Introduction

Tauranga’s urban growth creates opportunities for developing a variety of uses within the same building or adjacent buildings. This is particularly relevant to supporting the residential intensification aims of the long-term regional growth strategy (SmartGrowth). The success of these developments will be based on the mix of activities and location, the quality of design and construction, and building capacity for adaptation over time.

In this guideline ‘mixed use’ refers to different but complementary activities accommodated on the same site. Different activities include shops, business offices, professional services, cafes, restaurants, educational centres, crèches, libraries, night clubs, gymnasiums, cinemas and residential units. A home business operating from a residential unit is not considered in this definition of mixed use.
Where mixed-use works

• Experience in other cities indicates that the most appropriate location for mixed use development is in and around the city business area and suburban town centres, and along arterial streets with public transport. These developments may be a single building or a whole urban block, which provide opportunities to live, work, and play within the same area. Activities must be a good fit with the immediate neighbourhood and agreed planning vision for the area.

• It is essential that the combination of uses are compatible and create additional benefits, not compromise occupants' and users' amenity, utility and enjoyment

• Mixed use without a residential component is appropriate and encouraged in most business locations. It can help create safe, efficient environments where the mix of activities can operate day and night without creating nuisance e.g. nightclubs in office buildings.

• Mixed use development, including residential units, must be within walking distance of high quality open space to balance the smaller outdoor living spaces of the units. The more valued mixed use residential buildings are within walking distance of amenities such as convenience shopping, bus stops and community facilities. Living in a compact walkable urban neighbourhood is an attractive alternative to the suburbs for people who want to live closer to work, use vehicles less, have easy access to entertainment, and low maintenance living spaces. Such places are suitable for different stages of life, young adults, empty nesters and elderly.

What mixed-use looks like

• Mixed use can take many forms. Good design is the most important factor to creating a successful mixed use development. Developers need to employ experienced designers who can balance the diverse and complex requirements of mixed use developments to create buildings that contribute to the public realm and function well for the occupants.

• Mixed use is based on making different uses ‘work’ together to create an outcome that gives an advantage to all of those uses.

• Mixed use is varied in scale. It can involve multiple uses in the same building, or a number of buildings located adjacent to another as part of one comprehensive development covering a whole urban block.
Bulk, form and scale

- Building mass, form and scale needs to be compatible with and considerate of the existing built environment. Consider how the development will shade the street, open space and neighbouring buildings, and how it will appear from public approaches.
- Break up horizontal mass by designing buildings to appear as groups of narrow buildings joined together.
- Manage horizontal and vertical mass by creating a base, middle and top to each building using variations in materials, colours and proportions for instance. Ensure each part is complementary to the whole. Step back very tall buildings from the street edge.
- If designing a comprehensive development consider stepping buildings up and down rather than using a uniform height. Emphasise height on corners, opposite open spaces and opposite street junctions to create landmarks which enhance way-finding.
- Build to the property boundaries at lower levels. Vary elevations above this.
- Create an interesting roofline. Raise and lower parts of the roof by varying parapets and roof form.
- If additional height is sought, focus on minimising horizontal bulk and vice versa. The combination of vertical and horizontal bulk creates the most adverse visual dominance.

Facades

- Reduce the appearance of building mass and avoid large flat walls by manipulating façade elements to create an interesting play of shadow and light.
- Recesses, windows and doors, projections such as decks and sunscreens should be in proportions and patterns that relate to positive elements in the immediate built environment.
- Use a variety of high quality materials and colours that have good tonal differentiation.
- Relate building elements to the human scale so that people can sense or observe a positive physical correspondence.
- House services within the building or screen from public view.
**Design Considerations**

**Street interface and entrances**

- To contribute successfully to their location, mixed use buildings must have active street frontages. Ground floors need to be non-residential spaces, with between 70-80% of the façade should be glazing if on a main street, and between 60%-70% on other street frontages.

- Day time activity will provide visual interest and passive surveillance of pedestrians. Limit tenancies to 7m-12m street frontage to create greater variety and visual interest. Avoid blank walls, reflective glass and window films at street level.

- In frontage situations internal floor levels should closely match external pavement levels to allow convenient level access. Avoid large retaining walls at street edges.

- Use the building to define the edge of the street. Ensure that footpaths are wide enough to allow flexibility of use of ground floor tenancies e.g. a bar, restaurant, or café may want to provide outdoor dining yet it is essential a clear pedestrian path along the street is retained.

- Provide a continuous canopy along all ‘main street’ edges, and canopies over all other entrances for shelter. Consider transparent canopies to allow sunlight through to the footpath.

- Ensure entrances and access to different uses are easily seen, safe and on direct public routes. Main entrances must be located on the street and not through a parking area, to support an active and interesting public realm.

- In some locations this will be achieved through regular individual entrances along a street, and in other locations it may be appropriate to share or cluster entrances to focus activity. For example, a new plaza may require concentrated movement and occupancy to ensure it is a safe and attractive public area.

- Consider investing in special paving or seating outside the building to reinforce an overall sense of a quality and care.

- Each business unit should be directly accessed off the street. If this is not possible, arrange business entrances off a combined logical circulation route from the street. Avoid individual entrances off long, indirect paths. Offices at street level require reception and office areas that relate directly to the street with good use of glazing to allow visibility in and out. Position reception desks so staff face the entrance.

- Locate staffrooms and balconies so that they are visible from the street, near key circulation and entry points. This helps convey a sense of activity, interaction and safety through surveillance.

- Public entrances need to be separate from residential entrances which are often communal lobby and circulation routes. Provide well lit secure access to residential units. Locate mail boxes in convenient and safe locations such as a lobby or entrance.

- To allow streets and public spaces to be faced by building ‘fronts’ ensure that ‘rears’ face other buildings, or onto service lanes.
Corners and landmark sites

- Use height to mark street intersections and terminations of key views.
- Use corner setbacks to create a public space at appropriate street intersections.
- Take the building around corners through the continuance of the key façade elements, awnings, or balconies.
- Corners can work well when prominent entrances to ground floor uses are included, particularly when the building line is projected or set back.
- Reinforce identity with additional façade detailing, materials and colour.
Transport and parking

- Mixed use developments work can help reduce car usage when good public transport and essential services are available nearby. Minimise car parking where alternative transport is provided.
- Encourage use of non-motorised transport by creating attractive, direct walking connections.
- Provide cycle stands in highly visible and accessible locations.
- Car parking needs to be well integrated with the building and open space within a development, and not dominate spaces.
- On-site car parking should be below or above street level so buildings directly front the street. Ground level parking should not be on main street frontages, but rather at the rear or side of the building with planting and well defined pedestrian ways.
- Provide short stay on-street parking to attract customers and visitors. Parking for shoppers or visitors should be closer to entrances than long-stay parking for residents and workers.
- Avoid vehicle crossings along a main street. Provide access from the lowest order street frontage or a rear service lane.
- Share vehicle crossings where possible, and consider different users with different operating times, sharing car parks.
- Consider space required for manoeuvring vehicles. Regular users become familiar with tighter and more complex manoeuvres, but shoppers and visitors should be provided with more space and easier manoeuvres.
- Provide dedicated loading bays for large trucks.

Open space and planting

- Mixed use developments need well-designed, high quality open space to cater for the number and diversity of users. Much of the open space will be multifunctional, providing outlook, access, car parking and connections. For best possible results, employ a landscape architect at the beginning of the project so the open space has high amenity and adds value.
- Landscape considerations include connections with open space and planting beyond the site, variety of surfaces for pedestrian paths and access ways, suitable trees and plants for softness, shade and colour.
Flexibility of use

- Design buildings to be flexible and adaptable over time. If the building structure is independent of internal walls, internal spaces can be altered with minimal energy, effort, or waste.
- The ground floor needs to have a minimum 4 metre height from top of slab to underside of first floor slab to allow for a variety of commercial/retail uses and associated servicing requirements to be fitted in the ceiling space. The next two floors should have a minimum 3.5 metre stud for potential office space.
- Offices and other business uses can locate at ground if no retail is required. Businesses that do not rely on direct customer access can be located further from ground level.
- Residential units should generally be above offices. However, some businesses like to occupy high value top floors with views. These will require separate access to protect the privacy and security of residents on lower floors.
- Consider buffers between different activity zones. Different uses can be separated vertically or horizontally. Offices on the street frontage can provide a horizontal buffer to traffic noise for residential accommodation behind. Courtyards and landscaping between can contribute to residential privacy and outlook.
Design Considerations

Signage and lighting

- Provide a consistent level of lighting along circulation routes including public footpaths, routes from parking areas and communal corridors.
- Provide a higher level of lighting at entrances.
- Design lighting to prevent glare or light spill nuisance for residents in the development or adjacent developments.
- Consider using solar panels to power lighting in public and communal areas.
- Reduce the need for entry signage by incorporating visual cues into the building fabric and pavement finishes.
- Make signage as small as possible. Use directory boards on multi-unit sites to reduce individual unit signage. Avoid footpath clutter by hanging signs overhead or in shop windows. Any billboards should sit within the building façade over an area that is free of windows.
- Use ‘temporary’ signs such as flags and banners that can be varied easily.

Service areas

- Consider the requirements for recycling and disposal of waste from the different uses in the development. Avoid the need for large amounts of waste to be put out on the street frontage for collection.
- Provide common refuse areas well screened from public view and located away from residential units. Consider securing these and providing roofing to reduce odour, visual and pest nuisance. Maximise opportunities for recycling or composting.
- Each unit should have its own internal waste storage, in addition to the main communal collection point.
- Ensure service vehicles can access refuse areas within the development.
Residential requirements

- Residential mixed use is most appropriate where it supports rather than competes with business activity. Conversely, only a few business uses are truly compatible with residential activity.
- Residential units within a mixed use building can add vitality and 24 hour use of space and immediate financial return that can help balance the typical longer-term payback on commercial development.
- Consider quiet offices as a buffer between noise-generating ground floor activities, and residential units above.
- Ensure access to residential units is secure, well lit and with clear sightlines. Entrances to residences need to be well separated from any late night entertainment businesses in the locality.
- Communal lobbies and circulation spaces need to be well maintained and cleaned regularly. Ensure suitable cleaning facilities are included in the communal area.
- The number of residential units in the building will indicate the level of communal amenity to be provided within the building e.g. waiting space in the front lobby, meeting room, small gym, tennis court, lap pool.
- Avoid reliance on only one or two residential unit layouts. Provide options so that buyers can prioritise for themselves solar access, visual outlook, or acoustic amenity.
- Ensure the living space receives the most sunshine and has some visual outlook, and at least one bedroom has excellent acoustic privacy.
- Use simple open plan layouts and locate doorways to minimise circulation space. Separate personal zones, bathrooms and bedrooms from communal living zones near the entrance. Allow for flexible furniture arrangements.
- A fundamental part of the Tauranga lifestyle is a high-quality connection with the ‘outdoors’. Ensure all residential units without direct connection to the ground have some private outdoor space. The size of a balcony or recessed terrace should relate to the size of the apartment. The minimum balcony area should be 6sqm with a minimum dimension of 1.8m. Vary balcony size and depth to vary the facade.
- Arrange balconies for sun, views and privacy. Complement the balcony by providing wide doors from the adjacent living space. Protect privacy through the use of screens, planter boxes and solid balustrades.

Main living spaces and balconies should be orientated for good outlook and solar access.

Amenities like a lap pool can be used to make an asset out of side or rear yard areas.

Balconies which provide outdoor living space to apartments, also vary the façade.

Glass and open framing allow more light and views from the inside, but less privacy from the outside.
Low impact design

- Orientate living spaces to north for the greatest possible exposure to sunshine. Include materials with high thermal mass for passive solar heat gain and reduced heating costs.
- Design to reduce energy use and material waste during construction, and energy consumption required during use of the building.
- Select appropriate durable materials to reduce life-cycle and maintenance costs. Select materials that have a low embodied energy and are environmentally safe.
- Limit the depth of buildings, and use high studs and tall windows to allow natural daylight and ventilation deep into the interior of the building.
- Utilise external louvers, screens, and shutters to reduce heat gain and glare but still allow ventilation. Air conditioning may be needed if external noise and air quality are a problem.
- Install energy efficient light fittings.
- Use semi-permeable pavers for car parks to allow some stormwater retention on site.
- Consider roof gardens and green roofs as a form of insulation, which can also provide outdoor amenity for occupants.
- Include swales and rain gardens to collect and filter to collect rain. Collect rainwater for flushing toilets and watering planting. Locate storage tanks in areas not visible to the public e.g. basements or under stairs.
- Provide dedicated vehicle washing areas to reduce the flow of pollutants into the stormwater system.

Acoustic insulation and noise

- Mixed use puts different activities and users in close proximity to one another. Do not rely on minimum statutory requirements to deliver acoustic privacy or amenity. Consider treatments such as double glazing, acoustic insulation, double walls with cavities, and special cladding to reduce the transmitted noise.
- Acoustic amenity starts with properly locating and orienting different spaces. Separate noise sensitive spaces from noise generating ones. Locate living spaces adjacent to living spaces, and bedrooms to bedrooms.
- Locate entrances and circulation areas for pedestrians, vehicles, and servicing, and mechanical or service plant areas such as air conditioning, lift shafts, and garbage chutes, away from noise sensitive areas.
- Buildings reliant on closed acoustic glazing to reduce external noise will also require air conditioning for fresh air supply.
- Where hard floor finishes are to be used, provide or anticipate space for features or finishes which can absorb frequencies which are easily reflected by these surfaces.