

Tēnā koutou

Rotorua Lakes Council is seeking the views of Ngāpuna Village on whether there should be changes to the District Plan rules on the types of houses that can be built in Ngāpuna Village.

Why are we consulting on this issue?

There is a significant lack of housing in Rotorua, which is contributing to a housing crisis. The Government and the Council have agreed that one way to increase the amount of housing is to make changes to the Rotorua District Plan to allow “Medium Density” housing in all residential areas.

As a result, the government has directed the Council to make changes by 20 August 2022 to the District Plan to implement new Medium Density residential standards. From August onwards, the Medium Density rules will apply across the whole of the Rotorua urban area.

Medium Density

Basically, “Medium Density” means property owners will be allowed to build up to 3 housing units on their section, up to 3 storeys high. Compared to the existing rules, section sizes can be smaller and houses can be closer to the boundary.

Ngāpuna

We acknowledge that the residents of Ngāpuna have repeatedly asked Council to address the adjacent industrial zoning, and its impact on residents. We understand and anticipate that this will continue to be the clear feedback in this process too and we have earmarked the Future Development Strategy to address this in more depth.

We are now consulting the residents of Ngāpuna to ask whether the Medium Density Residential Standards should also be applied to Ngāpuna.

Included in this letter is background information on what the Rotorua District Plan currently says (including the existing maps) and the options for Ngāpuna. Please send your feedback to us by 8 April 2022 by:

- Dropping off to Rotorua Lakes Council at 1061 Haupapa Street (attention: Anna Bindon)
- Sending an email with your response to anna.bindon@rotorualc.nz.

Any related comments are also welcome.

Before then, if you have any questions, please get in touch with us, or we can organize a Zoom hui for the Ngāpuna community to explain the Medium Density Changes and answer your questions.

[Sign off]

APPENDIX ONE: BACKGROUND

The Rotorua District Plan – What are the current rules for housing?

The Rotorua District Plan contains rules to manage the type of new housing that can be built in the Rotorua district. It does this by setting out limits for things like:

- separation of buildings from boundaries,
- maximum building height,
- how much of a site can be covered by buildings, and
- how many houses can be built on a site.

If an owner wants to develop their land outside these limits, they need to apply for a resource consent.

The District Plan also contains rules to manage other aspects of our environment, for example, natural hazards and the protection of cultural sites. These issues may also restrict what can be built on a site.

The District Plan and Ngāpuna

Whakarewarewa, Ōhinemutu and Ngāpuna are currently treated differently than other residential areas in the District Plan with a unique zone ('Residential 3 Zone'). The purpose of the Residential 3 Zone is to help recognise the special cultural and historic importance of these Villages, and to protect their qualities and characteristics such as marae being the dominant focal points, the presence of geothermal features, and a sense of community.

The new legislation

The government has introduced new legislation (the [Enabling Housing Supply Amendment Act](#) 2021, which amends the Resource Management Act 1991), which requires council to change our District Plan to allow Medium Density housing. We have the option to not apply the Medium Density standards to areas with special historic and Māori cultural values (such as Ngāpuna).

Medium Density residential standards – What would they mean for Ngāpuna?

The table compares the current standards for Ngāpuna to the new Medium Density standards in more detail.

	Current District Plan Standards	Medium Density Standards
Maximum Building Height	5m	11m with an allowance for the peak of the roof to extend an additional 1m.
Density	1 house per 250m ²	3 houses per site
Minimum distance from house to front yard	3m	1.5m
Minimum distance from house to side and Rear	2.5m	1m

Height envelope	3m +45 degrees	4m + 60 degrees
Maximum amount of site that can be covered by buildings	50%	50%
Glazing, landscaping, outlook space	No controls	Controls

Natural hazards – geothermal and flooding risk

It is important to note that even if we change the rules (to allow Medium Density housing within Ngāpuna), there may be other technical constraints to building on your section such as liquefaction or geothermal issues.

APPENDIX TWO: Our Questions

We would greatly appreciate your views on the following questions:

1. Ngāpuna is an historic kāinga and village of ngā hapu e toru a Ngāti Whakaue and of Tūhourangi. It is a focus for the continued expression of hapū belonging, identity, kawa and tikanga. The two marae Hinemihi and Hurunga o te Rangi (and the associated urupā) are a focus for hapū life and represent the strength and permanence of mana whenua presence on the whenua. Important taonga tuku iho surrounding Ngāpuna include the Puarenga river, numerous geothermal features, Te Papa a Ruamoā and Rotorua lake itself. Dwellings in the area are typically single storey and many were built in the mid 1950s to 1970s. There is a mix of general land and Māori freehold land, and homes tend to be passed down through families, reflecting the continued whakapapa connections of the residents.

We know this is a very simplified description of Ngāpuna, and that it does not capture all of its important aspects. What is missing? What are the other aspects of Ngāpuna that help contribute to its special historic and cultural values?

2. Do you think new buildings in Ngāpuna should look similar to what's there now? Or do you think people should be allowed to build new buildings that are quite different, with contemporary styles and different types of materials?
3. Is the existing style of the buildings in Ngāpuna important to the heritage or cultural values of the village?
4. Do you think the current rules for new buildings in Ngāpuna are about right? Or do you think the current rules should be changed?
5. Do you think the Medium Density residential standards should be applied to Ngāpuna Village? For **each row** in the table, please circle your preference between the current standard or the Medium Density standard (ie in the first row, do you prefer 5m height limit or 11m)?

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