3 October 2019

Proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development Consultation
Ministry for the Environment
PO Box 10362
Wellington 6143.

Email to: nps-udconsultation@mfe.govt.nz

Dear Sir/Madam

Transport Special interest Group Submission on the proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development.

Please find attached the Local Government New Zealand Regional Sector Transport Special Interest Group (TSIG) submission.

Should you have any queries regarding this submission please contact [redacted] TSIG policy workstream member, or [redacted].

Regards

[Signature]

[Redacted] Greater Wellington Regional Council
TSIG Sponsor
A submission by: The Transport Special Interest Group of the Regional Sector of Local Government New Zealand (TSIG)
On: The Proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development
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1. Summary

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD). Our key points are as follows:

General comments and the vital role of infrastructure funding
- To achieve the outcomes being sought, the NPS-UD must be accompanied by increased investment in public transport, walking and cycling networks, and modern transport systems, including the acceleration of rapid transit options in the major urban centres and between major urban centres where appropriate.
- We support increasing densities around transport hubs, a more descriptive approach for directing intensification (P6C Option 1), requiring developers to pay towards costs of development including infrastructure and services (Q9, pg 40) and new tools for infrastructure funding and financing and investment in modern transport systems to encourage more effective growth (pg 15).
- In respect of new funding tools we consider that regional councils should receive developer contributions to establish new public transport services into new greenfield areas and for provision of higher frequency public transport services in high density areas.

The important role of Regional Land Transport Plans (RLTPs)
- We consider that the NPS needs to strengthen the relationship of urban development planning with strategic policy and funding for land transport, through RLTPs.
- We support the explicit reference to RLTPs in Policies P1H and P1I under Section 4, Future Development Strategy, but PIC (d) needs to specifically reference RLTPs as one of the key plans informing an FDS.
- We support Objective 010 and P 10B (pg 53) which recognise the importance of integrating land use and infrastructure planning.

The relationship with wider RMA reform and spatial planning
- The NPS-UD needs to be considered in the context of the pending wider RMA/LTMA legislative review, including future requirements for the development of spatial plans. The planning processes need to be fully aligned with any future policy and planning framework coming out of the RMA/LTMA reviews.

Removing minimum parking requirements
- TSIG does not support the total removal of a local authority's role to regulate car parking (Q10) as this will lead to perverse outcomes. Parking is an essential tool in land use and transport planning and local authorities need to be able to retain the ability to manage it at a local level. Thus, TSIG does not support any of the options proposed for applying the policy to limit the ability of local authorities to regulate parking (P7A Options 1 to 3).
We submit that territorial authorities should be empowered to retain some regulatory powers over parking to respond to local circumstances.

2. Background

The Transport Special Interest Group (TSIG) is a technical group established under the Regional Sector of Local Government New Zealand. All regional councils and unitary authorities are represented on TSIG and the primary role of the group is to advocate on regional transport planning matters.

Urban development is a matter of significant importance to the regional sector and TSIG places a high priority on seeking better integration between transport and land use. The way that urban areas are developed and their dependencies on good transport systems is very important to our sector.

TSIG applauds Government and the Ministry for the Environment on preparing the "Proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development" and we strongly support the national approach seeking greater integration between land use and transport.

Regional Councils are responsible for preparing regional land transport plans (RLTP) under the Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA). Under section 14 of the LTMA regional transport committees must take into account any relevant national policy statements that are in force under the Resource Management Act 1991.

3. General comments and the vital role of infrastructure funding

From a TSIG perspective, the overall premise of the proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) is supported. Enabling growth by requiring councils to provide development capacity to meet the diverse demands of communities, address overly restrictive rules, and encourage quality, liveable urban environments is supported. So too is the aim of encouraging more effective growth, particularly close to frequent public transport hubs and walking and cycling facilities.

Increasing densities of our major urban areas is supported. The GPS on Land Transport 2018/19 — 2027/28 (GPS) has a particular focus on urban areas to ensure that transport and land use planning reduces the need to travel by private motor vehicle. This is envisaged by improving access by reducing the need to travel long distances to access opportunities like employment, education and recreation, and by supporting a mode shift for trips in urban areas from private vehicles to more efficient, low cost modes like walking, cycling and public transport. The GPS also explicitly supports new mixed use housing developments as a way of increasing economic access in high growth areas.

A key issue is whether the objectives and the policies in the NPS-UD can achieve the outcomes that are being sought — will allowing for growth ‘up’ and ‘out’ end up contributing to a quality urban environment and liveable cities that support economic productivity and access to opportunities and increasing transport choice? The NPS-UD will only meet this expectation if the necessary infrastructure to support intensification, particularly public transport, is planned for and fully funded.

It is vital that safe, attractive urban design that supports a range of transport modes and efficient public transport systems (both road and rail) results, otherwise the aim for a quality urban environment will not be realised and perverse transport, land use, and amenity outcomes could result.
Similarly, the need for good integrated transport and land use planning, and accompanying infrastructure funding, is vital to ensure the effects of greenfield growth and out of sequence urban development does not adversely affect the efficiency and effectiveness of strategic transport corridors and that new transport infrastructure is well planned and funded alongside new development proposals.

Greenfield growth, particularly at the extremities of large urban areas, has serious implications for transport demand, transport travel patterns, congestion and the ability of local government to service the community with public transport options.

The full costs of transport infrastructure and services development, including on the wider network, would need to be met and more robust policies than the examples provided on p39 would need to be in place in the NPS-UD to ensure that perverse land use and infrastructure outcomes do not result. Question 9 ponders to what extent the cost should fall on developers — the infrastructure funding gap already exists with planned-for infrastructure.

Any out of sequence greenfield development and associated strategic infrastructure not identified would therefore need to be met by the developer to avoid down-stream socio-economic costs on future homeowners/beneficiaries of the development. This is particularly important for major urban areas that might not have a large rating base.

TSIG questions the approach of the NPS-UD toward requiring higher densities around ‘frequent' public transport stops (pg 37 — Options for directing intensified development). TSIG has concerns that P6C Option 2 for directing intensified development is too prescriptive by zoning higher densities within 800m catchments of frequent public transport. There may be infrequent public transport services where higher urban development density is justified, places where a greater catchment may make sense (flat walkable places with good levels of services, and places where, while not inappropriate, high densities may not be justified by proximity (e.g. within 800ms as the crow flies, but significantly longer following existing routes as is the case for many of Wellington's hilly suburbs). From that perspective TSIG would support P6C Option 1 which proposes a more descriptive approach for directing intensification through district plan policies for major urban centres.

The discussion document states (Pg15) that the NPS-UD will be supported by new tools for infrastructure funding and financing and investment in modern transport systems. This is considered crucial to address infrastructural funding constraints we are seeing at the moment and long lead-in times to accessing funding. As part of the suite of tools, TSIG submits that regional councils should be able to access developer contributions to fund new public transport services to new greenfield sites as well as to higher density areas within central cities. This is currently not allowed.

The relationship of the NPS-UD to other planning and funding frameworks, particularly the LTMA and the role of RLTPs and the National Land Transport Programme is therefore fundamental to achieving the aim of the NPS-UD (see point 3. below).

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<th>TSIG Submission Points:</th>
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<td>The proposal for increasing densities around transport hubs is supported. To achieve the outcomes being sought, the NPS-UD must be accompanied by increased investment in public transport, walking and cycling networks, and modern transport systems, including the acceleration of rapid transit options in the major urban centres and between major urban centres where appropriate. TSIG supports P6C Option 1 which provides a more descriptive approach for directing intensification through district plan policies for major urban centres.</td>
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4. The important role of Regional Land Transport Plans

The proposals around strengthening the local authority requirement to produce Future Development Strategies (FDSs) refer to the role they have in informing RMA plans and strategies prepared under other legislation. They are also designed to better align land use and infrastructure planning, and identify funding gaps between capacity and infrastructure. Long-term plans (LTPs) and infrastructure strategies required under the Local Government Act 2002 are explicitly recognised, as are RLTPs under the LT MA.

The discussion on the important link of urban development planning with RLTPs in the NPS-UD (Section 4) is considered to be particularly light. If FDSs are 'informed by', and 'encouraged to inform' other relevant plans and strategies, then the relationship with the strategic funding arm for land transport, including public transport, through RLTPs needs to be strengthened. The relationship of FDSs to RLTPs and LTPs for infrastructure funding is vital, particularly for seeking the benefits the NPS-UD proposes such as improving the viability of public transport services. Policy PIC need to specifically reference RLTPs under (d).

Timing alignment of these planning and funding documents is also crucial, as recognised by Question 3 in the discussion document which is concerned with the potential impact of the proposed timing on statutory and planning processes. Proposed policies under Objective 07 rely on existing or planned active transport and public transport networks to enable higher-density development in Policy 6A so the inference is that RLTPs will need to respond as the legal mechanism by which regions will access transport funding through the National Land Transport Programme and National Land Transport Fund. Local share contributions through LTPs will also need to be responsive.

At a regional level, there will need to be good planning and funding alignment through Regional Policy Statements, RLTPs and local authority planning instruments. With this in mind, the proposal to make it more explicit that planning decisions should be coordinated and aligned with infrastructure decisions is supported (Objective 010).

TSIG Submission Points:
The relationship of urban development planning with the strategic policy component and funding arm for land transport, including public transport and walking and cycling, through RLTPs needs to be strengthened.

With regard to the proposed objectives and policies in section 4 of the discussion document, explicit reference to RLTPs is supported in Policies PIH. PIC (d) needs to specifically reference RLTPs as a plan to inform an FDS Objective 010 and PIOB are also supported.

5. The relationship with wider RMA reform and spatial planning

Question 1 in the discussion document asks whether there are other tools under the RMA, other legislation or non-statutory tools that would be more effective in achieving a quality urban
environment and making room for growth. Whilst a NPS-UD is supported, it is difficult to see ahead of wider RMA reform how this might relate to the Government’s goal for strengthened spatial planning. Question 17 also asks whether there might be potential areas of tension or confusion between any of the proposals and other national direction, but in relation to the role of spatial planning, this is difficult at this time to know.

TSIG Submission Points:
- The NPS-UD needs to be considered in the context of the pending wider RMA/LTMA legislative review, including future requirements for the development of spatial plans. The planning processes need to be fully aligned with any future policy and planning framework coming out of the RMA/LTMA reviews.

6. Removing minimum car parking requirements

It is proposed in the discussion document (Pg 42) that the NPS-UD include a policy that removes the ability for local authorities in major urban centres to regulate the number of car parks required for a development. Three options are being considered:

- Option 1: removing the ability for local authorities to regulate the requisite number of carparks.
- Option 2: removing the ability for local authorities to set minimum car park requirements.
- Option 3: removing the ability for local authorities to set minimum car park requirements in areas providing for more intensive development.

The rationale for removing car parking requirements is that "it responds to strong evidence that such requirements do not support the outcomes desired across urban areas, including the efficient use of land." (p45).

It is interesting to note that parking is specifically targeted in the NPS-UD whilst other development rules are still being considered. Question 11 asks whether central government should consider more directive intervention in local authority plans to remove other unnecessary constraints on development such as building height limits, the ability to set minimum house or apartment sizes, and minimum lot sizes in particular zones.

TSIG’s key concern is that removing car parking requirements may not necessarily result in the outcome of a quality urban development the NPS-UD seeks. Intensification along with the corresponding removal of car parking regulations may in fact lead to perverse transport and amenity outcomes. Removing car parking requirements will not necessarily equate to increased public transport use, particularly in major urban centres that do not have particularly good public transport networks, or the funding for this.

In the absence of high quality alternatives to driving car owners will find other ways of parking, shifting on-site parking into surrounding commercial, industrial and residential streets. This may increase congestion and have adverse amenity and safety issues. Congested local roads in major urban centres may result in the opposite effect the NPS-UD is seeking. Local councils should be empowered to retain some regulatory powers over parking to respond to local circumstances. This will differ across jurisdiction, but should include:

- The ability to set maximum parking limits in locations where there are good alternatives and onsite parking will have a negative impact on amenity
The ability to require minimum off street parking in areas where sufficient alternatives are not available, or will be negatively impacted (e.g. reduced safety for cyclists) if parking overspills to on-street, berms and verges

Retaining the ability of territorial authorities to set parking provision to meet community expectations is a better option. Requiring Councils to obtain their communities expectations and set rules that fit those is a more appropriate outcome. Parking requirements is just another component of the transport options conversation and shouldn’t be regulated from the top.

An option that minimises the ability for local authorities to regulate car parking requirements (with a focus on shared parking strategies and plans) is missing from the discussion document. This option could still address the core issue of an oversupply of car parking as a whole. TSIG does not as a result support any of the three options currently proposed for removing minimum car parking requirements in the NPS-I-JD.

TSIG Submission Points:

Parking is an essential tool in land use and transport planning.
QIO - TSIG does not support the total removal of a local authority's role to regulate car parking as this will lead to perverse outcomes.
TSIG does not support P7A Options 1 to 3
TSIG submits that territorial authorities should be empowered to retain some regulatory powers over parking to respond to local circumstances

7. Conclusion

The Transport SIG supports the proposed NPS on Urban Development and the direction it is heading.

Our submission seeks greater recognition in the NPS-UD of the important role of RLTPs in urban development planning as they are the predominant statutory transport document in the regions and include investment activities to provide increased public transport services to support high density urban development.

New tools for funding for transport infrastructure to accompany urban development are essential to ensure that optimal urban form is achieved and perverse outcomes do not arise.

TSIG does not support the total removal of a territorial authority's role to regulate car parking.