

Workshop - Council

NOTES ATTACHMENTS

Date: Tuesday 9 September 2025

Time: 10.15 am - 11.45 am

Venue: Camellia Chambers, Level 2, Civic Offices,  
53 Hereford Street, Christchurch  
Open session will be livestreamed

TABLE OF CONTENTS NGĀ IHIRANGI	PAGE
2. Plan Change 21 - Central City Noise; Pre-Notification Engagement - Consultation Feedback	
A. Plan Change 21 Central City Noise - 9 September 2025.....	3
4. Plan Change Programme - Plan Stop and Exemptions	
A. Plan Stop and Plan Change Exemptions - 9 September 2025.....	27



# Plan Change 21 Central City Noise

Pre-notification feedback Council information  
session

9 September 2025

## Overview

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- What is Plan Change 21?
- Recap on current District Plan approach
- Summary of Preferred Option for engagement
- Recap on other options considered
- Summary of engagement feedback
- Plan Stop implications
- Next steps
- Questions/Feedback

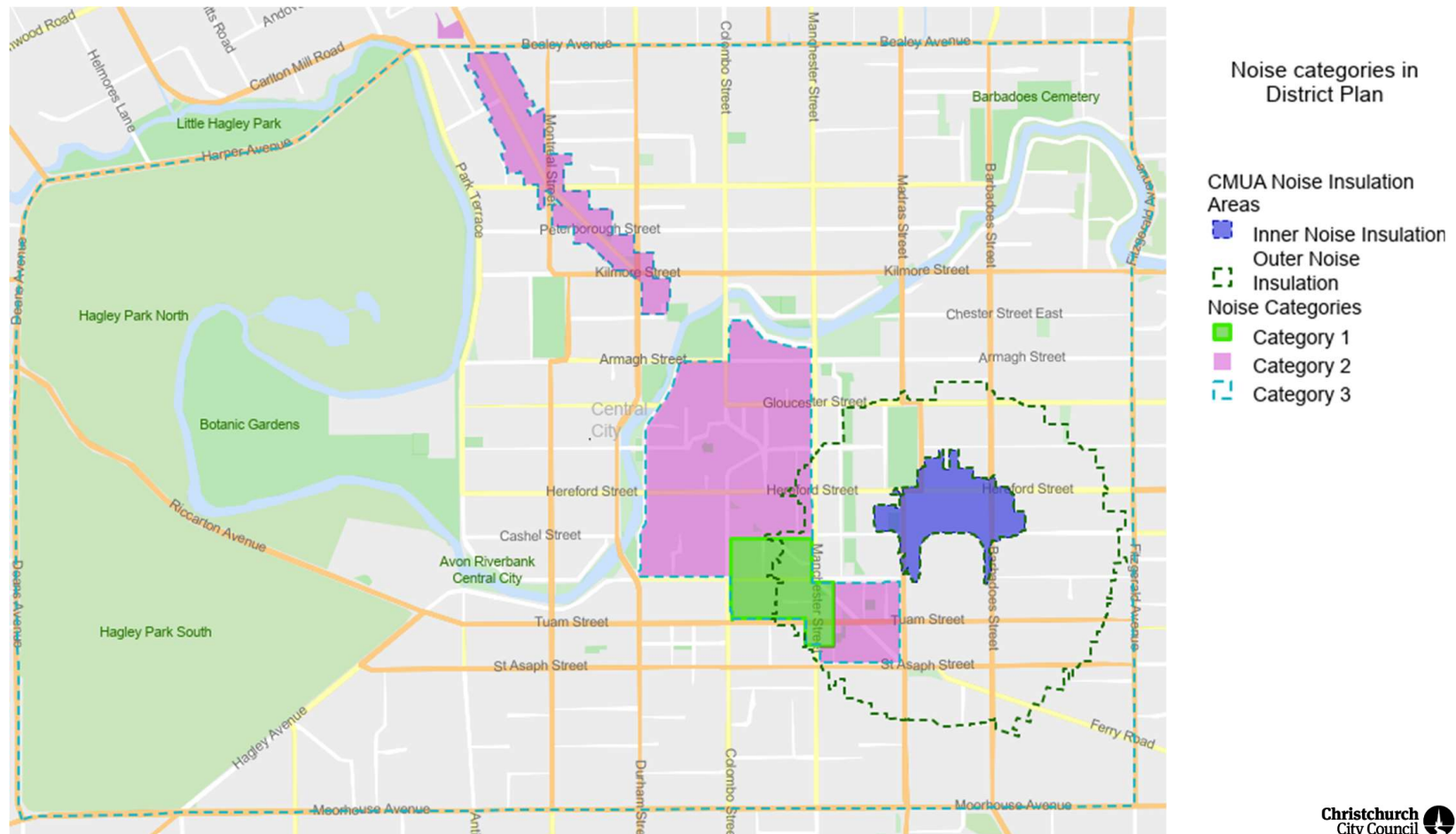
## What is Plan Change 21?

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- Management framework for noise in the Central City
- Review of operative District Plan provisions related to noise and entertainment activities in the Central City.
- Looking to address issues arising:
  - Conflicts (including reverse sensitivity effects) between noisy activities and residential activities in the Central City, particularly in mixed use zones.
  - Noise limits being too restrictive for music venues which have established outside the existing noise category areas that allow for higher noise limits.
  - Older residential activities may not have adequate insulation for higher noise levels.

# Current Approach - Recap

## Current District Plan approach



# Current noise limits

Area	Location	Noise limits (dB) (at site receiving the noise)	
		LAeq	LAmix
Category 1	The former SOL Square area and immediate environs.	60 (all day)	85 (7am – 3am) 75 (3am – 7am)
Category 2	Includes Dux Central and Innovation Precinct areas.	60 (7am – 1am) 50 (1am – 7am)	85 (7am – 1am) 75 (1am – 7am)
	Victoria St	55 (7am – 11pm) 50 (11pm – 7am)	85 (7am – 11pm) 75 (11pm – 7am)
Category 3	All other areas of the Central City	55 (7am – 11pm) 45 (11pm – 7am)	85 (7am – 11pm) 75 (11pm – 7am)



## Current noise insulation requirements

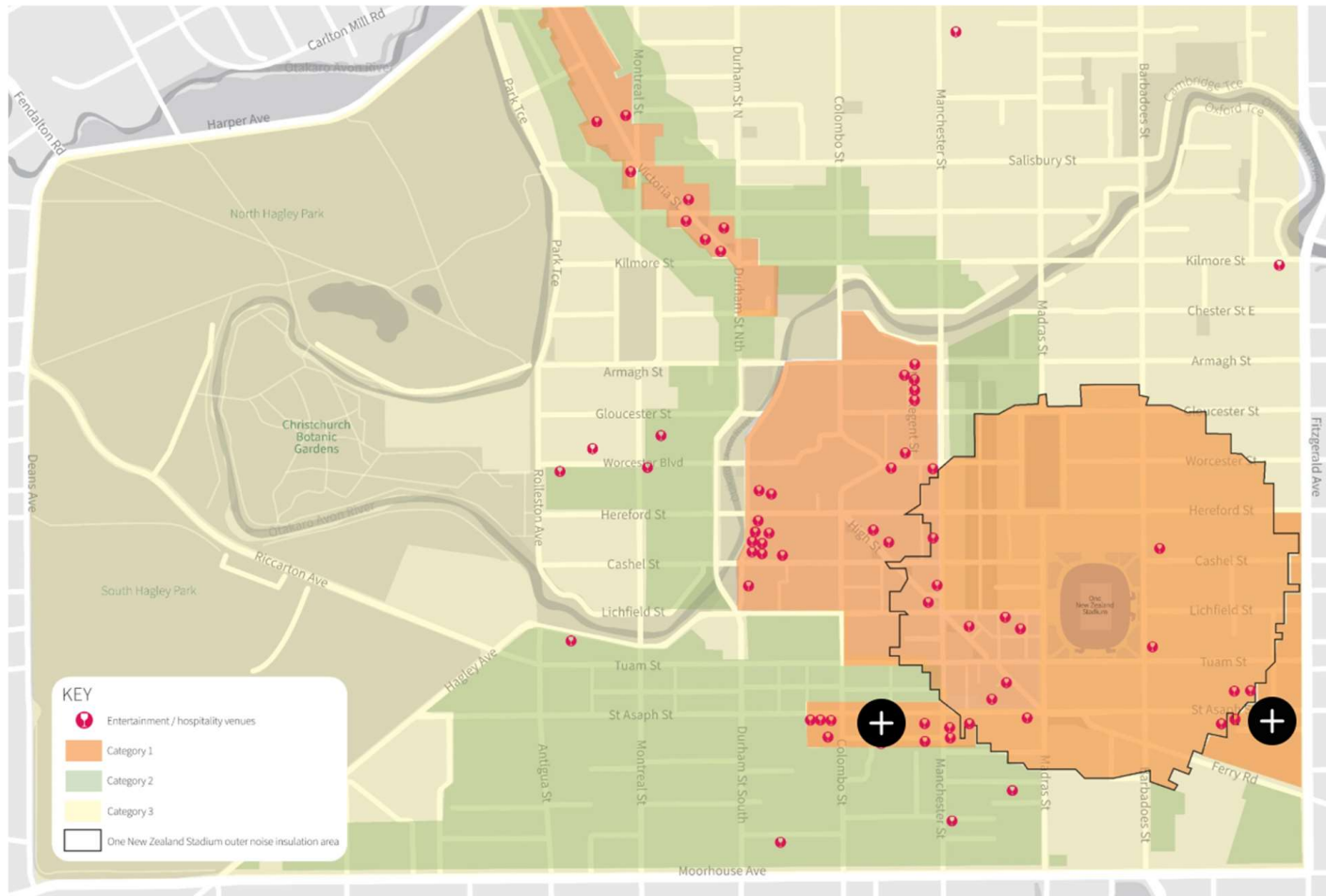
Area & Location	Insulation required	Year operative in District Plan
<b>Category 1</b> – Includes the former SOL Square area and immediate environs.	Resource consent required before residential activity can be established.	2015
<b>Category 2</b> - Includes Dux Central, Innovation Precinct, Victoria St areas.	Façade reduction: 35 dB $D_{tr,2m,nT,w} + C_{tr}$ for bedrooms.	
<b>Category 3</b> – adjoining Category 1 Precinct	30 dB $D_{tr,2m,nT,w} + C_{tr}$ for other habitable spaces.	
<b>CMUA</b> - Inner and Outer Insulation areas	Or, for the CMUA Inner Noise Insulation Area - 35 dB $D_{tr,2m,nT,w} + C_{tr}$ for other habitable spaces.	2022

## Current noise insulation requirements

Area & Location		Insulation required	Year operative in District Plan
<b>Category 3</b>	Within commercial zones & within 75m of Categories 1 & 2.	Façade reduction of 30 dB $D_{tr,2m,nT,w} + C_{tr}$ for bedrooms.	2015
<b>Road noise</b>	Within 40m of arterial, main distributor or local distributor roads.	Façade reduction of 30 dB $D_{tr,2m,nT,w} + C_{tr}$ for any habitable space.  <b>OR</b> Target noise level of: 40 dB $L_{Aeq}$ (24hr) for traffic noise.	
<b>Category 3</b>	All other areas of the Central City, not covered above	None required.	

# Summary of Preferred Option we engaged on

## Preferred Option - Increase noise limits relative to existing insulation required



# Preferred Option | Night-time noise limits

Area	Current Rules	Preferred Approach
Category 1	60 dB <sub>Laeq</sub>	65 dB <sub>Laeq</sub>
Category 2	50 dB <sub>Laeq</sub>	60 dB <sub>Laeq</sub>
Category 3	45 dB <sub>Laeq</sub>	45 dB <sub>Laeq</sub>

## Options

Option & Description	Comment
<b>Preferred Approach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep noise categories</li><li>• Align boundaries to current insulation requirements</li><li>• Increase noise limits – Category 1 (65 dBA) and 2 (60 dBA) areas.</li><li>• Potentially include venues in St Asaphs Street and area out towards Fitzgerald Ave</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Better provides for entertainment</li><li>• Greater certainty and flexibility for venues</li><li>• Limited change to insulation requirements</li><li>• Key trade-off – potential negative effects on older properties.</li><li>• Possibility of excluding pockets of existing, older residential activities from the expanded boundaries</li></ul>

## Recap - Other Options Considered

Option	Description
<b>Status Quo</b>	Keep the current categories
<b>Minor Boundary change to include existing venues</b>	Keep the noise categories but expand them to include established venues (and possibly further expansion)
<b>Same rules across entire central city</b>	Remove the noise categories and apply a higher noise limit and related sound insulation requirements across the whole central city

# Pre-notification engagement

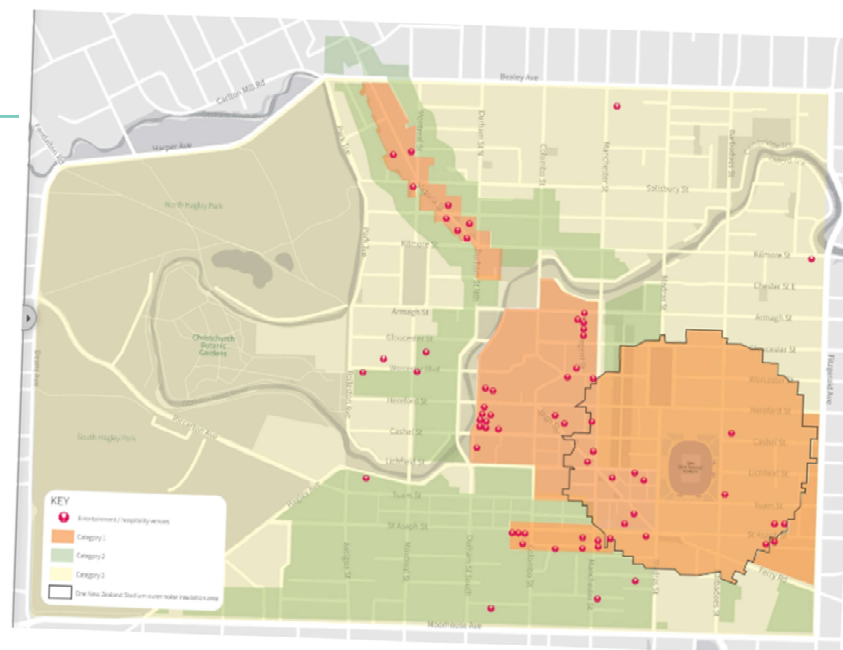


## Engagement

2023 – Central City Noise survey (N=3,399)

2025 (June – August) - pre-notification engagement on PC21

- Kōrero mai webpage 5,135 views
- Feedback provided by **1, 429** individuals and organisations



### Draft Plan Change 21 - Central-City Noise

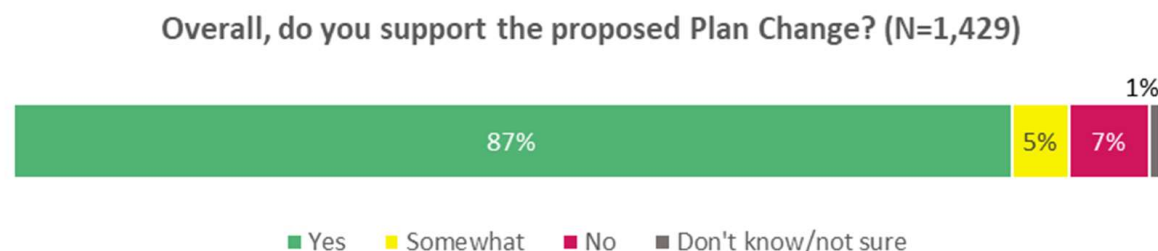
We're proposing to change the District Plan's rules about noise in the central city.

+ Follow

8 September 2025

## What we heard

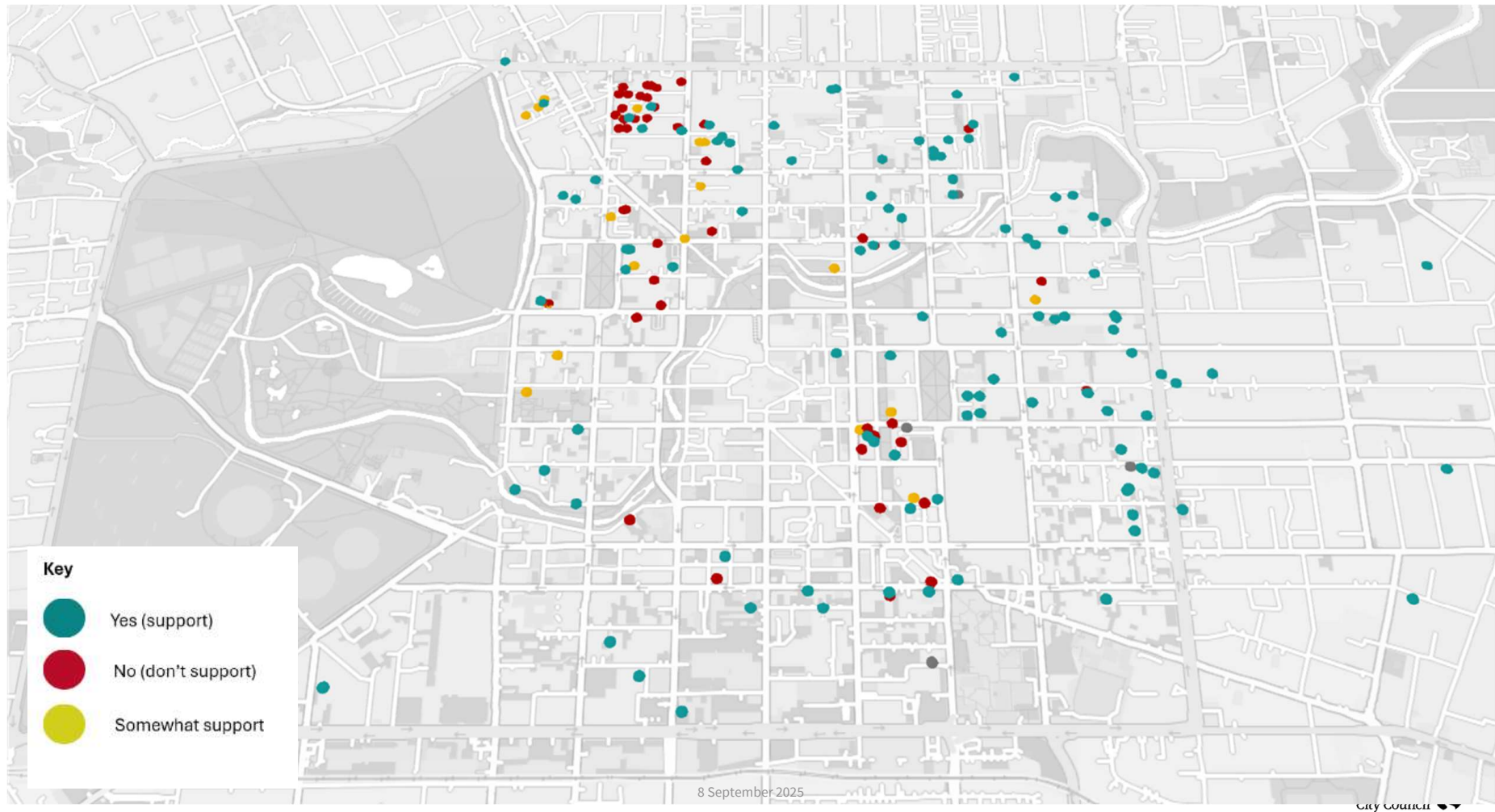
Most submitters (1,233, 87%) supported the proposed changes -



Live music venues, artists, and sound businesses supporting the proposed plan change including locations and limits/insulation requirement.

Central city resident groups that did not support increased noise levels in their neighbourhoods and don't believe that their neighbourhoods should be within louder-noise categories.

Submitters who live within the central city were less likely to support the changes than those living in other suburbs (66% support vs. 88%-95% in other suburbs).



## Noise limits and insulation requirements

Do you think we've got the noise limits and insulation requirements right? n=1,377



■ Yes ■ Somewhat ■ No

## Category locations

Do you think we've got the category locations right? n=1,393



■ Yes ■ Somewhat ■ No

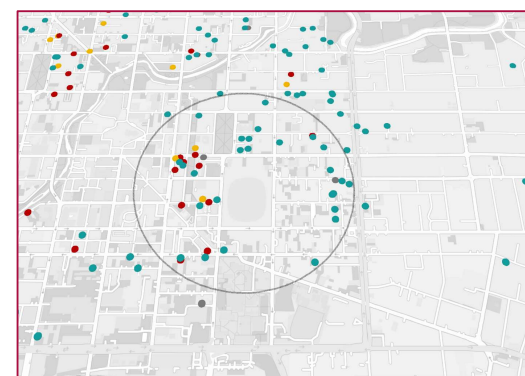
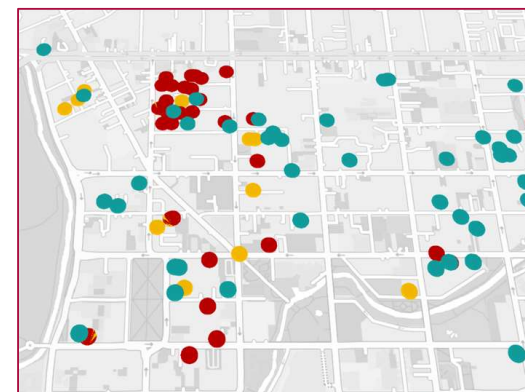
## Category locations



- For all areas within the Four Avenues to be included in category 1 or have no limit (8)
- St Asaph Street (5)
- Areas outside the scope of this central city plan change – Hagley Park (10) and the ‘central’ zone being wider than just the Four Avenues – including some of Sydenham, Linwood, Addington, Riccarton (14)



- The area around Victoria Street (31) including some mentions of Salisbury, Beveridge, Conference, Peacock, Peterborough, Dublin
- The residential East Frame neighbourhoods (6)



## Thematic analysis



- Support for nighttime businesses and/or the economy, including live music venues (575)
- It supports vibrancy and/or nightlife within the central city (380)
- It supports Ōtautahi Christchurch's arts and culture scene (134)
- It strikes a balance in supporting both businesses and residents (57)
- The insulation and/or ventilation requirements, including positive sentiment about supporting residents via more suitable housing (57)



- The noise limits are too low/should be increased further (107)
- It will affect quality of life/comfort of central city residents (62)
- Residents were there first and/or should be prioritised (40)
- Increased noise will affect the health of central city residents (29)
- It could have negative impacts on existing live music venues (the rules aren't enabling enough, confusion about the current rules in place, the cost of soundproofing for venues etc) (23)

# Plan Stop Impact on PC21



## Plan Stop Legislation

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- Government has introduced changes to the RMA to stop notification of new plan changes, unless automatic exemption apply or the Minister grants an exemption
- PC21 does not fall within automatic exemptions
- PC21 would require an exemption application, and approval from MfE, to be notified in the next two years.
- This will be covered under the Plan Stop agenda item at Council on 10 September 2025.



## Next steps



Council confirmation of seeking exemption (considered in separate report).



Detailed analysis of feedback received, further technical input, and updating provisions accordingly.



Ongoing analysis (preparing Section 32 Report).



Council meeting to seek approval to notify plan change, if exemption approved.

# Questions & Feedback

# Plan Stop and plan change exemptions

9 September 2025

Darren Bridgett – Team Leader, City Planning

Sarah Oliver – Team Leader, City Planning

Mark Stevenson – Head of Planning and Consents

## Plan stop Council Report – 10 September 2025

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### RMA stops plan changes until 31 December 2027

- Do not notify new ones
- Withdraw ones that have been notified

RMA reform anticipated before 2027 – this will direct future plan preparation/changes – detail of that legislative change currently unknown, including expectations and timelines

### The stop does not apply to:

- Changes for natural hazards (PC12 Coastal Hazards, PC17 Flood Management Areas, Activities in the Waimakariri Stopbank Setbacks (2 parts of 3))
- Private Plan Changes
- Streamlined plan change processes approved by the Minister

## Discretionary criteria in the Act that may be relevant to our plan change programme

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The Minister has discretion to exempt some plan changes from being stopped if one or more of the discretionary criteria are met

- *Better enables provision of drinking water, stormwater, or wastewater (Water Services Act 2021)*
- *Rectifies in the district plan – unintended consequences, unworkable provisions, inefficient outcomes*
- *Managing climate change*
- *Managing the risk of erosion for high risk land*
- *Any other reason that the Minister considers appropriate*

## MfE advice and Plan Stop exemption questions

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### Plan stop exemption applications

- Be selective
- Demonstrate alignment with government priorities
  - Economic growth, attracting investment, Going for Growth
  - Long term infrastructure investments
  - Promoting resilience e.g. renewable energy capacity, development of mineral resources
  - Enjoyment of property rights e.g. only manage externalities
  - Rule simplification and standardisation, noting National Planning Standards to be introduced
- **Urgency** – how necessary is the plan change before legislative change

## Urgency considerations

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- Benefits of acting or not acting in next two years - individual to each plan change
  - Avoiding undesirable activities that would otherwise be enabled
  - Providing for opportunities that would be missed if not enabled
- If exemption sought, we must deliver the plan change in that time period
- Plan changes can still be developed (for inclusion in the new system), but not notified now

### Devil's advocate...

- What is truly urgent in the next two years?
- Will the Minister share our view on urgency?

## Urgency of individual Plan Changes

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### PC7 Managing significant indigenous vegetation (as notified)

- Forest and Bird/Environment Court – Kaitorete Spit
- Rules in legal effect, restricts clearance of native vegetation
- Affects property rights – notably on farms
- *Urgency – moderate*

### PC7 (variation)

- **Notified version**, plus better alignment with NPSIB
- *Urgency – low*



## Urgency of individual Plan Changes

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### PC17 Earthworks, Flood Management Areas, Waimakariri Stopbank Setbacks

- **Exemption required for Earthworks**, other parts automatically exempt (as described)
- Sediment in waterways, streamlining consents
- *Urgency – moderate/high*

### PC20 Industrial interface

- Managing adverse effects at industrial/residential interface
- ... but **will not change existing use rights nor resolve effects from existing activities** – only impacts new development/activities. New legislation could undo any rule changes – *Urgency for rule changes – moderate*

## Urgency of individual Plan Changes

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### Rezoning elements PC20/PC Rezoning (combination of)

- Rezoning requests through pre-notification engagement (PC20) and specific or larger site rezoning from PC Rezoning
- Supporting economic and residential growth – *Urgency – moderate*
- Wider plan maintenance/specific sites – *Urgency – moderate*

### PC21 Central City Noise

- Noise limit/precinct changes to support entertainment activities and address potential conflict with sensitive activities e.g. residential
- Supports economic and residential growth – *Urgency – high*

### PC Kerrs Reach (Ōtākaro Avon River Corridor)

- Relocation of flatwater sports from right bank to left bank and relocation of Wainoni Landing to Porritt Park
- Part of broader recovery of the city – *Urgency – low/moderate*

## Next steps

**Choose which plan changes to seek exemptions for  
(10 September 2025)**

**Apply ASAP, but before 90 working days from 20 August 2025**