



Our Space consultation,  
 Greater Christchurch Partnership,  
 PO Box 73012,  
 Christchurch 8154

30 November 2018

**Re: Submission – Draft Our Space 2018-2048: Greater Christchurch Settlement Pattern Update**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Our Space 2018-2048: Greater Christchurch Settlement Pattern Update. This is a joint submission by ChristchurchNZ and Development Christchurch Ltd (DCL)

**The key submission points from ChristchurchNZ and DCL on the draft settlement pattern are:**

Delivering strategic aspirations: passive vs active approach

The proposed settlement patterns appear to be driven by a process that has considered growth forecasts as numbers to be accommodated, rather than contemplating how urban areas should be developed to meet broader strategic aspirations, and deliver the NPS objective to “enable people and communities and future generations to provide for their social, economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing”.

We believe the approach for planning settlement patterns should be to consider how Greater Christchurch can grow in a manner that meets the strategic aspirations for the South Island’s primary urban centre whilst best enabling future prosperity and sustainability.

We would expect to see an explicit analysis of the strategic priorities for Greater Christchurch and how settlement patterns can be shaped to best deliver these. Without this active approach to deliver top-level strategic aspirations, the region cannot achieve its potential to the benefit of our, economy, community and environment.

From our perspective the city’s prosperity, as measured by its economic growth and national relevance, is vulnerable unless there is further transformation of the mix of economic activity away from a heavy reliance on the rebuild stimulus and servicing the local population, to an economy which is outward looking and attractive to people (residents and visitors), high value business and investment.

This will not be achieved by incremental change, the status quo, or returning to “pre-earthquake” Christchurch, but rather requires high aspiration to imagine and strive for creating new and better economic opportunities for Christchurch and its people.

We believe that increasing Greater Christchurch's economic relevance will be achieved by:

1. Growing scale
2. Growing economic wealth
3. Enhancing the attractiveness of Christchurch to visitors, current and future citizens, business and investors.

#### Importance of focusing on development in and around Greater Christchurch's central city

Christchurch's central city is critically important to the overall attractiveness of Greater Christchurch to visitors, talent, business and investment, but has not recovered in line with the rest of the Greater Christchurch economy and consequently is at a point of vulnerability.

The central city is at a pivotal point in its regeneration. Insufficient attention is given to the importance of driving urban growth to the central city and surrounding suburbs in the short to medium term, to position Greater Christchurch as an attractive proposition in the longer term.

Successful cities have vibrant city centres. City centres provide a high density built environment, including specialist buildings such as theatres and civic venues, that create the ability to attract a variety of activities, as well as high-value service jobs, quality and diverse hospitality and entertainment experiences, investment, entrepreneurs and businesses.

Creating a central city with vibrancy and critical mass to support ongoing reinvestment is critically important for the provision of amenities that the Greater Christchurch population will not otherwise have. It will be a key contributor to the attractiveness (or otherwise) of Greater Christchurch as a place to live and work. Higher residential and economic density in the central city is pivotal to achieving this.

#### Concerns about the evidence base utilised

We have concerns about the information and assumptions used in the preparation of the document.

The population and employment forecasts have been prepared in an abnormal and dynamic period of a post disaster environment, without the benefit of a recent Census to validate the baseline situation.

There are statements in the document that are contrary to the findings of detailed analysis undertaken recently by Regenerate Christchurch in its "Central City Momentum advice" in relation to the city's current state. This indicates that the issues and proposed solutions may not be based on the best or even sound evidence, creating a risk of perverse outcomes.

#### **Specific comments on the content of the draft document:**

*Piii – "Many other plans, strategies and initiatives will complement this Update in improving our wider social, economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing".*

As outlined in the key submission point on delivering strategic aspirations, we do not believe this approach is sufficient. The various wellbeing strategies should inform and drive settlement patterns, not be made to fit and complement them.

*P3 – states that “Continued momentum behind the Central City recovery has meant businesses and workers are returning to this area, helping to restore the central business district as the principal commercial hub for the region. Employment levels in the Central City are again nearing those attained prior to the earthquakes.”*

This statement is not an accurate reflection of the state of recovery as outlined extensively in the “Central City Momentum advice” prepared by Regenerate Christchurch. Central city employment levels are still well below pre-earthquake levels. Furthermore, the central city was in decline prior to the earthquakes, so there is a long way to go to create a vibrant ‘principle commercial hub’ that fully delivers the potential regeneration opportunity presented by the earthquakes, optimising the return on subsequent public and private investments.

*P15 Key growth issues for Greater Christchurch*

A key issue that is missing is the need to ensure momentum in regeneration is maintained and accelerated to give Greater Christchurch the best chance of achieving higher economic relevance in the national context and a vibrant urban centre that provides the platform for attracting ongoing investment, re-investment, businesses, talent and visitors.

Taking a strategic approach in relation to the future shape of Greater Christchurch will assist in the work of ChristchurchNZ and DCL to support positive economic development and community outcomes, attracting investment and people to the city.

ChristchurchNZ and DCL would like to present this submission at the public hearings.

Yours sincerely,



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ChristchurchNZ



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