



CASE STUDY

THAMES COROMADEL DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING FOR
THE FUTURE

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY - AGE FRIENDLY CITY - SMART
THINKING - ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY - SUSTAINABLE
CHANGING THE HOUSING STOCK - MEETING THE
NEEDS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

Lifemark

 **ccs**
disability action
including all people

TE HUNGA HAUĀ MAURI MŌ NGĀ TĀNGATA KĀTOA

OVERVIEW

Housing lasts a long time and the long term planning process requires a council to deliver a strategic understanding between the characteristics of the housing stock and community requirements. **Thames Coromandel District Council (TCDC)** reviewed their population profile and made a decision to incentivise new dwellings that contained universal design features and by doing so to proactively address this issue for their region.

The incentive allowed a slight increase in site coverage in exchange for an independent universal design certification of the new dwelling.



This process was introduced in July 2016 and **10%** of all new dwellings consents are taking up this initiative.

Feedback from the developers/builders/designers and residents has been positive.



The designers get an independent **assessment and feedback** on their plans so they can understand why any design changes are necessary to ensure an age friendly dwelling is built.

The plan review process is also delivered in a timely and cost effective manner as the Council is not required to invest in more staff time as this is undertaken by a third party.



The overall result is a win/win for all stakeholders, with residents changing their designs to help ensure the development of housing stock will meet the current and future needs of the community.

BACKGROUND

Thames Coromandel District Council (TCDC) reviewed their district plan as part of their long term planning process and decided to bring a new approach to address the strategic issues in their aging and changing population base.

The housing stock in the region consists of low rise detached dwellings and semi-detached dwellings on individual titles. There was a mix of private, rental and holiday accommodation and **TCDC** wanted the development of new accommodation to meet the needs of the widest possible range of people. The private market provides housing solutions to match supply and demand, however the role of the Council is to assess the long term community trends and address the strategic issues.

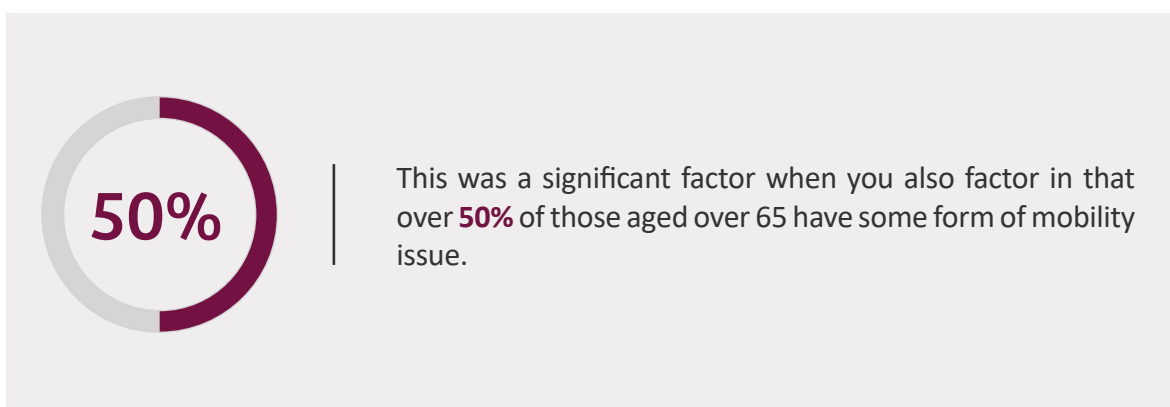
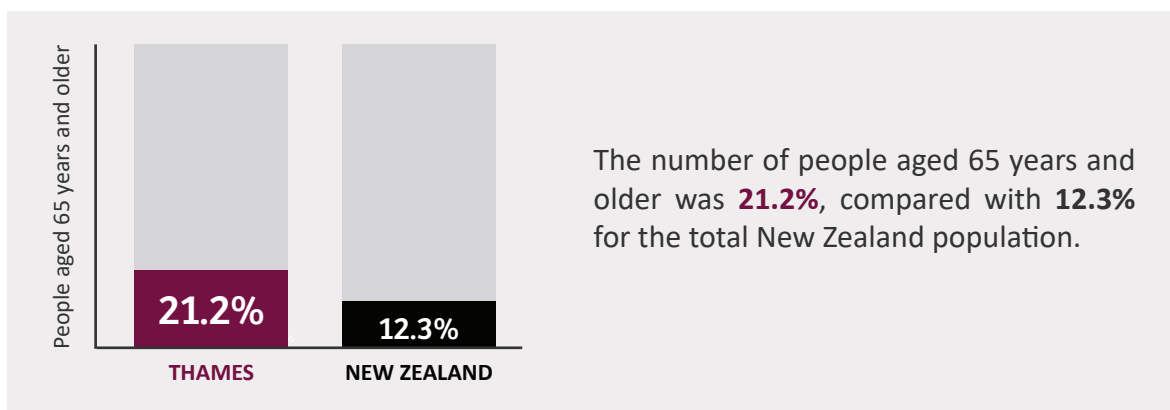
This long term approach delivers a closer alignment between the type of housing provided and the housing preferences that will be needed both now and in the future



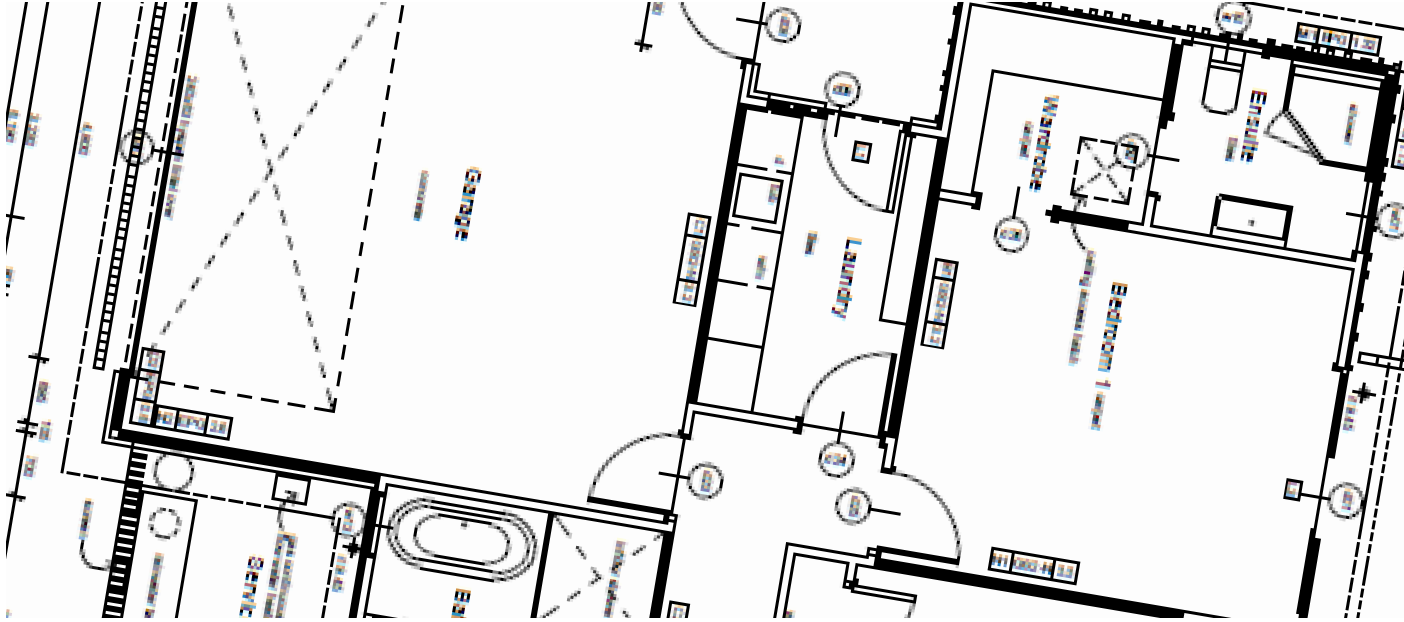
ANALYSIS

An analysis of the demographic characteristics of the District revealed an aging and changing population. Notably, **the population already had a significantly higher aged population** than the rest of the country and that this percentage was likely to increase in the future.

TCDC was also aware of building activity that was not inspected, and this initiative addressed this issue and provided an incentive to register all building work.



Population growth was also deemed to come from the older population with more people moving into the region as a retirement or lifestyle option. The decision to target support for the elderly and those with physical disabilities was seen to form part of a wider more inclusive community strategy that values all people regardless of age, stage or ability.



PROCESS

TCDC reviewed their policy options and developed a process that addressed the issues of fairness transparency, workability, and was cost effective. TCDC made changes to their residential zone, within the proposed district plan.

This was notified and became operational on 1 July, 2016.

The plan stated “A house or minor unit that is certified by **Lifemark**[®] or a similar organisation to be functional for both elderly and disabled residents will achieve objectives and policies for the residential area in the plan, including Objective 1: Various forms of residential density and different dwelling types (to) provide all sectors of the community with dwelling choices and high levels of amenity” Policy 1a: A mix of residential densities shall be encouraged to provide for a variety of housing options:”

The **Lifemark**[®] standards, version 2016 or later, was deemed a suitable requirement within the District Plan and allowed for the two exemptions to rules in the residential zone of the proposed district plan.



| An increase in the maximum site coverage from **35% to 40%**.

| A minor unit to have a maximum gross floor coverage of **60m²**, rather than be **50m²** without any certification provided.

The applicant was required to lodge a building consent with the appropriate provisional certification attached. This certification issued by **Lifemark**[®] is obtained after a plan assessment and review process. There is a small fee payable to Lifemark[®] for this service, which provides for a plan advice and assessment, discussion and changes, issuing a provisional certificate and then issuing a final certificate upon production of a producer statement when the dwelling is built.

OUTCOMES

An information sheet and promotion of the changes was made available to the public and Lifemark® directly took enquiries about the process and provided additional information on the rationale for using inclusive and universal design features. Feedback from the stakeholders indicates high satisfaction with the process and strong support for this initiative.



Approximately **10%** of all new building dwellings are now built to a universal design standard.

This initiative creates building stock that meets **the needs of an aging and changing population** and proactively supports a community where people have a physical disability and enables people to “**age in place**” and have choice about where and how support services are delivered in the community.

The universal design features support in home care options and provide an option for elder care. It is estimated that 90% of people wish to “age in place”, however few have the home design that supports this option. A universally designed home is a positive step towards ageing well and creating an age friendly community.

CONCLUSION

Housing is an important for any community and while there are trade-offs around location, size, price and type of house, the housing stock will impact on community development and community satisfaction.

TCDC evaluated the strategic requirements of their community and formulated an action plan that addressed mechanisms to encourage the right type of design for an aging population and to meet the needs of disabled members of their community. This decision to provide a low cost/no cost, high impact incentive is an example of smart forward thinking.

The market place has responded positively and now there is now a mechanism to better accommodate people with different abilities and develop a more inclusive community with housing that is suitable for everyone.