



BUSINESS SCHOOL

## Retirement Policy and Research Centre

**To:** National Policy Statement on Urban Development Consultation,  
Ministry for the Environment,  
PO Box 10362,  
Wellington 6143

c/o [npsurbandevelopment@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:npsurbandevelopment@mfe.govt.nz)

### **Submission: Proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development**

**From:** Retirement Policy and Research Centre,  
Department of Economics,  
University of Auckland,  
12 Grafton Rd,  
Auckland 1142

**Contact:** Dr M.Claire Dale, [m.dale@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:m.dale@auckland.ac.nz), Tel: 09 9236968

10 October 2019

Thankyou for the opportunity to submit on the Proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development.

1. We support a National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) that aims to deliver quality urban environments and make room for growth.

The NPS-UD is weakened by the absence of any recognition of the demographic change occurring in varying ways in urban and rural environments. The World Economic Forum 2015<sup>1</sup> ranked population ageing as one of the five top global risks in terms of likelihood and impact. New Zealand's population is ageing rapidly, and this change will endure. In New Zealand, in addition to the ageing of the population, the proportion of 'old' is increasing. In 2017, the 65+ population was 15% of the total population of 4,474,549; by 2036, the 65+ population is projected to comprise 20% of the total population estimated at 5,437,570. The proportion aged 75+, and thus more likely to be frail and in need of care and support, is projected to double in the next 30 years.<sup>2</sup> Also, as New Zealand's Auditor General reported, "Uneven geographical distribution of the aged population adds complexity to demographic change and equity issues. Regional variation in ageing impacts on the young and old in need of care, and on the caregivers."<sup>3</sup>

A tool that would improve the effectiveness of this policy in achieving a quality urban environment and making room for growth would be incorporating the World Health

---

<sup>1</sup> World Economic Forum (2015). The Global Risks Report 2017. 12th Edition Insight Report. Geneva: World Economic Forum, The Global Competitiveness and Risks Team.

<sup>2</sup> Dale, M.C. (2018) Working Paper 2018-1. Improving intergenerational equity in New Zealand, Retirement Policy and Research Centre, University of Auckland.

<sup>3</sup> Controller and Auditor General. (2013). Using the United Nations' Madrid indicators to better understand our ageing population. Wellington: Controller and Auditor General, p. 3.

Organisation (WHO) age-friendly cities guidelines<sup>4</sup> to better adapt urban structures and services to the needs of older people.

The 8 domains focussed on in the WHO model are: outdoor spaces and the built environment, transport, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information, and community support and health services.

Critically, an age-friendly world enables people of all ages to actively participate in community activities and treats everyone with respect, regardless of their age.

2. We support the approach of targeting the most directive policies to our largest and fastest growing urban environments.

Our largest and fastest growing urban environments require a speedy, well-considered, evidence-based plan for action.

4. We support the proposed approach of the NPS-UD providing national level direction about the features of a quality urban environment.

The costs of researching and preparing an Urban Development Plan are significant, and while every urban environment is unique, the guidelines established at a national level can ensure local cost savings and national coherence in development.

In summary, we urge that New Zealand's ageing population be incorporated into the fundamental facts grounding the NPS-UDA, and the NPS-UDA also incorporate the WHO age-friendly cities and communities guidelines to ensure future urban structures and services are better adapted to the needs of all people.

---

<sup>4</sup> World Health Organization (2007). Global age-friendly cities: a guide. Geneva. At: [http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global\\_age\\_friendly\\_cities\\_Guide\\_English.pdf](http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf).