



MEDIA STATEMENT

23 September 2022

Featherston Masterplan feedback released

Featherston residents have shown that they are open to smaller sections and denser housing provided it is done well, so more people can access affordable housing that meets their needs.

A recent survey also shows that overall, they prefer their train station where it is because it is a walkable distance for most of Featherston and moving the station would incur significant cost.

The survey was part of an informal consultation done by South Wairarapa District Council on its Featherston Masterplan, a 30-year plan to guide the town's future growth.

Featherston is recognised as a growth node and because of its key location on the rail network, an area around the train station has been tagged for growth. Some of this area will be intensified for housing.

Most residents told the survey that out of two Concept Options put forward, the option that densified around the existing train station and main street was their preference (64 per cent).

The majority of residents also said that while they approved of greater density, they wanted the qualities that Featherston values to be retained.

"Featherston is a highly engaged community and has taken a keen interest in the Masterplan," said the Council's Chief Executive, Harry Wilson.

"We trust this level of interest will continue as the plan is firmed up for the next phase."

Work on the Masterplan started at the beginning of the year. Following on from last year's South Wairarapa Spatial Plan, the Masterplan will provide detailed planning to deal with Featherston's population growth – which is forecast to rise steadily from 2,600 currently to 4,300 over the next three decades.

At the 21 September 2022 Council meeting, Councillors received a report on the plan's informal consultation phase, which was conducted during July and August.

There was a high degree of community interest, with 154 survey responses and 32 people attending the five drop-in sessions held.

Councillors agreed that Concept Option One - intensification around the existing main street and train station - should go forward for detailed master planning.

They also responded to the community's views on a vision statement. The original vision statement for the plan was: "A strong, caring community where there is a place for everyone".

There was a lot of support for this vision; however, the community also indicated they wanted it to be more aspirational. As a result, two options have been put forward for community feedback when the draft Masterplan goes out for formal consultation in early 2023.

Residents will be asked to choose between:

Vision 1: “Featherston - A thriving community of workers, families and creatives all supporting each other”.

Vision 2: “Featherston - Resilient, Creative, Caring”

Other areas of feedback covered density, heritage protection, main street rejuvenation, reserves and industrial land.

Next steps

Work begins in October 2022 on a detailed Masterplan for formal feedback in early 2023.

- On 5 October 2022, a design charette will be held to develop Concept Option One. This will involve government agencies and key stakeholders including Pae tū Mōkai, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Waka Kotahi, Wellington Water and KiwiRail.
- Further engagement with the Wellington Regional Leadership Committee will occur, in line with Featherston being prioritised as a Complex Development Opportunity.
- It is intended to have a draft Masterplan ready for Council to review in December 2022.
- Formal consultation will then occur around late January/ February 2023. Residents and the community will have the opportunity to provide written submissions and speak to their submissions before the new Council. This is likely to occur around April 2023.
- For further enquiries, please contact Kendyll Harper at spatial-planning@swdc.govt.nz
- For more information, go to <https://swdc.govt.nz/featherston-masterplan-feedback/>

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