although it is up to each local authority to determine the size of walkable catchments appropriate for local circumstances, we offer the following recommendations consistent with long-standing academic and international best practice:*

*1. A distance of 800 metres from each main entrance to a transit stop is considered a minimum walkable catchment in all urban areas.*

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<sup>3</sup> It was councillors, not officers that expanded the walking catchment of the CBD to 15 minutes.

2. For larger tier 2 and all tier 1 local authorities, we suggest this threshold is extended further to account for local factors that include:

- **Street layout** – are the streets laid out in a grid, **or well connected through footpaths** and open space that permit easier connectivity?
- **Severance** – **are major pieces of infrastructure or natural landscape interrupting or channelling convenient pedestrian movement?**
- **Topography** – **how hilly or steep an area is will affect how easy or difficult it is for people to walk** within a period of time.
- **Connectivity** – **are there footpaths on both sides of the roads? Is there access via pathways that run through reserves and open space? Are there pedestrian crossings?**
- **Urban amenity** – what other activities, such as local retail, pharmacy or green space, exist in streets within the extended catchment that would encourage local walking activity and multi-purpose trips?
- **Street lighting** – **are streets well lit, including through local footpath connections**, to ensure that vulnerable groups feel secure?
- **Passive security** – **are footpaths and pedestrian routes overlooked by buildings with active frontages** or otherwise designed to meet the security needs of vulnerable groups (noting that increased density can improve passive security)?
- **Mobility needs** – **is the street layout and accessible design suitable for those with mobility needs, specifically those using wheelchairs or with pushchairs**, those using walking aids and other groups who may not be physically able to walk as far or as fast?
- **Other considerations** – matters **such as traffic light-controlled intersections**, especially those that require pedestrians to wait for multiple lights to travel across a road, means a pedestrian's travel distance in a fixed period of time will be shorter.

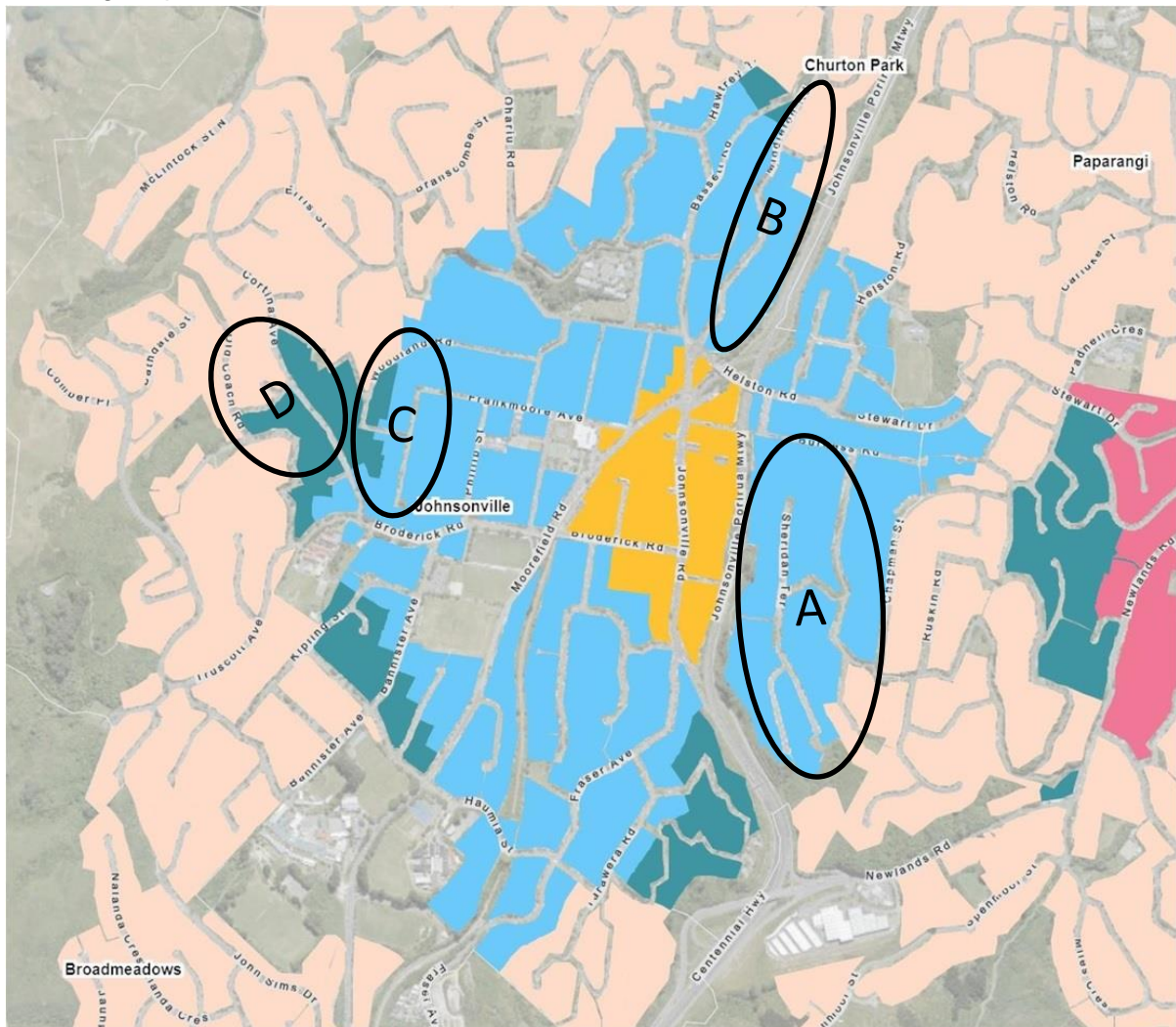
"Understanding and implementing intensification provisions for the National Policy Statement on Urban Development" Page 24 (**Bold** added for emphasis)

The UPS-UD Guidance recommends the above factors be considered as part of setting walking catchments to be "*consistent with long-standing academic and international best practice*". The proposed Johnsonville MDRZ has areas affected by one to all of these factors yet WCC officers have specifically stated their walking catchment modelling "*does not account for the quality or perceived safety of walking routes and pathways*"<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> "Johnsonville walkable catchment testing Report" Page 3

The JCA is especially concerned with four areas proposed for the MDRZ identified in the following map:



A) **Johnsonville East.** The JCA again requests that the area of Johnsonville East be removed from the MDRZ because it is not walking accessible to support high density developments. In support of this request, the JCA would highlight:

- This area is only accessible via a poor quality pedestrian subway and up a long series of largely unlit gravelled steps.
- MfE advice for determining walkable catchments recommends accounting for local factors (outlined in the previous section) and **this area has significant issues with every factor:** Street layout, Severance, Topography, Connectivity, Urban amenity, Street lighting, Passive security, Mobility, and Other considerations
- The WCC officers have admitted the walking catchment model does not include steps and therefore its inclusion of this area as being walkable is in question.
- The WCC officers have admitted the walking catchment model does “*does not account for the quality or perceived safety of walking routes and pathways*” and therefore its inclusion of this area as being walkable is in question.
- In 2013, the Environment Court rejected the WCC claim that this area was walkable accessible and the WCC agreed to remove this area from the MDRA

This area is only included in the MDRZ because the WCC approach to determining walkable accessible ignores best practice walking accessibility factors that the MfE Recommendations be considered.

#### **17. The JCA requests Johnsonville East (Area A) be excluded from the Johnsonville MDRZ.**

B) **Middleton Road.** The JCA again requests that the area on Middleton Road be removed from the MDRZ because it is not walking accessible to support high density developments. In support of this request, the JCA would highlight:

- This area is only accessible by crossing a busy arterial road without any pedestrian crossing facilities. More specifically, walking access to the Johnsonville Town Centre is only possible by crossing Helston Road or Middleton Road (or both). While both of these roads are busy arterial roads, neither of these roads has any pedestrian crossing (controlled or uncontrolled). Best practice requires that pedestrians have a right of access across busy unsafe roads.
- MfE advice for determining walkable catchments recommends accounting for local factors (outlined in the previous section) and **this area has significant issues with these factors**: Severance, Connectivity, Passive security, Mobility, and Other considerations
- The WCC officers have admitted the walking catchment model does “*does not account for the quality or perceived safety of walking routes and pathways*” and therefore its inclusion of this area as being walkable is in question.
- In 2013, the Environment Court rejected the WCC claim that this area was walkable accessible and the WCC agreed to remove this area from the MDRA

This area is only included in the MDRZ because the WCC approach to determining walkable accessible ignores best practice walking accessibility factors that the MfE Recommendations be considered.

#### **18. The JCA requests Middleton Road (Area B) be excluded from the Johnsonville MDRZ.**

C) **Woodland Road/Prospect Terrace.** The JCA again requests that the area on and connected to by Woodridge Road be removed from the MDRZ because it is not walking accessible to support high density developments. In support of this request, the JCA would highlight:

- This area is only accessible via Woodland Road that has no walking pavement requiring pedestrians to walk on a steep and narrow road.
- Prospect Terrace is also a narrow street with no foot path that is proposed to be zoned as MDRZ
- MfE advice for determining walkable catchments recommends accounting for local factors (outlined in the previous section) and **this area has significant issues with these factors**: Street layout, Severance, Topography, Connectivity, Passive security, Mobility, and Other considerations

- The WCC officers have admitted the walking catchment model does “*does not account for the quality or perceived safety of walking routes and pathways*” and therefore its inclusion of this area as being walkable is in question.
- The JCA is also very concerned that high rise development along this hilltop area will have a significant adverse impact to the Johnsonville Ridgeline and visual amenity of the whole suburb. This area is not listed as a Ridgeline area on the DDP Map.

This area is only included in the MDRZ because the WCC approach to determining walkable accessible ignores best practice walking accessibility factors that the MfE Recommendations be considered.

**19. The JCA requests Woodland Road/Prospect Terrace (Area C) be excluded from the MDRZ.**

**20. The JCA also requests that Woodland Road/Prospect Terrace (Area C) be added to the DDP as a registered Ridgeline and be made subject to DDP Ridgeline rules.**

D) **Cortina Avenue.** The JCA requests that the area Cortina Avenue be removed from being zoned higher than Outer Residential because it is not walking accessible to support high density developments. In support of this request, the JCA would highlight:

- This area is beyond the MDRZ 10 Minute Walking Catchment as measured from the Broderick Road Bridge. It is actually more than 15 minutes walking from most Johnsonville Town facilities and services.
- MfE and WCC Officers define a “*walkable catchment as “the area an average person could walk from a specific point to get to multiple destinations”*”
- The new government Medium Density Standards will mean this area will be permitted to have higher density housing up to 4 storeys and so the special zoning in the DDP is no longer relevant.

This area is only included in the MDRZ because a previous WCC walking catchment assessment erroneously determined this area was within the MDRZ 10 Minute Walking Catchment. The WCC model now being used by the DPP shows this area is beyond the 10 Minute Walking Catchment and so outside the DPP MDRZ.

**21. The JCA requests Cortina Avenue (Area D) be excluded from the MDRZ Residential.**

## Supporting Infrastructure and Green Space

Johnsonville has long been targeted by the WCC for higher density residential development. The 2021 Spatial Plan outlined Johnsonville is expected to grow from 10,000 to 16,000 in the next 30 years, the highest level of population growth of any suburban area.

The JCA has, in previous submissions, noted the high level of supporting infrastructure investment that will be needed to support the massive population increase planned for Johnsonville. The JCA continues to be concerned that the WCC has not budgeted sufficient

supporting investment to enable Johnsonville to meet these growth expectations without further degradation of amenity. Best practice urban planning requires key supporting infrastructure is in place before increasing housing density.

### **Supporting Investment in Roothing**

Johnsonville is very busy having to support a high level of traffic, especially peak hour through car and bus traffic. In 2014, the WCC undertook some road upgrades including rebuilding the Broderick Road Bridge.

However, a range of planned roading improvements remain to be completed. These include adding signalize controls on all intersections and pedestrian crossings along Broderick and Moorefield Road. The reason these improvements remain to be completed is because the Mall Owners, Stride Properties, were to provide funding as part of the Johnsonville Mall redevelopment. Because the mall redevelopment has not started, Johnsonville continues to suffer from overloaded roads without adequate traffic controlled intersections.

### **Supporting investment in Public Transport**

The WCC claims Johnsonville is a major transport hub yet its public transport facilities are totally inadequate. The “bus hub” is a widely distributed set of street side bus stops along Moorefield Road with inadequate shelter and no other public facilities.

This means Johnsonville does not meet the description in the DDP of being a “*Metropolitan Centres* [that has] ... *excellent access to public transport, including existing and planned rapid transit.*” In particular, if the WCC is to insist that Johnsonville station is a Rapid Transit Stop, then a commitment needs to be made to build an integrated rail and bus hub as has been previously proposed by the GRWC.

### **Supporting Investment in MDRZ Parks and Green Space**

Central Johnsonville is also lacking in public park and green space. Such space becomes even more important with the much reduced private space and greater number of apartments under MDRZ planning rules. The JCA understands that the WCC has finally commenced a review of Johnsonville greenspaces which the JCA supports.

One important green space opportunity site is the old Johnsonville Library. The JCA supports the Johnsonville Business Group in its proposal to turn at least some of this site into a public park. There is a concern that the WCC is planning to redevelop the whole site into social housing. The JCA notes:

- the library site is the only WCC owned property located on the Johnsonville Triangle roads
- this site is likely suitable for being a park being located in a sunnier, relatively sheltered site in an areas some distance from any other green space.
- there are several other sites in Johnsonville that could be redeveloped for social housing.

**22. The JCA requests the WCC fund and complete the planned roading improvements for the Johnsonville Triangle to support planned population growth.**

**23. The JCA supports the Green Space Review for Johnsonville and requests it be completed as soon as possible.**

**24. The JCA requests that development of the Old Library Site be postponed until the Green Space Review is complete.**

## Supporting Investment in other public facilities

While Johnsonville does have some public facilities including the new public library and the Alex Moore sports ground, there is a shortage of other facilities. Perhaps the most obvious is the lack of any indoor sports stadium. Other major suburbs have such a facility including Tawa, Ngaio, Newtown and Kilbirnie.

**25. The JCA requests the WCC outline the specific planned investments in each of the above areas that require further investment in facilities and infrastructure.**

## Conclusion

The DDP contains a large number of changes that will have a major impact on Johnsonville. The JCA has raised a number of issues and concerns with the approach of the DDP. These concerns are based on previous experience with the MDRA and with apparent deficiencies with some key assumptions in the DDP, such as Johnsonville Station being served by a rapid transit service capable of supporting major population increase. The JCA is concerned that if the issues raised are not properly addressed, the amenity and family friendly nature of our suburb will be degraded further by inappropriate and poor quality housing.

The JCA is also concerned at the lack of supporting information in justifying these major changes in DDP urban planning rules for Johnsonville. It requests further information be released on the justification of both the rapid transit stop walking catchment MDRZs and the metropolitan walking catchment MDRZ.

The JCA asks that councillors and officers seriously consider and address the issues raised in the JCA submission on the Draft District Plan.