

# Housing intensification on agenda

By NICHOLAS BOYACK

Coronation Street-style terrace housing is not on the books but Hutt City Council is looking at major planning changes for parts of Epuni, Waterloo and the central city.

Residents are to get a say on proposed new rules, which could radically change the face of the city over the next 20 to 30 years.

The Policy and Regulatory Committee last week agreed to consult on new rules for parts of Epuni, Waterloo and the edge of the central business district.

In simple terms, the proposal seeks to encourage a more varied range of housing styles.

A recent article in *Hutt News* which included a reference to Coronation Street terraced housing resulted in a heated discussion on our Facebook page.

In reality, the proposal would not allow that but would result in a range of styles very different from the traditional single-storey house on a quarter acre.

General manager Kim Kelly said the work done by council officers identified a clear need to grow the city.

There is a shortage of greenfield land and that effectively leaves only one option, intensification.

Council policy is to have 6000 new homes and increase the population by 11,700 by 2032.

"Essentially we need more peo-



**Quarter-acre alternative:** The townhouse development designed by architect Roger Walker for Park Avenue in 2007 may be the kind of residential land intensification and new options for modern lifestyles that Hutt City Council is chasing.

ple...we just can't afford to sit still."

Senior planning officer Dan Kellow says a lot of work has gone into the proposal and the council has reached a point where a decision now has to be made.

Residents will worry the proposed rules will result in an immediate change to their neigh-

bourhood. But in reality, Kellow says, any change will occur over a long period.

Key aspects of the proposed rules include:

- Increasing the number of new residential properties with a minimum lot size of 300 sqm within 800 sqm of the Waterloo and Epuni train stations.

large sites within 400 metres of the Waterloo train station and CBD edge.

- Making it easier to develop multiple units on large sites. This will be done by allowing buildings to be nearer the road boundary and increasing the size of the allowable site coverage from 40 per cent to 50 per cent.

Policy analyst Allison Tindale last week told *Hutt News* that although many of the changes would be far-reaching, in most cases resource consent will still be needed.

Houses in Lower Hutt are steadily getting larger and with the lack of available land, that trend has to change.

The average size of houses here is 177 sqm and increasing. In Britain it is 77 sqm and getting smaller.

Kellow says a lot of work has gone into the proposals and the public now have the opportunity to support or reject the new rules.

The council wants to hear from residents throughout the city, not just those in the suburbs involved.

Tindale emphasises the council will need to change its District Plan and that will provide opportunities for public comment.

The council is also planning an open day for residents to meet council staff, and workshops.

- Submissions close on December 19. See the council website for more information.

- Making it easier to build semi-detached housing and townhouses. Proposed changes include reducing the minimum lot sizes from 400 sqm to 200 sqm and reducing parking requirements for semi-detached properties.

- Allowing three-storey apartments (up to 12 metres high) on