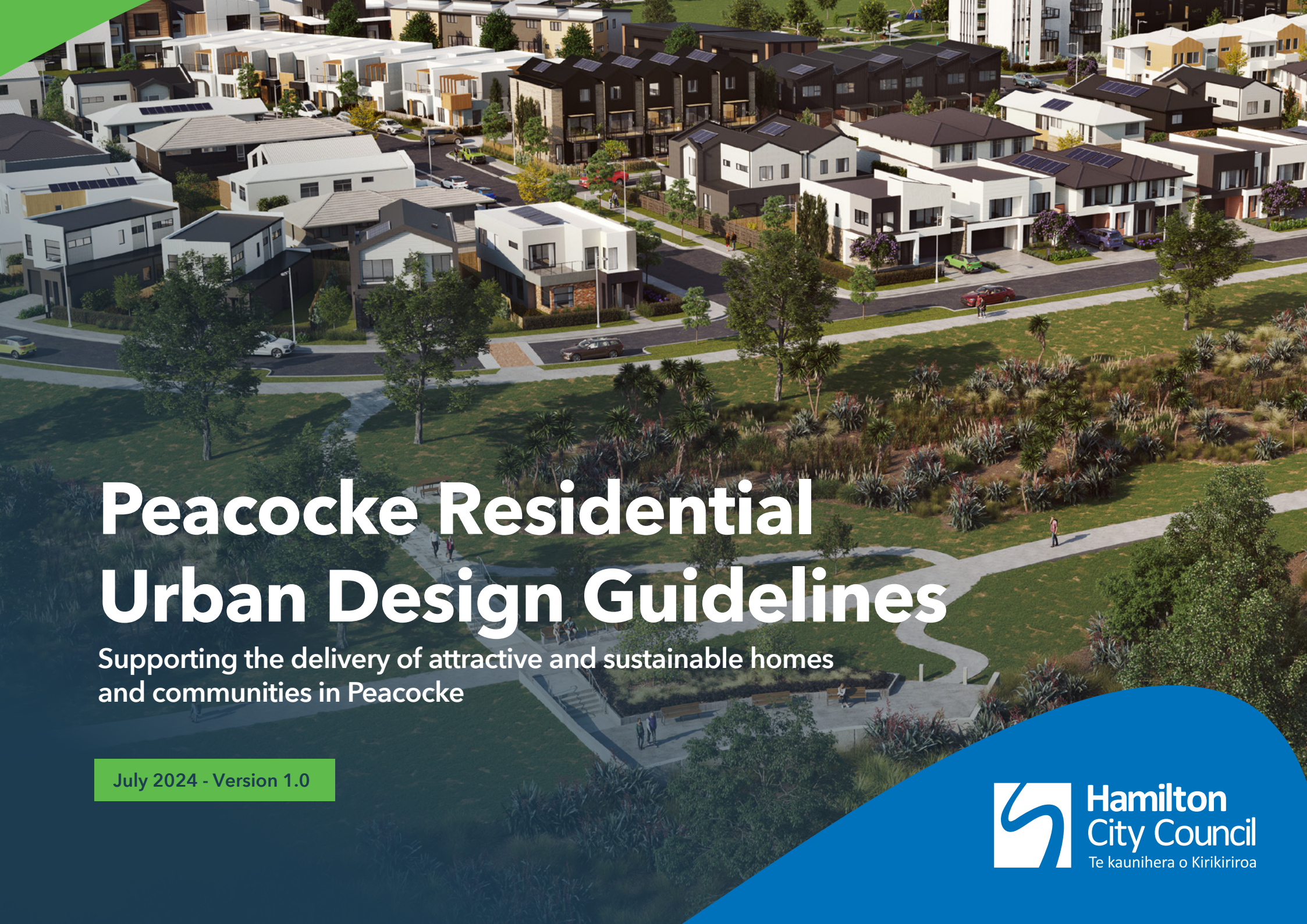


Peacocke Residential Urban Design Guidelines

Supporting the delivery of attractive and sustainable homes and communities in Peacocke

July 2024 - Version 1.0

Hamilton City Council
Te kaunihera o Kirikiriroa

Contents

Our guide

Aligned with the Hamilton District Plan, these guidelines outline a best practise urban design approach needed to support and enable liveable communities in Peacocke.

When to use the guide

Developers, landowners, and Council staff should use this guide at all stages of the development process. For landowners and developers, refer to the guide during the following development stages:

- Project design – designing the site and showing how urban design outcomes can be achieved.
- Resource consenting – preparing for pre-application meetings and reviewing development proposals before they are submitted to Council.

Aligning the design of your development with this guide will help reduce any potential urban design issues during the resource consenting process.

What this guide doesn't do

These guidelines won't:

- Offer a comprehensive or exhaustive guide – it should be read in conjunction with the provisions of the Hamilton District Plan and relevant bylaws, policies and other guides.
- Introduce new rules on development or require specific design solutions.
- Cover specific assessment criteria and other design guides. These can be found in the Hamilton District Plan.
- Offer engineering solutions. These should be referred to separately, such as through the Regional Infrastructure Technical Specifications (RITS).

To view the Hamilton District Plan, visit hamilton.govt.nz/districtplan.

Navigating the guide

The guide is split into four key sections:

1. Introduction

An overview of Peacocke's history and cultural significance.

2. Context

Considering context is about understanding the opportunities and challenges of a site, and how it relates to the wider neighbourhood, city, and region. Consideration of context helps create a design that maximises the site's strengths to deliver the outcomes sought in the District Plan.

3. Subdivision outcomes

Subdivision is the first step towards creating a new community. Getting it right from the start is critical to achieving good design and wellbeing outcomes, making it easier to achieve high-quality developments after the subdivision process.

Aspects covered in this section include:

- subdivision layout
- how subdivision design can reflect and enhance the natural environment.

4. Building design and layout

Buildings are one of the most visible and used parts of urban environments. Good building design is key to creating the homes and neighbourhoods people want to live in.

Aspects covered in this section include:

- designing around public spaces
- creating quality homes and spaces
- accessibility
- sustainability.

Tino pai tips – look out for the handy 'rule of thumb' tips in this guide. These are practical and handy info to help design and deliver your development.

Introduction

Our vision for Peacocke

Ko te aaheinga o te hanga he waahi ataahua, he waahi toiora ki Nukuhau.

We're enabling the development of an attractive and sustainable community in Peacocke.

Peacocke is one of Hamilton's greenfield growth areas that will be developed over the next few decades into a great place to live for up to 20,000 Hamiltonians.

Development in Peacocke is more than just bricks and mortar – it's about building and nurturing a vibrant and sustainable new community. We want Peacocke to become a high-quality urban environment that is based on best practice urban design principles, accessible design, environmental responsibility, and positive social wellbeing outcomes.

The design of new developments should complement the things that make Peacocke unique while creating neighbourhoods that people love to live in and Hamiltonians can be proud of in the future.

This can be achieved, in part, through providing varied housing styles and densities, easy transport connections, accessible neighbourhoods for all ages and mobility levels, and quality open spaces. Protecting and enhancing the natural environment, and celebrating our cultural heritage is also integral to the vision for Peacocke.

Tino pai tip – Our plan for Peacocke sets minimum density targets for housing ranging between 30 to 45 homes per hectare.

Peacocke is unique

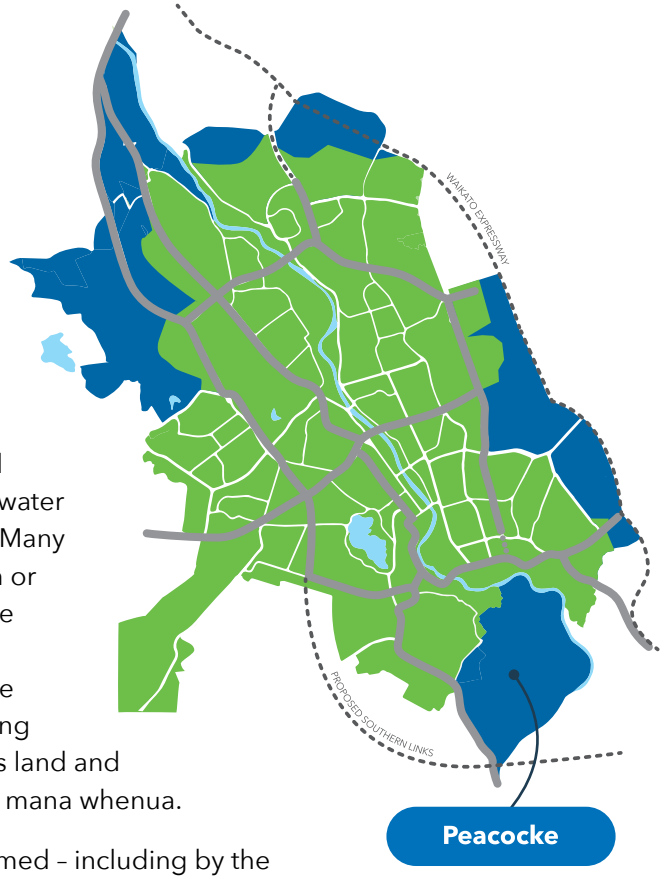
Location

Peacocke is approximately 740 hectares and located in the south-west of Hamilton Kirikiriroa. Peacocke is close to the central city, hospital, and the University of Waikato. The proximity to nearby suburbs, the wider city and Waikato River offers the potential for extensive cycling and walking routes as well as other opportunities for play and access to nature. Peacocke's location makes it the ideal place for a new neighbourhood with higher density housing suited to a range of residents.

History

The area now known as Peacocke is also known as Nukuhau, which is the traditional Maaori name for the whenua (land). Traditionally, the area was inhabited by five hapuu (subtribes) – Ngaati Maahanga, Ngaati Wairere, Ngaati Korokii-Kahukura, Ngaati Tamainupoo and Ngaati Hauaa. These hapuu have ancestral connections to the Peacocke area so they are known as mana whenua and kaitiaki (guardians) of the land, waterways, and historic sites. Since the 1650s, the area has been home to people living and travelling along the Waikato River and throughout the wider region. Alliances between Waikato and Maniapoto tribes formed in the 1750s saw increased numbers of people travelling north and south between the two regions and throughout Peacocke. The awa (river) became a main transport and communication route for Maaori, making the land along the river even more important.

By the time Europeans first visited in the 1830s, Maaori had extensively settled the area with many sites holding cultural significance to mana whenua. The 1860s brought the Waikato land wars and whenua raupatu (confiscation of Maaori land) to the region.



Significant cultural sites in Peacocke include paa (settlements), urupaa (burial sites), borrow pits and freshwater sources like puna (springs). Many of these sites are located on or near the Waikato River or the Mangakootukutuku Gully.
The strong connection of the whenua, awa and surrounding environment means that this land and wider area are significant to mana whenua.

The area has since been farmed – including by the Peacocke family from which the area gained its name – and was officially included within Hamilton's boundary in 1989.

To learn more about some of the history and sites of significance in Peacocke, check out the Nukuhau Cultural Assessment as part of the Peacocke Structure Plan.

To view the Nukuhau Cultural Assessment visit hamilton.govt.nz/PlanChange5.

Tino pai tip – Hamilton City Council uses double vowels in te reo Maaori to represent a long vowel sound as it is the preference of Waikato-Tainui.

Habitats in Peacocke will be restored for indigenous lizards like the copper skink.

The pekapeka-tou-roa is a taonga (treasure) of our city that we need to protect now and safeguard for future generations as Hamilton grows.

Nature

Peacocke is already home to native and exotic plants, native birds, fish, lizards, and other wildlife. This is in-part thanks to the river frontage and gully networks that cross over the area. Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) and open spaces have been identified where there is ecological significance in order to provide protection from inappropriate development.

One of the native species that these natural and open space areas will help is the critically endangered pekapeka-tou-roa (the long-tailed bat). The pekapeka-tou-roa roost locally and have flight paths that cross Peacocke, its gullies, and the Waikato River. Hamilton is unique as it is one of only a few urban environments in the country with long-tailed bat populations living in the city.

To protect and ensure the continued presence of these taonga (treasures) in Peacocke and wider Hamilton, development will need to be designed and constructed in a way that responds to and protects their habitat. This also presents an opportunity to enhance the value of development in and around these natural areas.

Design outcomes for Peacocke

Achieving our urban design outcomes in Peacocke will help make sure new neighbourhoods are safe, attractive and desirable places to live.

Respect and restore the environment

Peacocke has a rich and diverse ecosystem located around the Mangakootukutuku Gully and Waikato River. New developments should contribute to the restoration and enhancement of the natural environment.

Have more homes in the right places

Sites that are near shops, public transport and cycling routes, parks, and schools are suited for more intensive development, allowing more people to live close to the things they need and want.

Accessible for all people

Not everyone can drive, walk, or cycle with ease. Incorporating accessible design helps make getting around safer for everyone and is becoming more important as the population ages.

Provide a high quality of living

Everyone deserves to live in a neighbourhood and home that they can be proud of and love. Development should contribute to a high-quality urban environment that is safe, attractive, healthy, and easy to live in on a day-to-day basis, regardless of age and mobility levels.

Be sustainable

Sustainable development enables reduced energy consumption, water use, and waste reduction. It is important to consider the embodied carbon of materials used, as well as choosing materials that are durable, that last the test of time and are low maintenance.

Be well-connected

Peacocke will be developed in line with Hamilton's vision for a city that is easy to get around for all people and all modes of transport. Making sure development is connected to the transport network for walking, cycling, public transport, and private vehicles is key.

Recognise and promote local culture and history

Bordered by the Waikato River, Peacocke has a unique history with many sites of significance for mana whenua. Early engagement with mana whenua will provide the best guidance to appropriately acknowledge and reflect the cultural diversity, history, and features in developments.

Urban design

Urban design is a people-centred approach to creating urban environments. Urban design is not just about how buildings look, it is about how buildings, places and spaces function, interact and integrate with people and the environment.

Ultimately, urban design is about creating liveable and functionable places for everyone. It attempts to maximise the positive outcomes of developments by improving the impact they have on the quality and safety of public space and surrounding areas.

The application of good urban design principles is key to improving people's wellbeing and creating places that are easy to live in. As an area develops with more homes built closer together, it's important to make sure development has positive impacts on the neighbourhood and the daily lives of people that will call these areas home.

Amenity

In this guide, the term 'amenity' is used to describe anything that makes a place pleasant or convenient to live in and contributes to a high quality of living. Creating and protecting amenity is a core goal of urban design.

Aspects of good amenity can include:

- quality of a place, including its character and aesthetics
- comfort
- safety
- privacy
- accessibility.

Things that contribute to good amenity can range from easy access to shops, services, and schools, to quality open spaces, footpaths, and landscaping down a street. All developments have the potential to create and protect amenity.

Urban design and consenting support

Council can provide urban design and consenting assistance through the **Urban Design Advisory Panel** – an independent group of local urban designers, planners, engineers, and architects that can review and provide feedback on proposals. This is a free, independent service. Using the Panel can make the consenting process quicker by helping identify and resolve any urban design issues at the start of the design process.

To find out more about the Panel and requesting a meeting, visit hamilton.govt.nz/UrbanDesign.

Developers and landowners can also meet with Council staff to discuss development projects, check what resource consenting requirements there might be, and the expected process for consents.

To learn about pre-application meetings, visit hamilton.govt.nz/pre-application-meeting.

Benefits of better urban design

Achieving good urban design can have economic, environmental, cultural, and social wellbeing benefits such as[1]:

- safer and more inviting neighbourhoods
- more prosperous local economies
- better public health
- greater social equity
- improved social cohesion and community identity
- increased value of land and return on investment
- reduced emissions
- more sustainable use of resources
- improved resilience to climate change.

Well considered urban design can deliver more attractive subdivisions and communities. This can increase demand for homes and produce greater returns on investments. Reduced management and maintenance costs, more productive workplaces, and a positive reputation for developments are less tangible but still significant benefits of better urban design.

1. Ministry for the Environment. 2005. The Value of Urban Design – The economic, environmental and social benefits of urban design. Wellington, New Zealand.

Engaging with mana whenua

Our design outcomes expect developments to integrate and acknowledge the rich history and cultural sites of Peacocke. Developers should engage early and at the right time with mana whenua and iwi (Waikato-Tainui) during the development process.

Several Waikato-Tainui hapuu (subtribes) have mana whenua (ancestral connections) to Peacocke including:

- Ngaati Maahanga
- Ngaati Wairere
- Ngaati Korokii-Kahukura
- Ngaati Tamainupoo
- Ngaati Hauaa.

Early engagement with Waikato-Tainui iwi, mana whenua, and their own environmental management plans is key to successful relationships and will make sure developments progress smoothly through design and consenting stages.

Preparing draft plans, concepts, or ideas of what the development is set to achieve will help with initial engagement. Engaging early and in the concept development stage can save time and cost compared to making changes once detailed design has been completed. Council's Planning Guidance Unit and Amorangi Maaori Unit can help connect developers with mana whenua in the area.

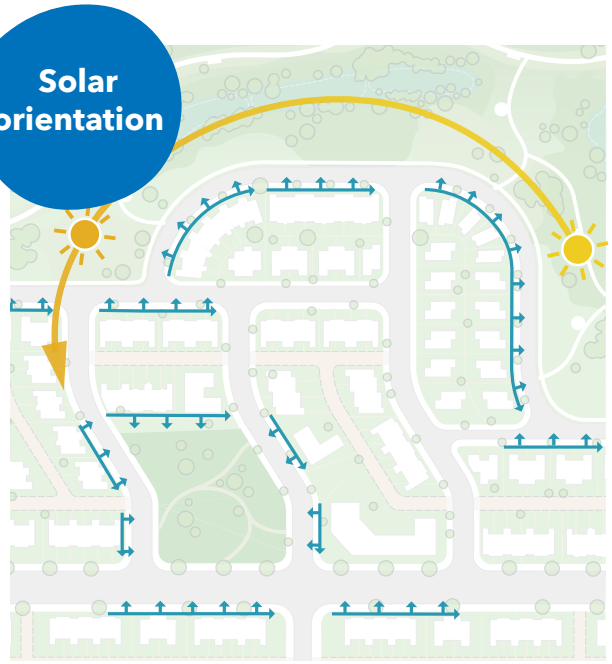
Developers should consider the following mana whenua aspirations as part of development planning and design:

- be kaitiakitanga (protecters and guardians) over their traditional lands
- participate in the development planning process
- have opportunity to live on their lands once again
- recognise pre-European Maaori history
- promote to the community the significance of Peacocke for mana whenua.

Context

Considering context

To know how a site fits into the bigger picture, an understanding of the wider setting is needed. It's important we understand the characteristics that make up the immediate, local, and regional surroundings and how development integrates with its context.



Tino pai tip – Neighbourhood blocks that run north-to-south with east and west facing properties tend to offer better access to sunlight, particularly for medium density developments.

Topography

Consider how development, including the street and property layout, can work with the contours of the site, reducing the need for things like retaining walls or steep streets – improving the area's accessibility. Where possible, streets and footpaths should follow the contour of the area.

Natural hazards

Development design must reduce and manage the impact of natural hazards. For example, flooding impacts can be reduced via comprehensive stormwater management, while good planting and maintenance can help reduce erosion and slips from occurring.

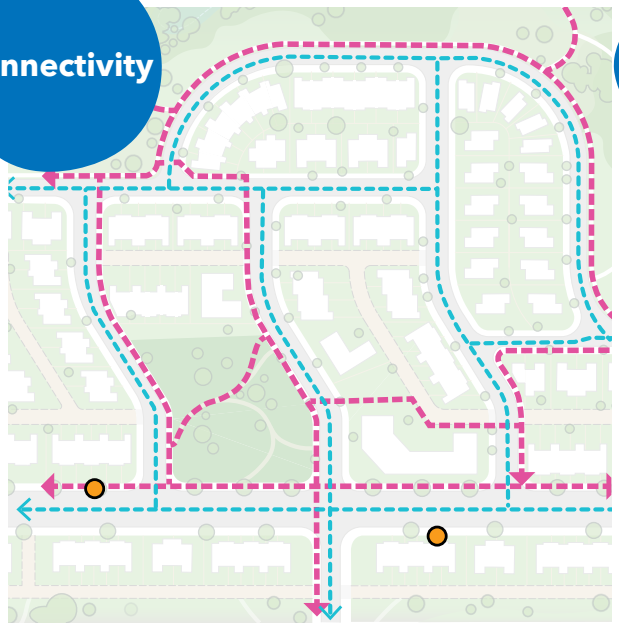
Space for nature

Development should integrate with, protect and restore the natural environment. The impacts from development on gullies and open space will need special consideration. Designing around nature includes adopting earthworks and lighting plans that are sensitive to protected areas, setting back development from protected areas, and landscaping that enhances natural space.

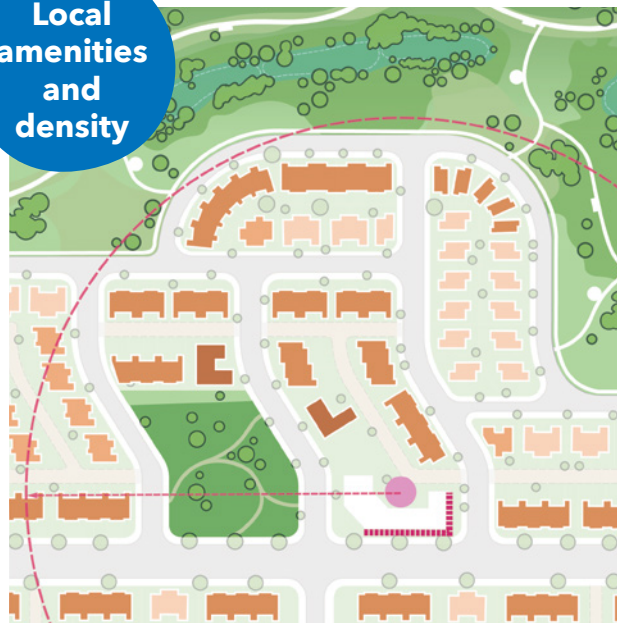
The sun

How a site is laid out will determine future homes' access to sunlight and levels of shading onto neighbouring properties. The design of subdivision and homes should allow for north, east or west facing indoor and outdoor living areas.

Connectivity



Local amenities and density



Culture and history

Appropriate responses to the cultural features and rich history of the area are best determined by early engagement with mana whenua and other experts such as archaeologists.

Transport connections

Consider the site's location and how it will integrate with the wider transport network, including different modes of transport and peoples' mobility levels.

Things nearby

Consider nearby shops, services, natural and public spaces, including gullies and the river. Consider how to maximise the benefits these places offer to residents, including how people can access and use them.

Location and types of homes

Peacocke is set up for higher density housing. Look for opportunities to increase density in areas that maximise value from amenity and other infrastructure. Areas close to shops, open spaces, public transport, and cycleways are often great locations for higher densities.

Tino pai tip – An average able-bodied person is more likely to walk up to 800m or around ten minutes for something nearby. Think about where people might walk to and how the development's layout makes this as easy, direct and enjoyable as possible for people of different ages and abilities.

Subdivision

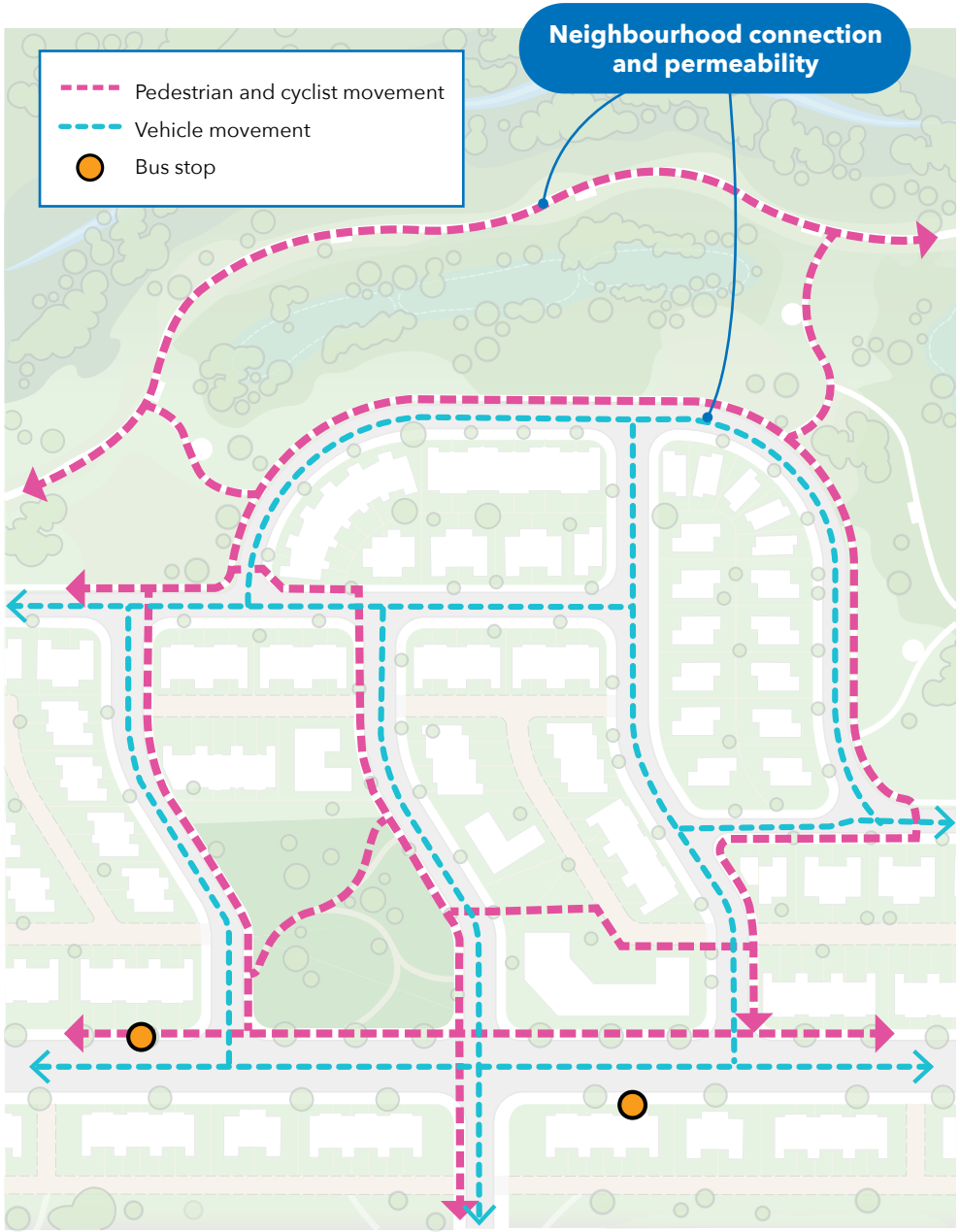
Layout

Determining the subdivision and layout of an area is a crucial step that underpins the achievement of good community and urban design outcomes. The pattern of streets, properties, stormwater infrastructure and open spaces determined at the subdivision stage can impact the future character and amenity of that immediate and wider area. Subdivision and land-use planning should be done together.

Connected neighbourhoods

- Streets, footpaths, and cycleways should seamlessly connect to the wider transport network, promoting clear access to key destinations in Peacocke including shops, services, public spaces, and other neighbourhood features.
- Provide easy to see and step-free pedestrian links to nearby shops and services, bus stops, adjacent public open space, or communal open space.
- The width and length of neighbourhood blocks should enable easy walkability in and around the neighbourhood. Blocks that are too big or long can discourage walking and cycling due to the need to cover more distance to get to destinations.
- Cul-de-sacs should only be used where necessary to respond to site constraints, such as topography. Where they are used, they should be short, and the layout should maintain connectivity across the wider subdivision area. Where possible, provide walking and cycling connections at the end of the cul-de-sac to connect to the wider walking and cycling network.
- Ensure footpaths are wide enough for all users. A footpath width of at least 1.8m allows two people to walk side by side or pass each other.
- Subdivision design should consider where and how people can cycle around safely, providing transport choices and recreational opportunities. Safe cycleways are separated from the road, continuous and direct.

Tino pai tip – Neighbourhood blocks between 60m to 80m in depth and 120m to 160m in length allow good ease of access around them while still enabling flexibility for a range of housing types.



Safe and attractive neighbourhoods

- A neighbourhood with safe and attractive streets and spaces can improve the desirability of an area and provide wellbeing benefits for residents.
- The placement of lots along a street can impact on the future safety of that street. Ensuring properties have good street frontage provides opportunity for passive surveillance and improved feelings of safety in an area.
- Open spaces also benefit from passive surveillance. Streets bordering an open space provide better passive surveillance outcomes than the backs of homes.

Tino pai tip – Passive surveillance is a key principle of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). Further guidance on CPTED principles are provided by the Ministry for the Environment at environment.govt.nz.

- Ensure properties are laid out so that their main 'fronts' face each other across the street, and their back yards also face each other. Avoid scenarios where a home has its back to the street. This maintains areas of privacy for residents in their home.
- Street and road design influences the safety, and the type of activities people use those spaces for. Street widths, speed limits, and other features can help create a safe street environment for all people.
- Minimising the frequency of driveways and their width over footpaths and separated cycleways can help improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as improving street amenity for residents by allowing more space for landscaping.
- Provide ample room for mature trees along street berms, public space, and private properties. Landscaping and street trees can help improve the use of transport networks by making them pleasant to be in. Street trees and landscaping provide shade, regulate local temperature, and improve wellbeing outcomes of residents.

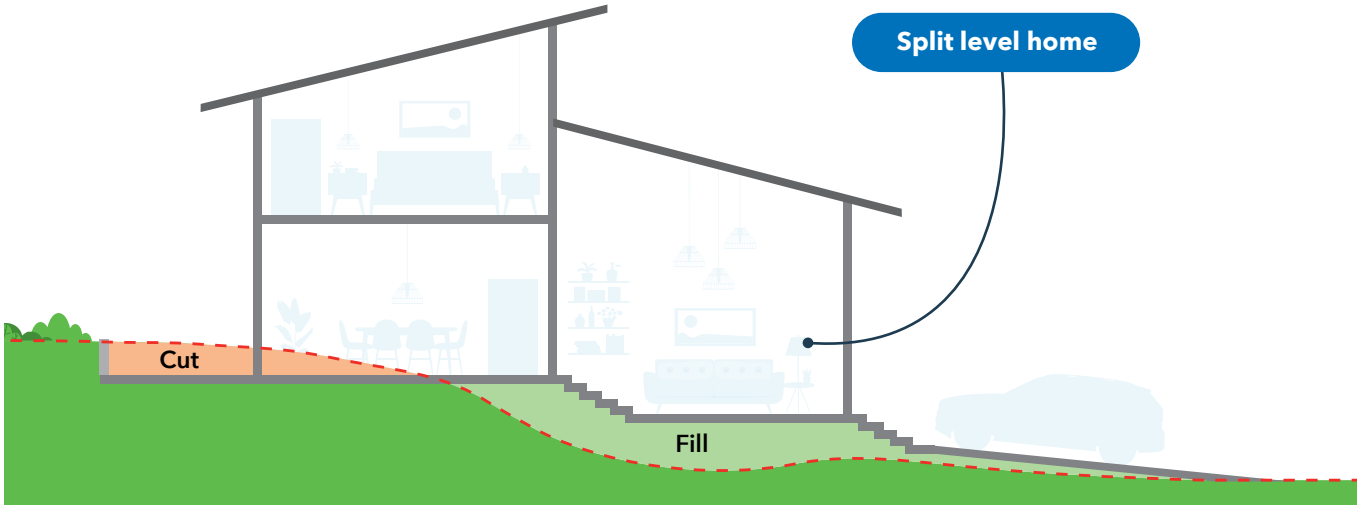
Accessing density

- Different homes and densities require different ways of being accessed. To enable higher densities of homes, such as terraced housing, rear lanes should be considered. Rear lanes are one way of reducing the number of driveways and garages disrupting the street corridor, improving street safety and amenity outcomes.
- When designing rear lanes, ensure they are wide enough for the vehicles that will use the space (such as rubbish trucks), promote a low-speed environment, have appropriate lighting, and do not become unpleasant to be in. The use of different surface materials and landscaping along the rear lane can help achieve a low-speed environment that does not reduce the amenity for surrounding properties.
- Where rear lanes are not suitable for the density or types of homes intended, consider if driveways can be paired with neighbouring properties to reduce the frequency of driveways interrupting footpaths.
- Rubbish and recycling bin collection points should be a part of planning the street corridor, rear lane design, and property layout. Rubbish and recycling trucks should not have to reverse. Make sure there is enough clear space for bin collection for all homes without blocking footpaths, cycle paths, parking spaces or driveways.

Tino pai tip – If a lot has a street front of less than 7.5m, a rear lane should be provided for vehicle access and parking. Where rear lanes are provided, ensure private ownership and maintenance arrangements are clear.

Consistent and comprehensive earthworks

- Undertaking earthworks comprehensively during the subdivision phase helps ensure a consistent layout across the development area. This will help improve future accessibility and attractiveness of the area by managing gradients and the location and extent of retaining walls across the subdivision.
- It is important to recognise that higher levels of density will require more thoughtful and comprehensive earthworks.
- Where possible, earthworks should reflect the contours and topography of the subdivision area by avoiding large cuts and fills. Streets and properties can be orientated to work with and follow the contours of an area to minimise the need for large retaining walls or steep access ways. For example, homes can 'split-level' across a site, reducing the need for retaining walls.
- Where retaining walls are required, these should have a low visual appearance by being stepped across a property, or with space in-between walls for landscaping. Large-scale retaining walls along the street front can detract from the attractiveness and safety of the neighbourhood.
- Where retaining walls require a safety fence on top, ensure the combine wall and fence does not block sunlight from reaching future living spaces on the property or neighbouring sites.



Local culture and history

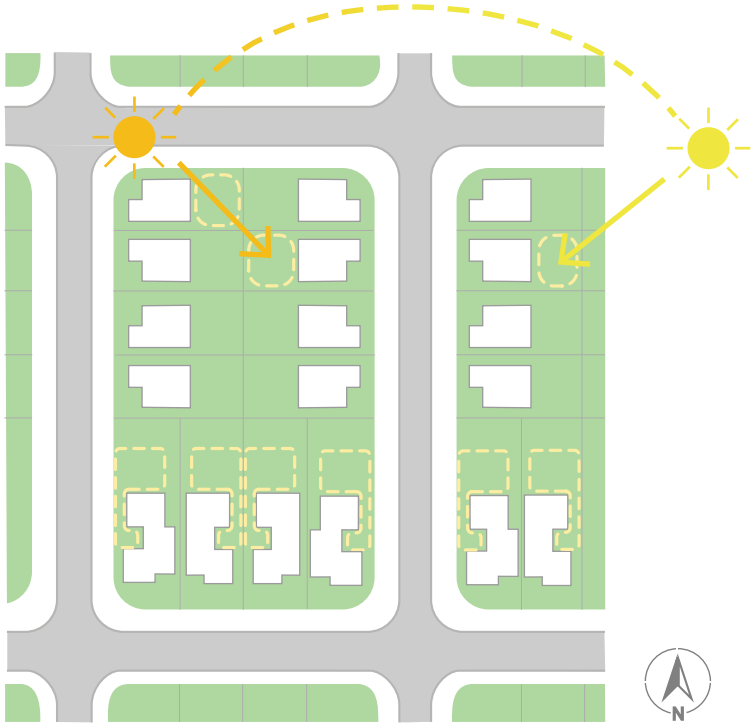
- Early engagement and collaboration with groups such as mana whenua and other specialists will inform how development should reflect the cultural and historic features of the area.
- Where subdivision and development includes or is near any sites of cultural or historic significance, engage with mana whenua to gain the most appropriate design direction.

Different types of homes

- Lots should be placed with the context of the area in mind as well as the privacy of those future homes. This means providing density in the right places, and providing a range of allotment sizes and shapes that enable a variety of housing types.
- Areas that are conveniently close to facilities such as local shops and public transport, present opportunities for greater densities.
- Areas of open space, such as parks and reserves, provide high levels of amenity. Locating higher levels of density near these amenity spaces can help maximise the use and value of those spaces, while adding value to the development and residents' wellbeing.
- When considering the topography of the area, lower levels of density might be more suitable where the land is steeper.

Access to sunlight

- As more homes are built closer together, it's important for homes and their neighbours to have access to as much sunlight as possible.
- The direction that neighbourhood blocks and properties face along with the width and depth of properties can influence and determine the layout of future homes, such as where indoor and outdoor living areas are located on a site, and their sunlight access.
- Blocks and streets that run north-south with homes facing east or west tend to allow better sunlight access compared to blocks that run east-west which can mean some homes are south-facing.
- Where homes are unable to face east or west:
    - facing north, a wider street frontage can benefit sun access opportunities as outdoor living areas can be located in the eastern or western side of the home instead of south. Upper-floor living can also improve sunlight access to living rooms.
    - facing south, deeper back yards can allow for sun in these areas.



Tino pai tip – When providing lots for terraced housing, ensure they are orientated towards the sun with plenty of windows to allow for solar access and space to live comfortably. In addition, try to avoid creating north facing garages which can reduce the amount of sunlight that can reach inside a home.

The environment

Peacocke is defined by its natural and cultural features, including the Mangakootukutuku Gully network, Waikato River and the native flora and fauna that live in this area. Subdivision should be laid out and managed in a way that protects and enables opportunities to enhance the natural environment and cultural features.

Allow space for nature

- Natural features, such as areas of vegetation, open space, and street landscaping, contribute to the local ecosystem and amenity, creating an attractive neighbourhood.
- Natural open spaces and parks should be provided across development areas in line with the Peacocke Structure Plan and Council's Open Space Policy. In general, parks and open space should be no more than a five to ten minute walk, or 400m-800m from every home.
- Trees should be along all streets, with the largest along main streets and public spaces. Street trees provide amenity for residents and transport users. They also have the potential to contribute to the wider ecosystem and biodiversity of the neighbourhood. Urban vegetation can also help regulate the temperature of an area. This is particularly important as climate change increases temperatures in urban areas.
- Existing, mature vegetation should be retained wherever possible.
- Along street berms and within properties, make sure there is sufficient space for new trees to become mature and large.
- Select tree species and their planting location in co-ordination with features of the site like driveways and lamp posts to avoid conflicts of use and future maintenance issues.

Think about stormwater management early

- Early consideration of stormwater management for development is part of good design and planning.
- Designing resilient stormwater networks is important given the impacts of climate change, such as more extreme rainfall events.
- Comprehensive stormwater management of an area will help:
  - Reduce impact of extreme weather events like floods.
  - Improve freshwater quality of streams and the Waikato River.
  - Create valuable amenity features and spaces for the neighbourhood and community like ponds, wetland areas and other multi-use spaces.

Create accessible open spaces

- Easy access should be provided to natural and open spaces for the community whether by foot, bike, bus, or car.
- Streets and pedestrian networks should follow and border natural and open spaces, providing open access to these areas.

Tino pai tip – At least half of an open space should have public streets bordering the area. As well as improving accessibility to that open space, this can also improve the safety of the area by allowing passive surveillance into the open space.

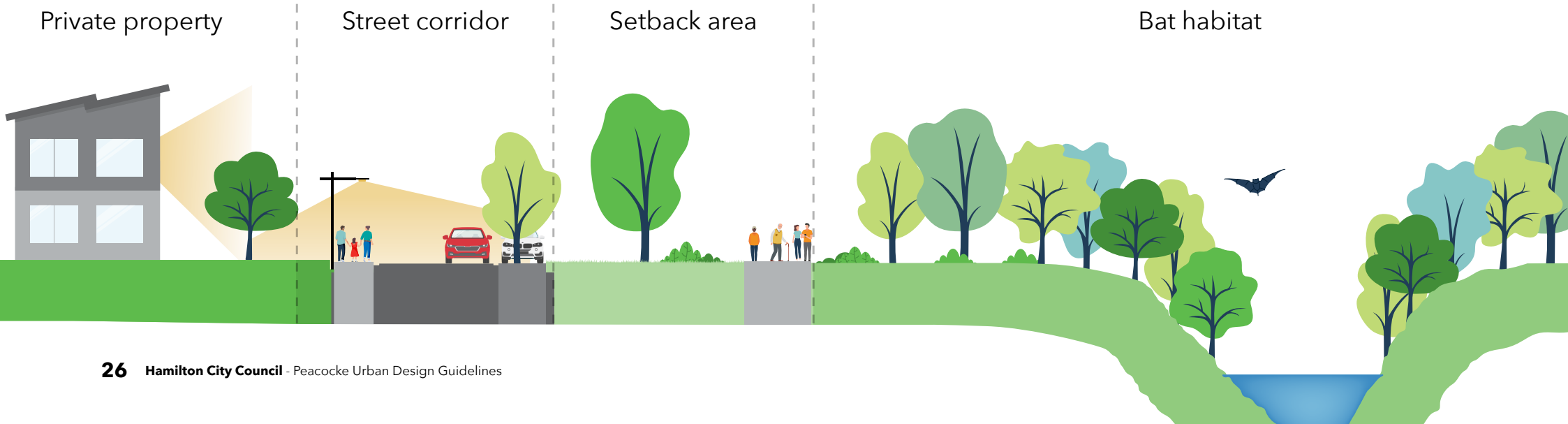
Urban heat island effect

Urban areas are often hotter compared to rural and open areas as they have limited natural spaces, few trees and less vegetation that is cooling and provides shade. Large areas of hard surfaces and buildings generate heat and limit natural ventilation in urban areas. To mitigate the urban heat island effect, make sure there are ample open green areas, space for mature vegetation to grow throughout neighbourhoods, reduced areas of hard surfaces and more conscious building design.

Protect bat habitat

- Artificial lighting can have a negative impact on native wildlife, including the critically endangered pekapeka-to-roa, impacting on their flight paths, feeding, and roosting areas. It is critical to manage the light spill from street lighting and future homes to ensure the continued presence of these native species in our city.
- The space between urban development and bat habitat, known as a setback area, provides a buffer where light intensity reduces before reaching habitat areas. Landscaping of these areas can help reduce light reaching natural open spaces.
- The placement of street lighting near natural spaces should be designed in a way that minimises unnecessary light spill, such as by being directed away from protected areas and being as low to the ground as possible.
- The location of lots, buildings and lighting should take into consideration the light spill that may be produced onto bat habitats. The use, placement and design of internal and external lights, landscaping, and other building features can help reduce light spill. Outdoor lights, such as balcony or security lights, should be low in height, downward facing, and have motion sensors or time limits if possible.

The unique natural and open spaces across Peacocke provide protection, vital habitat, and flight paths for the critically-endangered pekapeka-tou-roa.



Building design and layout

Designing around public spaces

Public space is any area that can be accessed freely by the public and includes areas such as streets, laneways, parks, gullies, and waterways. Better connection between homes and public spaces can help promote and protect amenity, including improved safety, attractiveness, and character of the neighbourhood.

Homes should be orientated towards public space. When buildings don't face public space, this can reduce the safety of an area or simply make it a less attractive or desirable place to be in.

Overlooking public space

- Where a home has frontage to a public area such as a park or street, locate living rooms such as kitchens or dining rooms with windows that look out over public spaces.
- Maximise the amount of windows and balconies for habitable rooms in locations that overlook public space while also maintaining privacy of the home. Where residents can 'over look' public spaces, this will support safer neighbourhoods by helping reduce anti-social behaviour.
- Look for opportunities where homes can be elevated slightly higher than near-by footpaths and streets while maintaining easy access to the home. Homes that sit above the street level provide more privacy to residents, especially along major street corridors.

Facing the street

- Face homes towards the street that they are on.
- The facade facing the street should feature the defining architectural elements of the building. This includes the front door being clearly visible from the street, providing direct pedestrian access, adding windows or balconies, and other architectural features facing the street.

Fencing and landscaping

- Along street fronts and other public space, use low-height and visually permeable fencing and walls that balances an active and safe street or open space with privacy of individual homes. Try to keep fences along a street at 1.2m or below, and at or below 1.5m along open space or park boundaries.
- Landscaping can help separate public spaces and private areas. Think about the height and type of landscaping that can create privacy and separation while also adding to the pleasantness of the wider area when compared to solid fencing.
- Make sure that any fencing or landscaping near the street and footpath does not block the view of drivers exiting a property or people using footpaths. For example, the height of fencing and vegetation should not block sightlines out of driveways.

Tino pai tip – Where a solid fence is needed, keep any portion above 1.2m visually permeable.

Attention to detail

- Good design is not achieved by mistake. Visually interesting and varied external building design improves the character, pleasantness and interest in a development and wider area.
- Look to use different material and cladding choices, colours, and other architectural elements along the street front.
- Place things like air conditioning units, rain tanks and gas fittings out of view from the street. Integrate other fittings like plumbing into the overall building design. Colour matching or using complimentary materials can help achieve an integrated design.
- Larger developments should combine a consistent design style with variety to create cohesion while avoiding a monotonous streetscape that lacks identity.

A friendly street

- Design homes to reduce the dominance of garage doors, parking spaces and driveways. When there are too many driveways crowding a footpath, this can create an unsafe environment for children playing on the street, and people walking or cycling, while also reducing the amenity for the surrounding neighbourhood.
- Rear lanes can be provided in higher density developments, such as terraces and apartments, and where properties have narrow street frontages.
- Where garages are provided from a street, set them back behind the main façade of the building to reduce their visual impact.
- Consider pairing driveways to limit interruption of footpaths and cycleways.
- Provide landscaping to visually break-up paved areas and to help reduce and soften the visual impact of parking, rear lanes, and large paved areas.

Tino pai tip – To reduce the dominance of garaging along a street, the width of garaging and car parking facing a street should not exceed 50% of the front width of the building. Garages should also be setback at least 0.5m behind the front facade of the building, rather than in front of it.

Better homes and spaces

Homes should be great places to live, regardless of the type of housing and density. Providing amenity through well designed and attractive homes and private spaces is always important but more so in communities where people are living closer to each other.

Gaining good sunlight access and outlook

- Indoor and outdoor living areas should be located where there is a northern aspect, optimising solar access. Aim for indoor living spaces to have at least three hours of direct sunlight throughout the day.
- The placement of all habitable rooms and their windows should be made with solar orientation in mind, as well as the views those windows provide to residents.
- Spaces such as gardens and balconies can help create privacy and separation for living areas adjoining public spaces such as streets or parks.

Tino pai tip – Buildings that are 14m deep or more should be at least 6m wide to avoid narrow and dark homes.

Privacy and shading

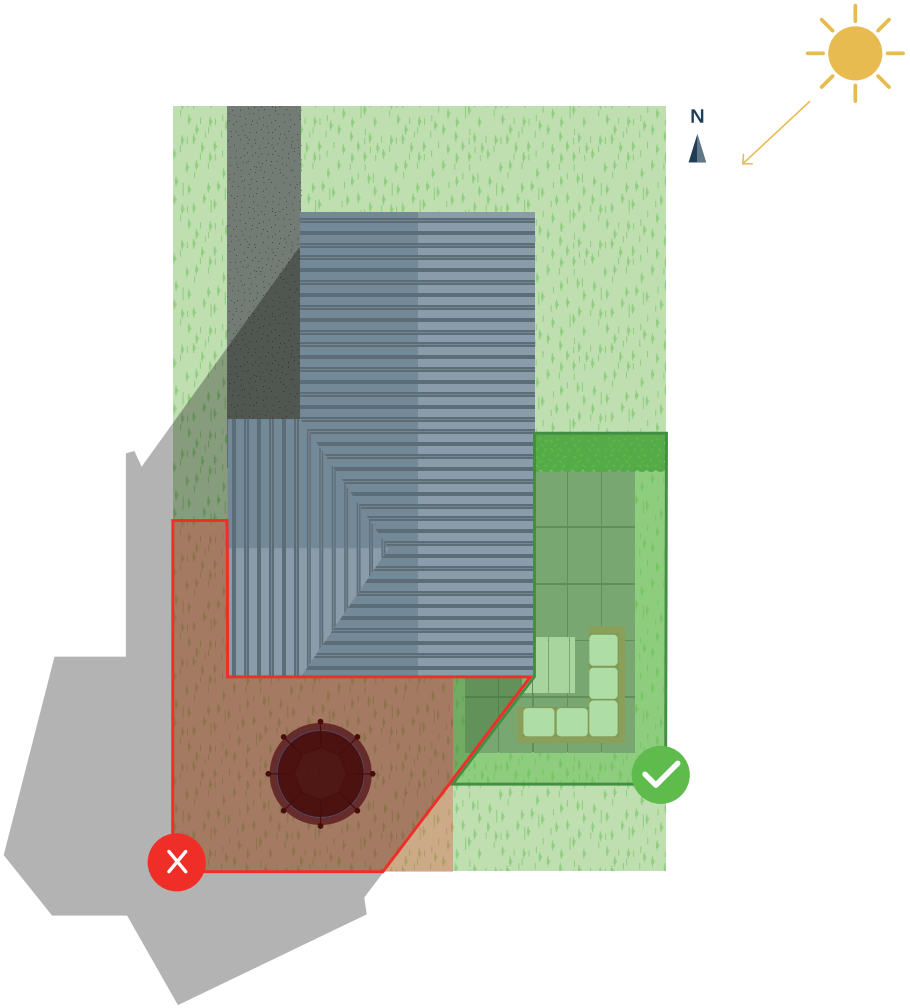
- The location of homes on a site, including their size and orientation should consider neighbouring properties. Being considerate of neighbours access to sunlight and privacy improves the quality of life for the whole neighbourhood.
- Protect privacy between homes by offsetting windows to avoid direct lines of sight into the primary living areas of neighbours, limit direct overlooking from upper-level windows and balconies, and use landscaping to screen private areas.
- Place homes closer to the street or public space it fronts onto. This helps create a larger private backyard and increased separation from rear neighbours.

Great outdoor living areas

- Whether for play, rest or entertainment, outdoor living spaces should be designed with their use in mind. Outdoor areas should be purposefully located, rather than being the remaining surplus land on a site.
- Outdoor living spaces should have direct sunlight, a size and shape that make them usable, and be easily accessible from indoor living spaces.
- The size of outdoor living areas should be proportional to the size of the home and number of people expected to use the space.
- Outdoor areas should be accessible for a range of different mobility levels. This can include elements like level entry doors and providing ample space for moving around outdoor furniture.
- Planting and materials should contribute to the useability of outdoor living spaces, be durable and easy to maintain. Planting can also assist with privacy, shade, and shelter of the outdoor area.

Communal outdoor areas

- Communal outdoor areas set aside for residents are common for larger and more intense residential developments. They provide open spaces for residents to enjoy and interact with each other, while creating 'breathing space' between large buildings with shade and green space.
- These spaces should be secure and safe and have clearly defined ownership lines between private, communal, and public spaces. Privacy, visual and noise impacts onto and from these spaces should be considered.



Tino pai tip – Aim for outdoor living areas to have at least five hours of sunlight throughout the day.

Right places for essentials

- Essential things people use often like washing lines, storage space, and rubbish and recycling bins should be easy to use and access.
- Washing lines should be in sunny locations.
- Rubbish and recycling bins should be stored in a purpose-built or designated space that is convenient to access and well connected to the point of collection.
- Bins and washing lines can make a space look cluttered and unpleasant so screening or hiding these spaces from everyday view should be considered. Screening should be durable, simple to access and integrated into the overall design.
- Communal bin storage should have enough space for all expected bins and be easy to access for both residents and collection vehicles. This location should also consider the visual, noise and odour impacts for nearby residents.
- Having purpose-built storage space that is conveniently located and large enough for items such as bikes or other household items is more important in high-density homes where there is less space available.

Tino pai tip – Bin storage should not be near living areas or have windows nearby.

Refer to our Design for Waste guide at fightthelandfill.co.nz for more tips and tricks on collection and storage of bins.

Landscaping and green spaces

- Vegetation and design of green spaces around a property can improve the daily lives of residents who live there and for those that pass by. Landscaping can also contribute to local biodiversity with native planting, and food resilience if vegetable gardens and fruit trees are planted.
- Well-designed landscaping should:
  - provide shade
  - include native plants for wildlife
  - provide privacy between private and public spaces
  - help define ownership boundaries
  - screen or visually break-up large, paved areas and service areas
  - soften the appearance of retaining walls.

Tino pai tip – Landscape plans should consider the long-term water and maintenance requirements of plants and screening materials.

Accessibility

Homes should be easy to live in and move around and should cater for all stages of life and different abilities. Homes should be conveniently laid out, accessible and considerate of people's age and mobility, all while protecting and providing amenity. The application of universal design principles can help achieve this outcome.

Prioritising ground floor living

- Include important spaces in a home, like living areas, bedrooms, and bathrooms on the ground floor. This can allow more people with different accessibility levels to live in and visit the home.
- In all internal living areas, ensure there is enough space for its intended use including furniture and space to move around easily.

Tino pai tip – To be wheelchair accessible, plan for at least a 1.5m diameter turning circle in all living rooms and ground floor bedrooms and bathrooms. Doors should be at least 910mm wide and exterior doors should be at the same level as the ground.

Clear pedestrian access

- Provide a clear and direct pedestrian path connecting between the street and the home's front door.
- Paths should be step-free if possible, relatively flat, continuous, direct, and wide enough for different mobility levels.
- The use of different materials, colours, textures, or landscaping can help provide clarity and direction.

Tino pai tip – Footpaths should be at least 1m-wide on private properties.

Safe spaces for people and vehicles

Make sure people using footpaths and driveways are safe by:

- Protecting drivers' sightlines by using low fences, careful selection and location of plants, and minimal use of retaining walls along the front of homes.
- Providing large enough car park spaces so parked cars don't block footpaths or access lanes.
- Creating low-speed environments in shared spaces by using different paved surfaces, textures, colours, and landscaping.
- Minimising the need for vehicles to reverse over footpaths and areas where people might be walking, cycling, or playing.
- Having outdoor lighting that is appropriate for safety and security.
- Ensuring off-street car parks have clear and direct pedestrian connections to homes and the surrounding streets or access lanes.

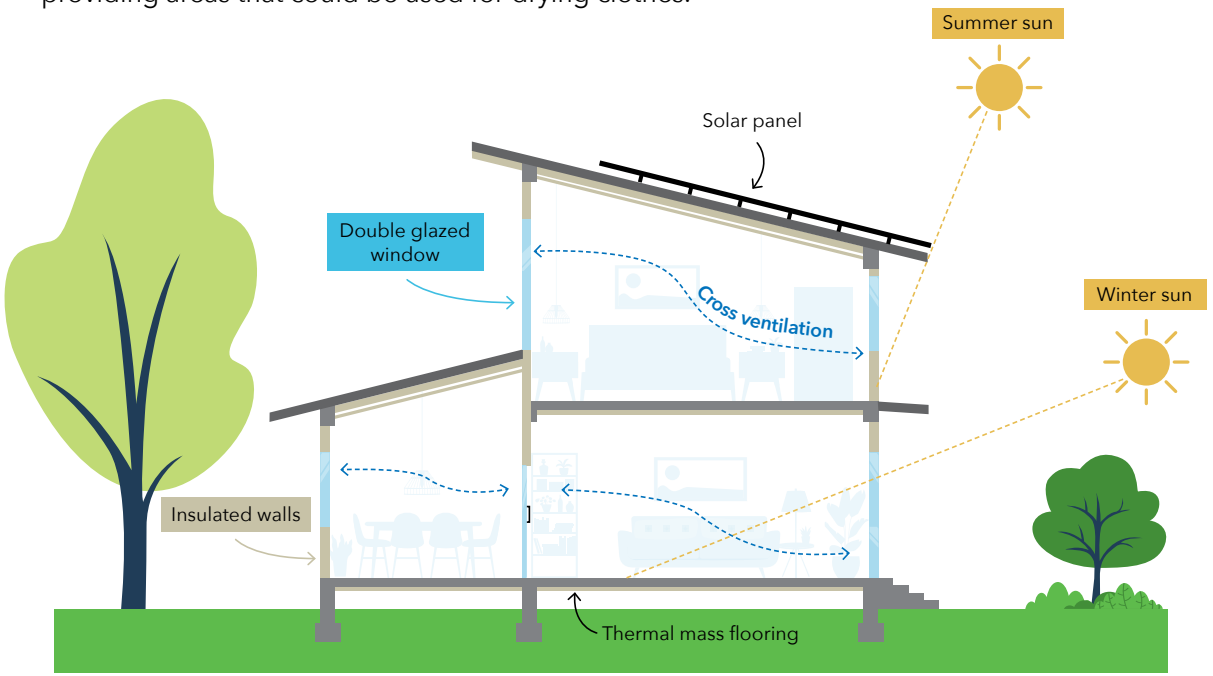
Sustainability

Sustainable thinking should be at the heart of every new neighbourhood. Development design should make it easy for residents to live a sustainable lifestyle. Developments should be conscious of the long-term changes expected in the environment from climate change and incorporate sustainability features in their design.

Tino pai tip – Our response to climate change is outlined in Our Climate Future: Te Pae Tawhiti o Kirikiriroa. To learn more, visit hamilton.govt.nz/climatechange.

Reduce home energy usage

- Consider passive design principles for new homes and buildings to reduce unwanted heat gain and loss. Use a north facing orientation towards the sun, thermal mass, insulation, and glazing to take advantage of natural sources of heating and cooling like the sun and breezes.
- The colours of external walls and roofs can impact the heating and cooling of homes. Darker colours absorb more heat which can increase the need for air conditioning in summer. Consider the use of 'cool colour' paints.
- Buildings can be designed to take advantage of renewable energy by having roof space and a suitable roof pitch for solar panels.
- Using outdoor space wisely can also help reduce energy consumption by providing areas that could be used for drying clothes.



Reduce the temperature of an area

Design should:

- Reduce hard surfaces around homes and buildings like paving. Hard surfaces can increase the temperature of surrounding urban areas – known as the urban heat island effect.
- Increase tree plantings and canopy cover to provide more shade and help regulate temperatures around buildings.
- Consider building materials and colours that can reduce temperatures in exposed areas.

Manage water wisely

Climate change is increasing the frequency and impact of extreme rainfall events and severe droughts. There are various ways a development's design can encourage efficient and sustainable water use, including:

- Rainwater tanks can supply water in and around the home.
- Appropriate on-site stormwater management via water reuse or ground soakage that can reduce the impacts from flood events.

Tino pai tip - Comprehensive stormwater management at the subdivision stage is the best way to reduce the impact of large flooding events.

Enabling sustainability

Consider construction materials and methods like the full material lifecycle, durability, maintenance requirements and embodied carbon of materials – the amount of carbon used to produce that product.

Include outdoor areas that could be used for drying clothes, composting, worm farms, and fruit and vegetable growing. These can allow residents to live more sustainably.

Consider low maintenance plants including ground cover, which can reduce the need for owning and using a lawn mower.

Providing space to store and charge e-bikes, scooters and electric vehicles is another example of enabling residents to live a more sustainable lifestyle.

Tino pai tip - Refer to our Building Without Waste Guide for more sustainable construction tips at fightthelandfill.co.nz/building-development.

Peacocke Renders


40

Hamilton City Council
Garden Place, Private Bag 3010, Hamilton

HamiltonCityCouncil
@hamilton_city_nz
07 838 6699

hamilton.govt.nz