

Long-term Insights Briefing 2025



New Zealand Council Of
Christian Social Services

Residential High Rise Housing in Aotearoa

Tirohanga Whānui | Overview

The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on this HUD Long-term Insights Briefing. We support the kaupapa to investigate the long-term impacts of infrastructure decisions in relation to housing.

Taunakitanga | Recommendations

Our main points are:

Affordability is not always the same as accessibility

It is important to ensure that the accessibility is not confused with affordability. Accessibility includes many things, of which affordability is one, but choices which might make a property more accessible (especially physical features such as flat entry showers and wider doorways) reduce the affordability of the project due to increased material costs. Affordability, while critical, cannot be the only metric of suitability that is assessed, and cannot be prioritised above accessibility when considering the needs of vulnerable populations.

Information from the previous LTIB regarding our aging population must be reflected in this briefing

High-rise housing is not the preference for older people, nor is it helpful in supporting older people to remain in their own homes. Residential high-rise housing often comes with issues of access for non-residents and helping people out in emergency situations. When considering this alongside the previous LTIB about our ageing population, this brings up issues around the ability for people to age in place with support from community services, or to be assisted to be removed from these complexes by emergency services in the event of an accident or medical incident. This must be factored in when considering the suitability and design parameters of these buildings.

Housing impacts wellbeing in multiple domains

Housing is a significant social determinant of health (Rolfe, 2020). A diverse body of research indicates that there are a wide variety of social and health implications for those who live in high-rise buildings (Larcombe et al, 2019). Many of these issues can be improved through design principles, but others will require socially holistic approaches to address. Both of these aspects must be considered in this LTIB.

Tohutoro kua tohua | References

Larcombe, D., van Etten, E., Logan, A., Prescott, S. L., & Horwitz, P. (2019). High-rise apartments and urban mental health – historical and contemporary views. *Challenges*, 10(2), 34. Doi: 10.3390/challe10020034

Rolfe, S., Garnham, L., Godwin, J., Anderson, I., Seaman, P., & Donaldson, C. (2020). Housing as a social determinant of health and wellbeing: developing an empirically-informed realist theoretical framework. *BMC Public Health*, 20(1), 1138. Doi:10.1186/s12889-020-09224-0

Ko wai tātou | Who we are

NZCCSS has six foundation members; the Anglican Care Network, Baptist Churches of New Zealand, Catholic Social Services, Presbyterian Support and the Methodist and Salvation Army Churches.

Through this membership, NZCCSS represents over 230 organisations providing a range of social support services across Aotearoa. We believe in working to achieve a just and compassionate society for all, through our commitment to our faith and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Further details on NZCCSS can be found on our website www.nzccss.org.nz.

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