Central city noise – Survey results

Between 1 September 2023 and 3 October 2023 we heard from a total of 3399 respondents via the Council's Kōrero mai | Let's talk Central city noise consultation on the Council's website.

Respondents were asked about their views on central city noise and related aspects, including current noise levels, zoning and acoustic insulation. The main purpose of the survey was to get an understanding of community expectations and to establish what kinds of support Council might need to provide residents and businesses. Feedback received will help to inform the proposed District Plan change, which is due to be ready for public consultation in 2025.

Who we heard from

Two-thirds (66%, n=2239) of all survey respondents were residents living in the broader Ōtautahi-Christchurch area, while one third (31%, n=1068) were central city residents. Representatives of central city businesses made up 3% (n=92) of all respondents.

	%	Count
I'm representing the views of a central city business	3%	92
I'm a resident living in the central city	31%	1068
I'm a resident living in the broader Christchurch area	66%	2239
Total	**100%**	**3399**

Survey questions were tailored for each of these groups. Findings in this report are presented for each group, and comparisons have been made where questions were asked consistently across the groups.

Please note that percentages in this report have been calculated using the number of respondents as the denominator, so may total more than 100% when multiple responses to a question were given.

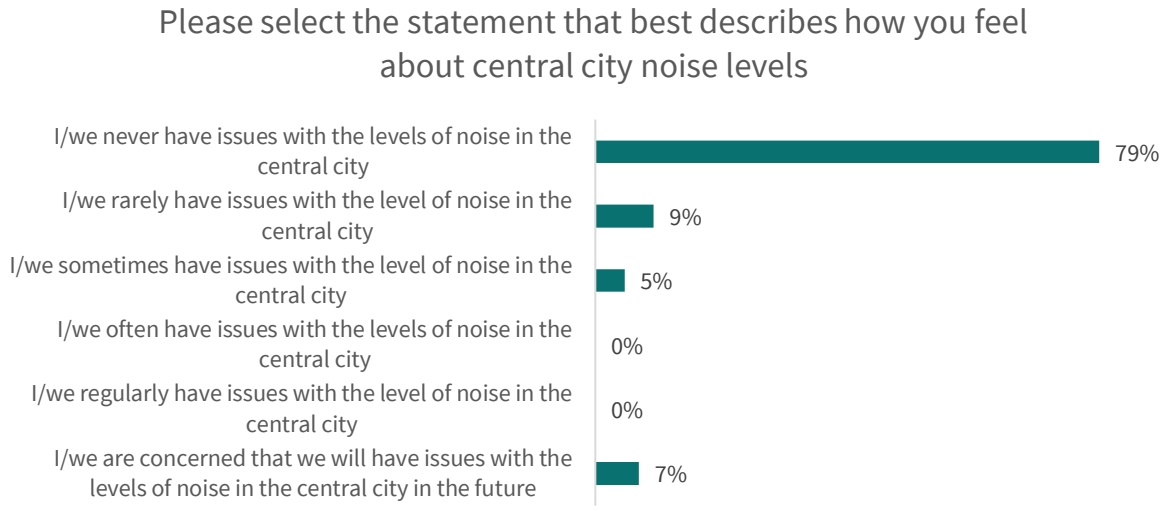
Central city businesses

We heard from 92 central city business representatives. Around 40% of these were hospitality and/or live music venues and around 20% were involved in the music industry (e.g., sound engineers) or events promotion. We also heard from some retail businesses and service providers, as well as businesses involved in property development and/or construction (approximately 10% respectively). Some education and religious institutions also submitted their views.

Demographic data was not collected for central city business representatives.

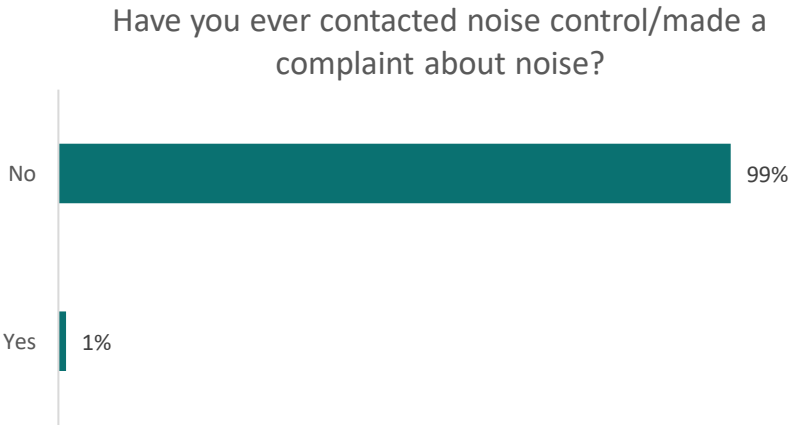
Views on noise levels

The majority (79%, n=69) of central city businesses never have issues with the levels of noise in the central city, with no businesses reporting regular noise issues.

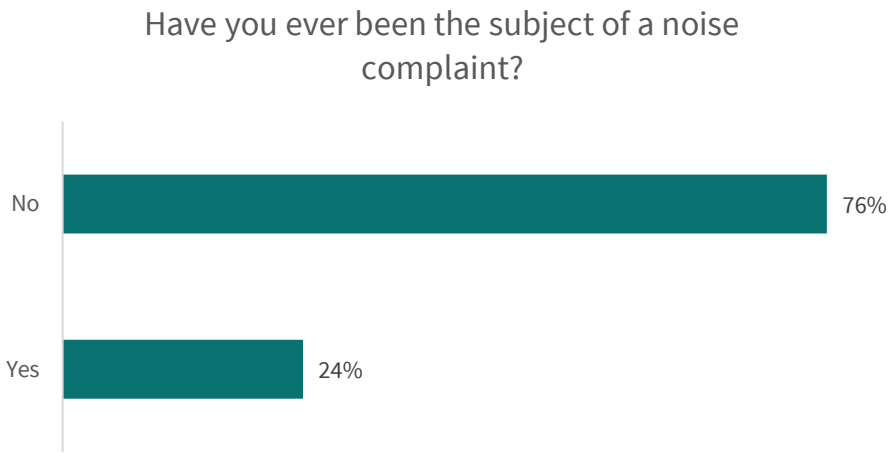


Noise complaints

The majority (99%, n=91) of central city businesses have never contacted noise control/made a complaint about noise.

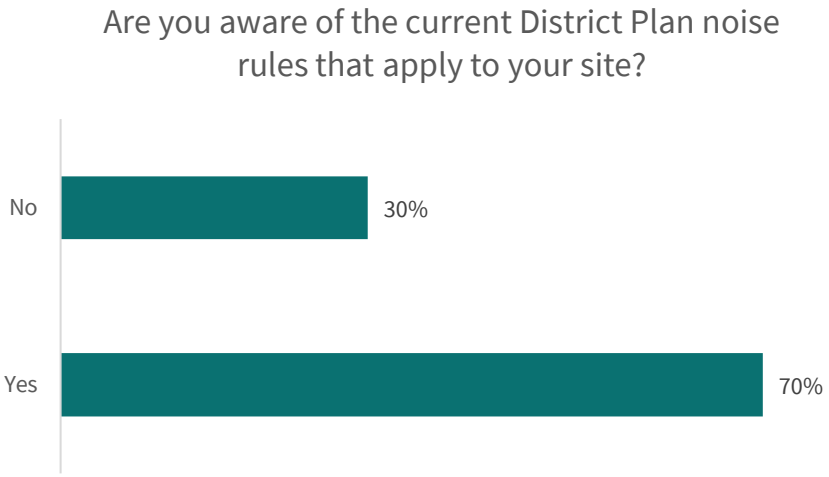


Three-quarters (76%, n=70) of central city businesses have never been the subject of a noise complaint.



Awareness of noise rules

Most central city businesses (70%, n=64) were aware of the current District Plan noise rules that apply to their site.



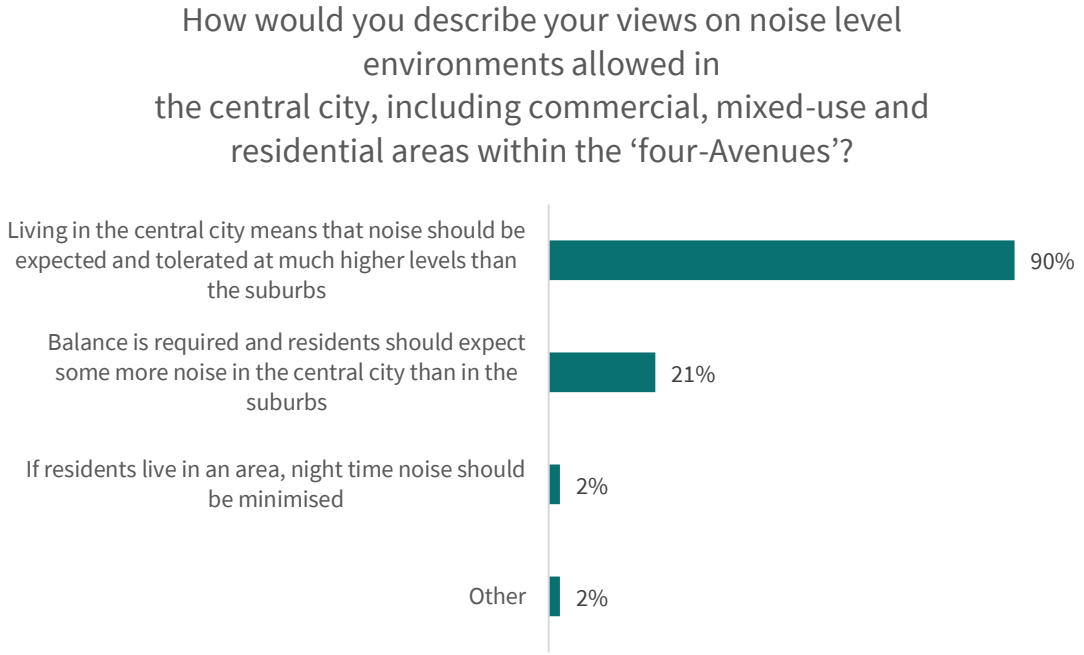
Challenges being faced in relation to noise

The most common challenge faced by central city businesses in relation to noise is the limitations placed on their operations due to noise rules (60%, n=55).



Views on noise level environments

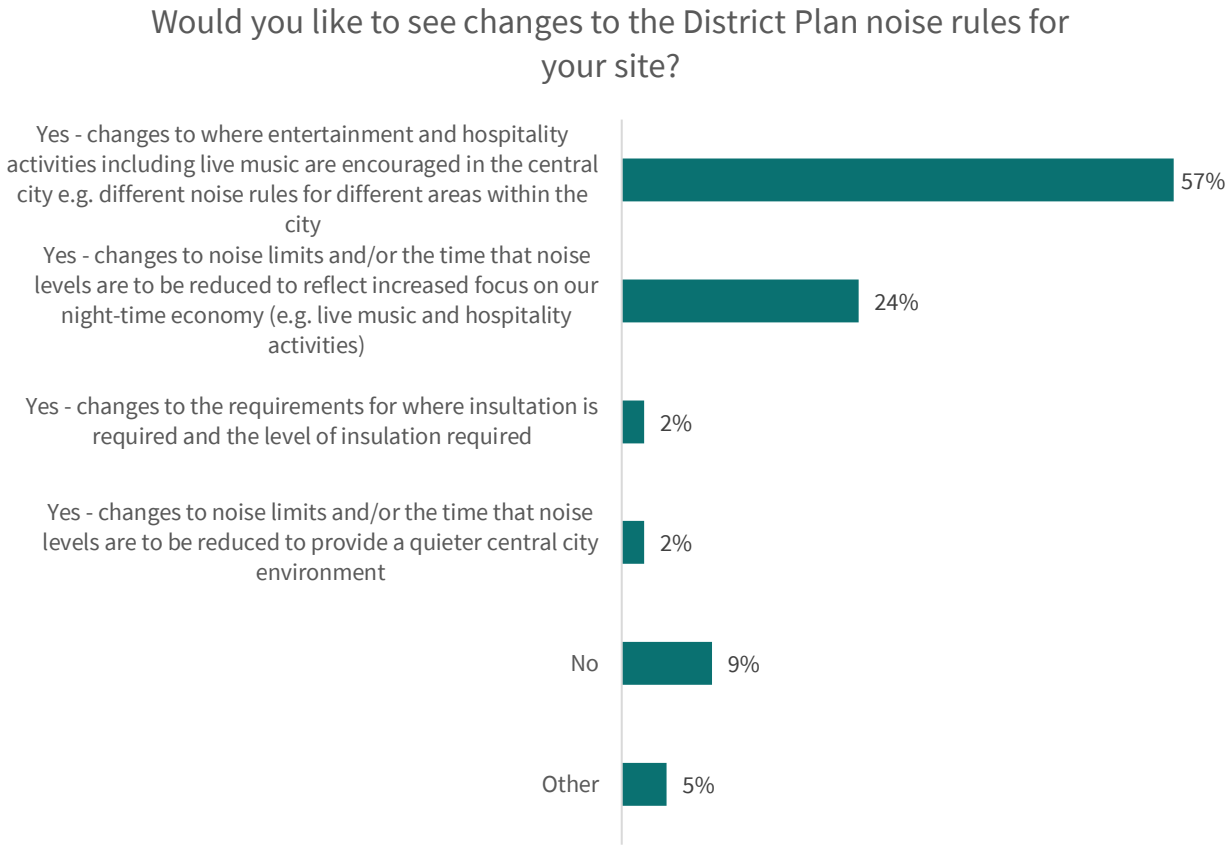
The majority (90%, n=83) of central city businesses felt that living in the central city means that noise should be expected and tolerated at much higher levels than in the suburbs.



Changes to the District Plan

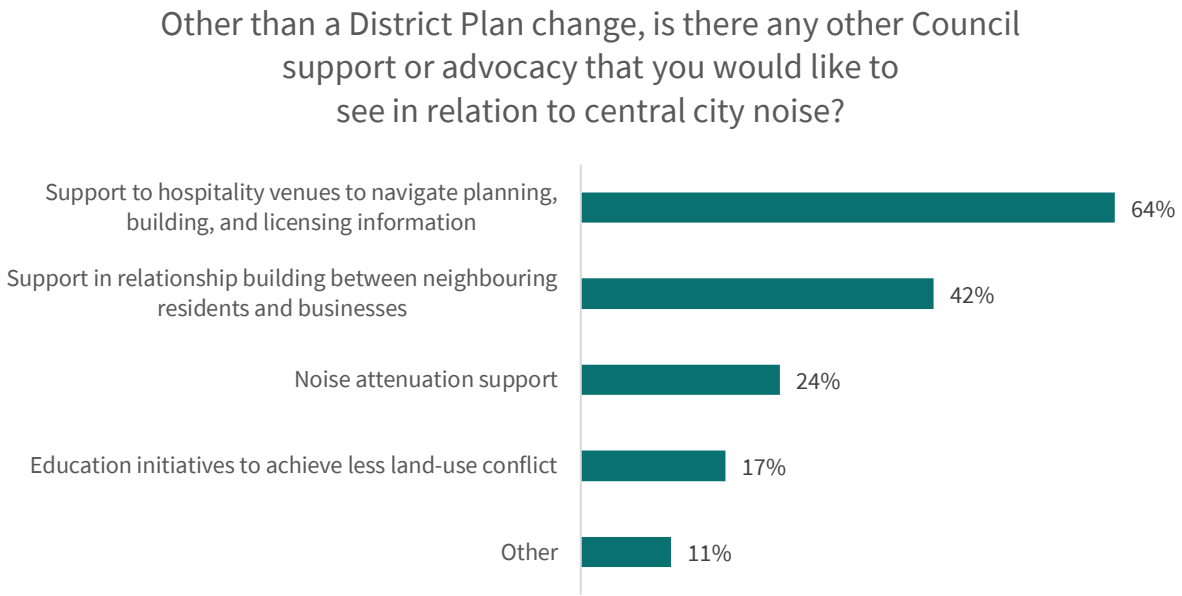
The majority (85%, n=74) of central city businesses would like to see changes to the District Plan. Over half (57%, n=49) felt that there should be different noise rules for different areas within the

city, while a quarter (24%, n=21) believed that noise limits should be reduced to reflect an increased focus on our night-time economy.



Additional support or advocacy

Nearly two-thirds of central city businesses (64%, n=59) would like Council to provide support to hospitality venues to navigate planning, building, and licensing information.



Central city respondents

Age	Count	%
Under 18 years	3	0%
18 - 24 years	247	24%
25- 34 years	447	43%
35 - 49 years	210	20%
50 - 64 years	90	9%
65 - 79 years	40	4%
80 years and over	3	0%
Total	**1040**	

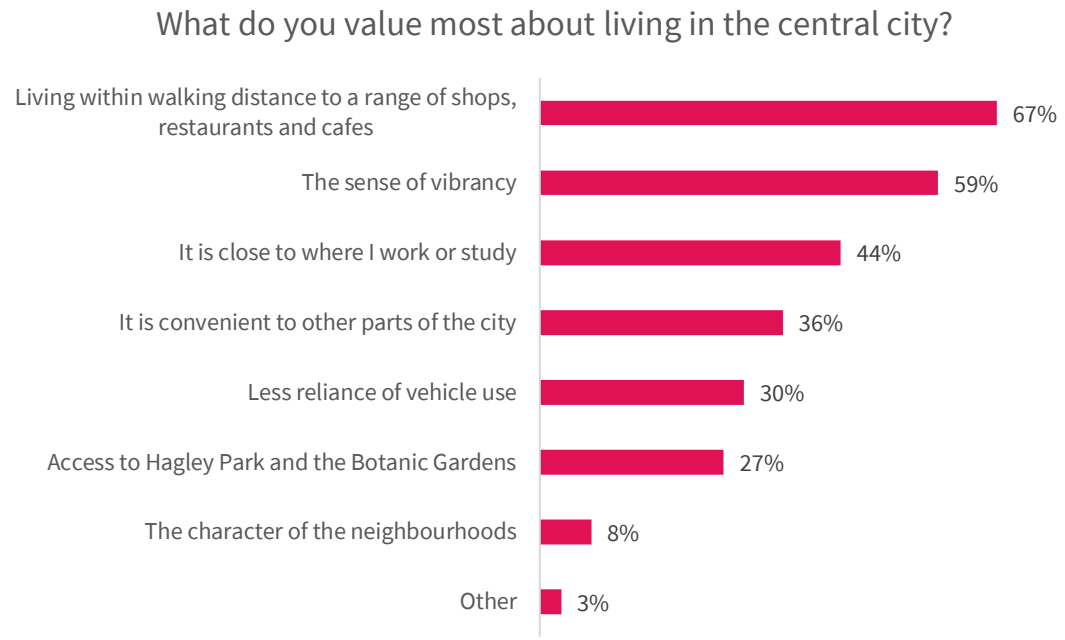
Gender	Count	%
Male	557	53%
Female	431	41%
Gender diverse	47	4%
Prefer not to say	24	2%
Total	**1059**	

Ethnicity*	Count	%
NZ European	890	84%
Māori	117	11%
Pacific Peoples	25	2%
Asian	35	3%
Other European	63	6%
MELAA	22	2%
Other	50	5%
Total	**1054**	

*Please note that respondents could identify with more than one ethnic group, so totalled percentages will sum to more than 100%.

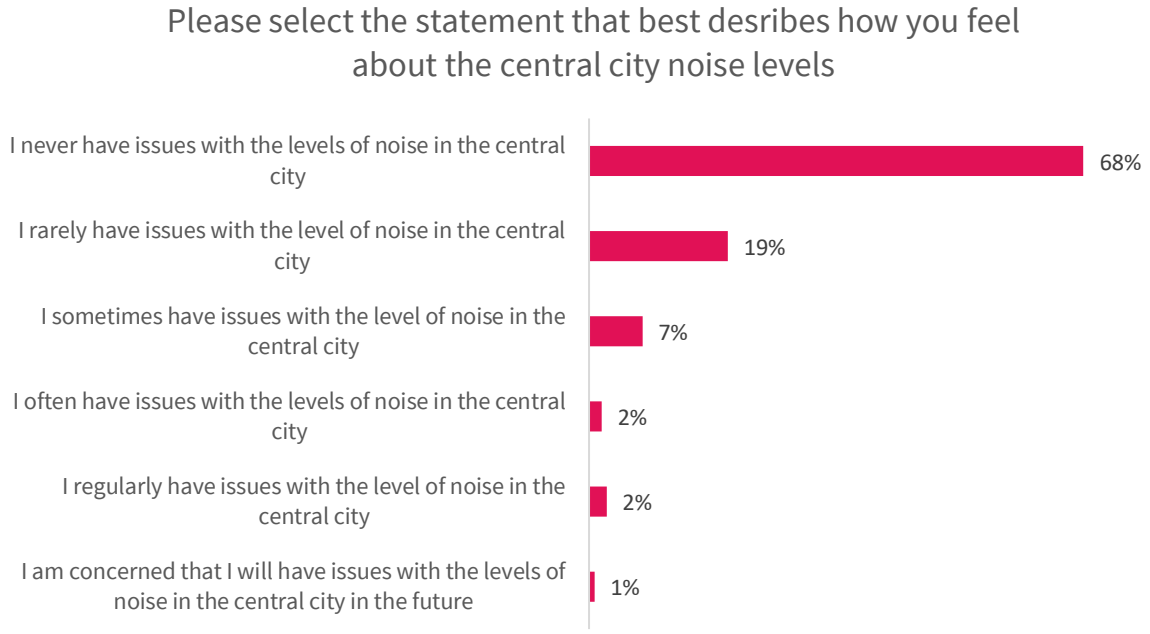
Central city living

Two-thirds (67%, n=718) of central city respondents felt that living within walking distance of a range of shops, restaurants and cafes is the most valuable aspect of central city living. The sense of vibrancy was also a highly rated aspect of living in the central city (59%, n=626).



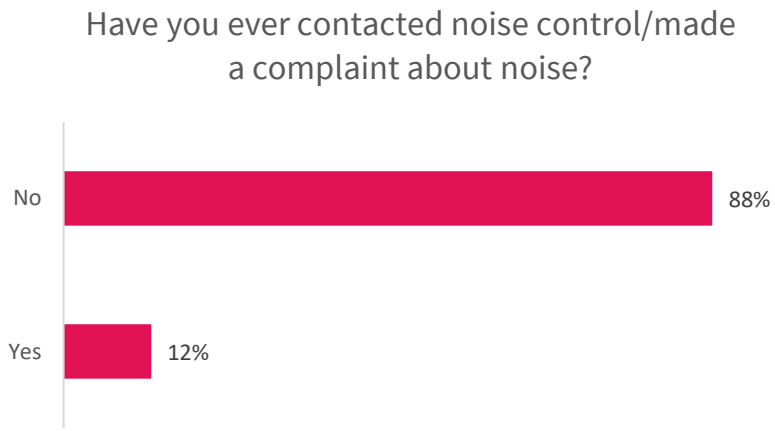
Views on noise levels

The majority of central city respondents have either never had (68%, n=731) or rarely have (19%, n=205) issues with the levels of noise in the central city.



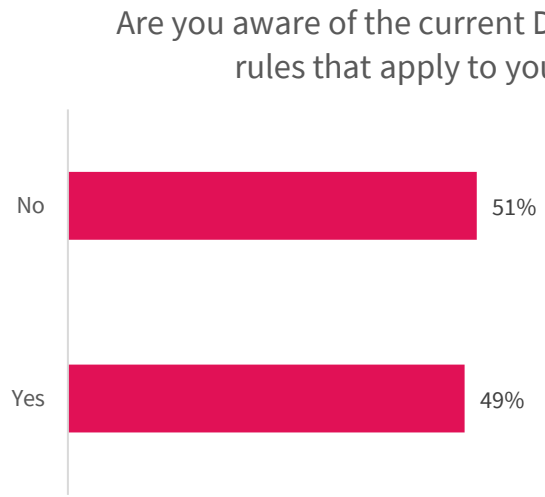
Noise complaints

The majority (88%, n=941) of central city respondents have never contacted noise control/made a complaint about noise.



Awareness of noise rules

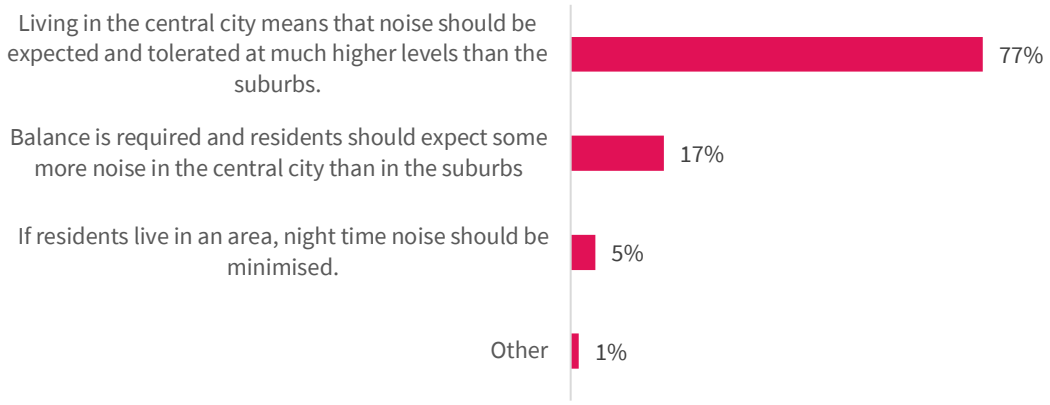
Just under half of all central city respondents (49%, n=526) were aware of the current District Plan noise rules that apply to their home, while just over a half (51%, n=542) were unaware.



Views on noise level environments

Over three-quarters (77%, n=818) of central city respondents believed that living in the central city means noise should be expected and tolerated at much higher levels than in the suburbs.

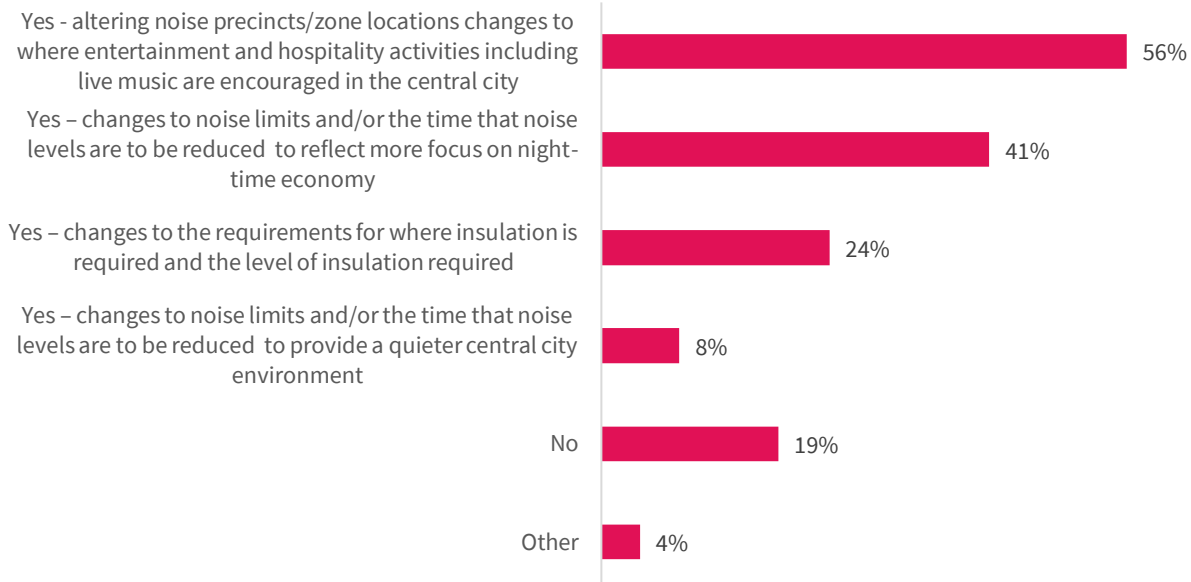
How would you describe your views on noise level environments allowed in the central city, including commercial, mixed-use and residential areas within the 'four-Avenues'?



Changes to the District Plan

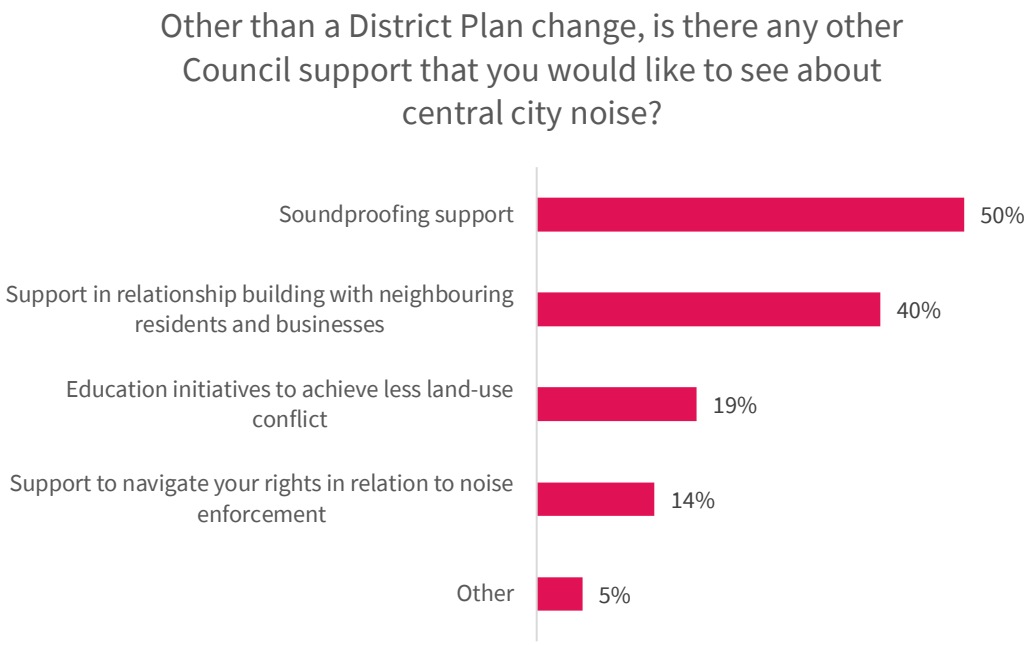
For central city respondents who would like to see changes to the District Plan noise rules, the most commonly selected change is to noise precincts/zone locations in which entertainment and hospitality activities are encouraged (56%, n=584). Reducing noise limits and/or the time that noise levels are to be reduced was also a commonly selected option (41%, n=432). Just 8% (n=87) of central city respondents feel that changes to the District Plan should enable a quieter central city environment.

Would you like to see changes to the District Plan noise rules for the central city?



Additional support or advocacy

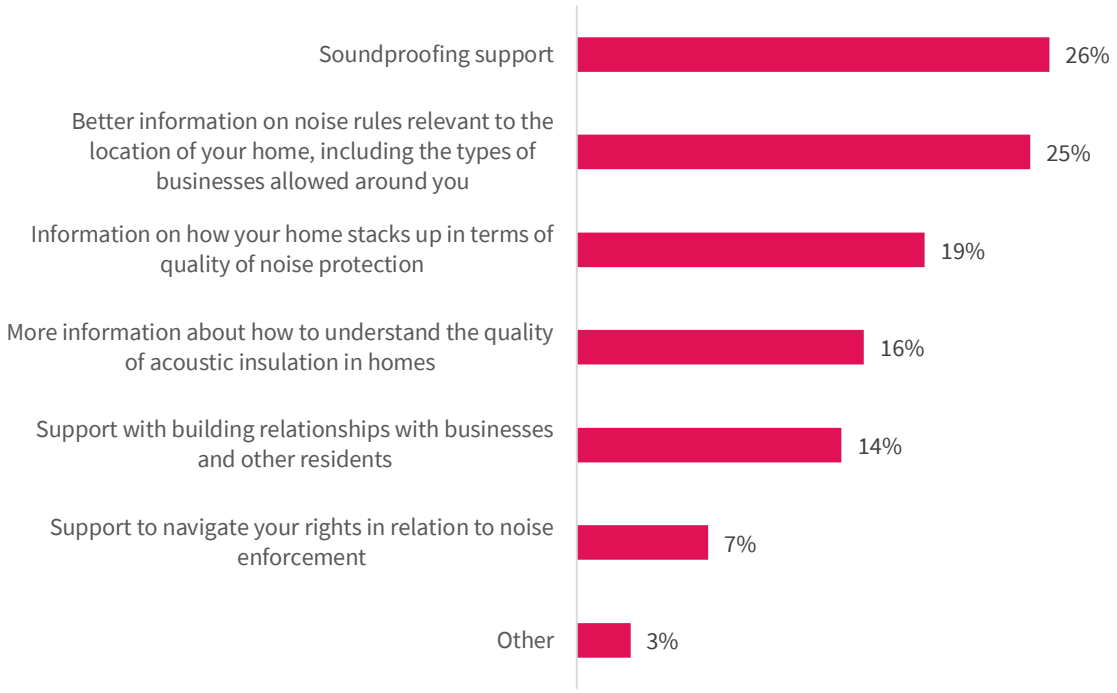
When asked if there was any other Council support they would like to see in relation to noise, half (50%, n=537) of all central city respondents said they would like to see soundproofing support. Two in five (40%, n=432) central city respondents would like to see support from Council in relationship building with neighbouring residents and businesses.



Prior knowledge

A quarter of central city respondents would have liked to have known about soundproofing support (26%, n=273) and had access to better information regarding relevant noise levels (25%, n=262) prior to moving into the central city.

Is there anything relating to noise that you would have liked to know prior to moving into the central city?



Wider Christchurch respondents

Age	Count	%
Under 18 years	9	0%
18 - 24 years	444	20%
25- 34 years	909	42%
35 - 49 years	586	27%
50 - 64 years	209	10%
65 - 79 years	33	2%
80 years and over	0	0%
Total	**2190**	

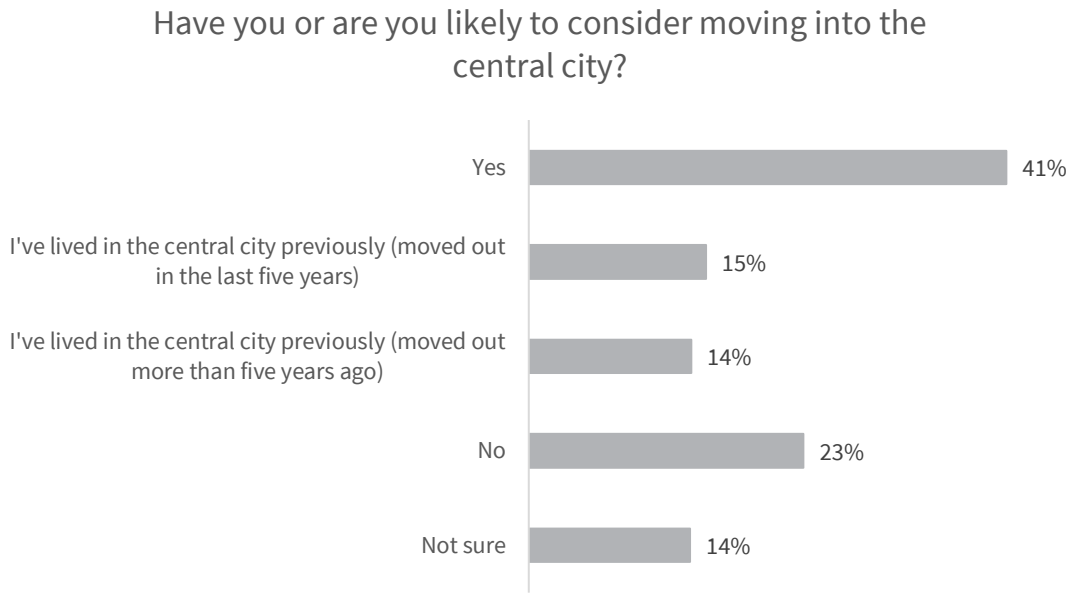
Gender	Count	%
Female	984	44%
Male	1143	51%
Gender diverse	52	2%
Prefer not to say	42	2%
Total	**2221**	

Ethnicity*	Count	%
NZ European	1961	88%
Māori	198	9%
Pacific Peoples	42	2%
Asian	60	3%
Other European	103	5%
MELAA	26	1%
Other	94	4%
Total responses	**2484**	

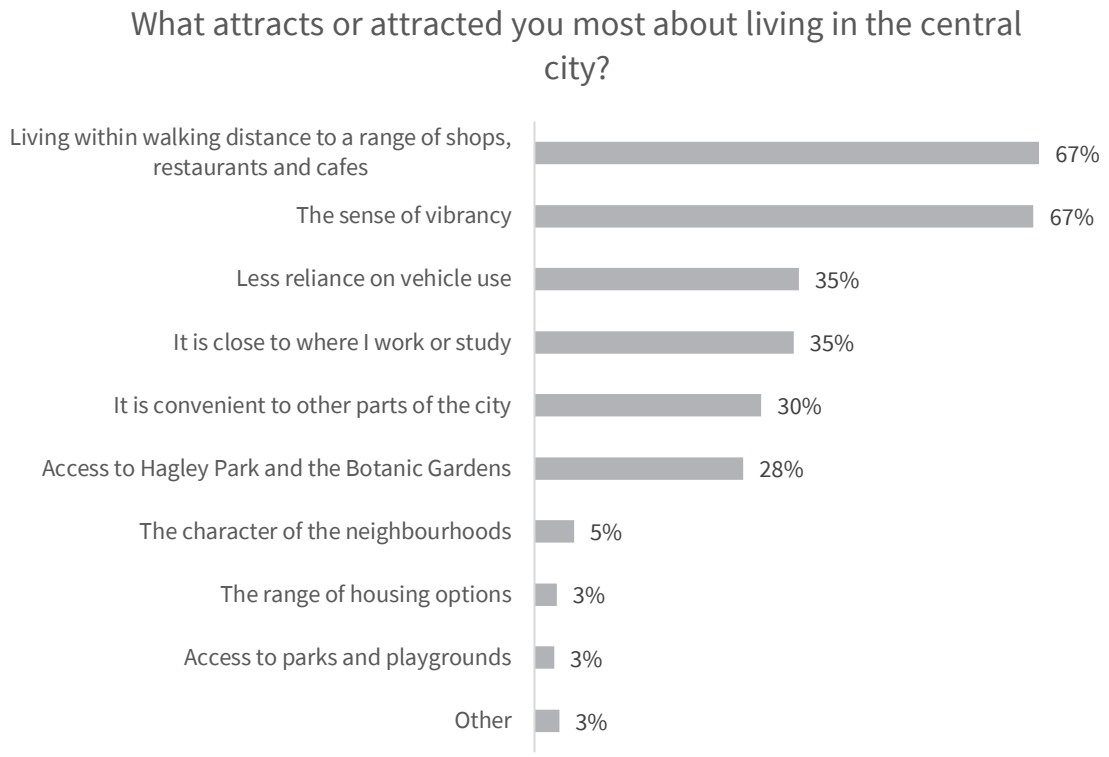
*Please note that respondents could identify with more than one ethnic group, so totalled percentages will sum to more than 100%.

Moving into the central city

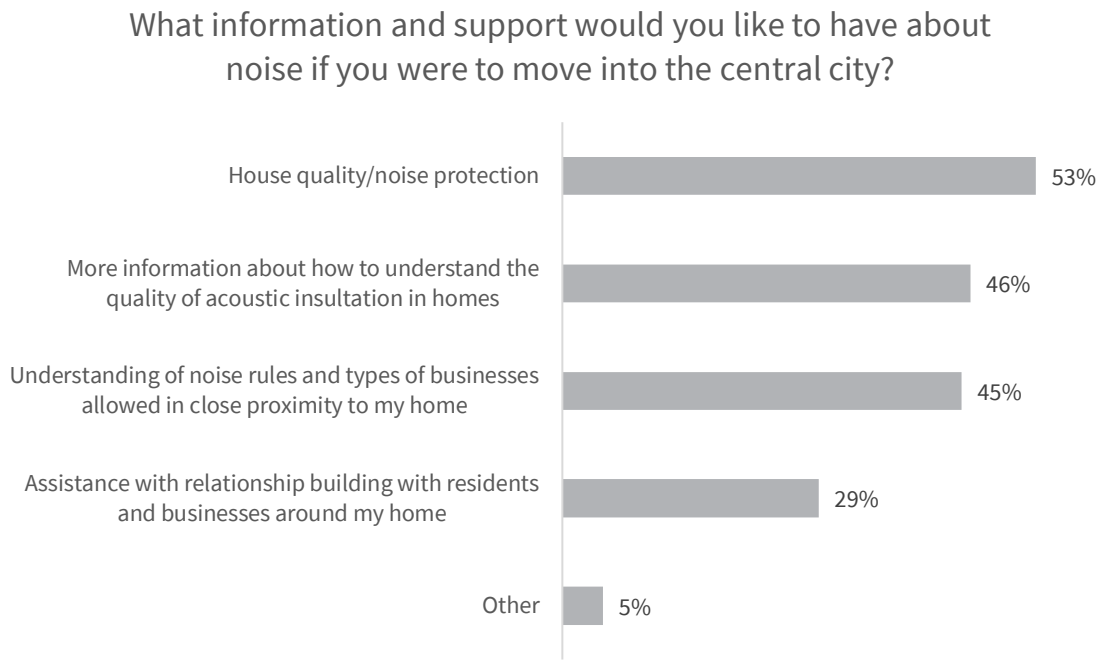
Respondents not currently living in the central city were asked if they had considered or were likely to consider moving into the central city. Forty-one percent (n=909) of respondents indicated they had considered or were likely to consider moving to the central city. Twenty-three percent (n=523) responded that they had not considered or were not likely to consider moving to the central city. Twenty-nine percent (n=646) of respondents indicated they had previously lived in the central city (15% having moved out in the last five years and 14% having moved out more than five years ago).



Of those who have previously lived in, or are considering moving into, the central city, living within walking distance to a range of shops, restaurants and cafes (67%, n=1170) and the sense of vibrancy (67%, n=1157) were the most attractive aspects of central city living.

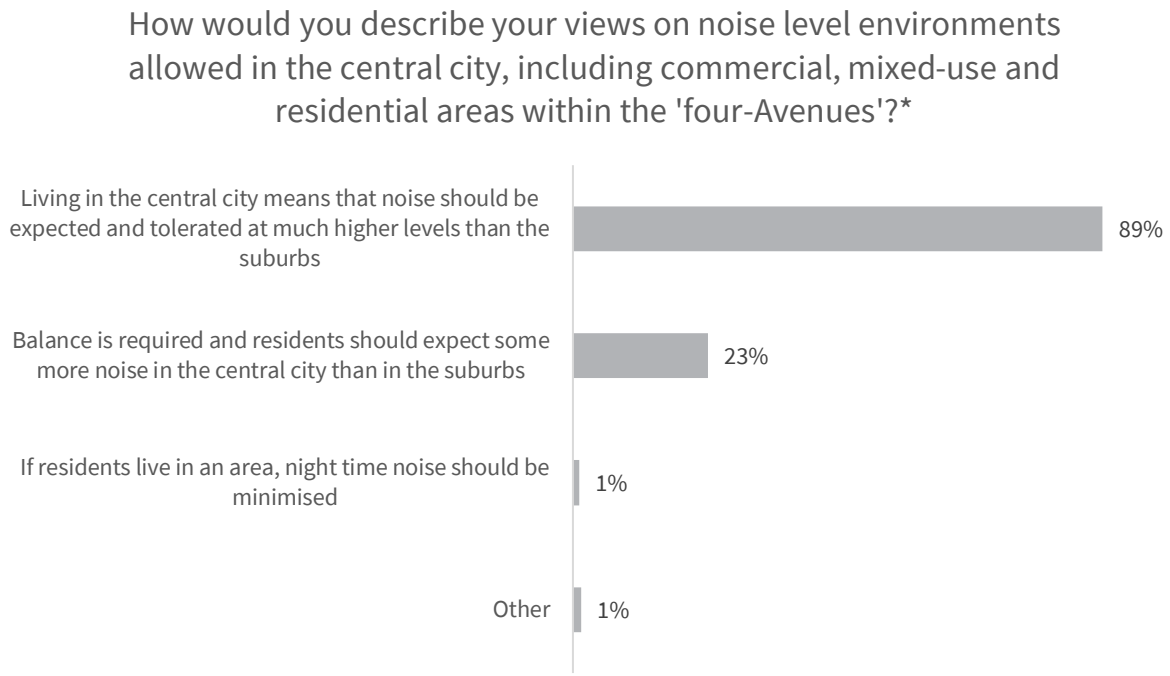


Respondents who indicated they are likely to consider moving to the central city were asked what information and support in relation to noise they would like to receive. House quality/noise protection was selected by over half (53%, n=855) of these respondents.



Views on noise level environments

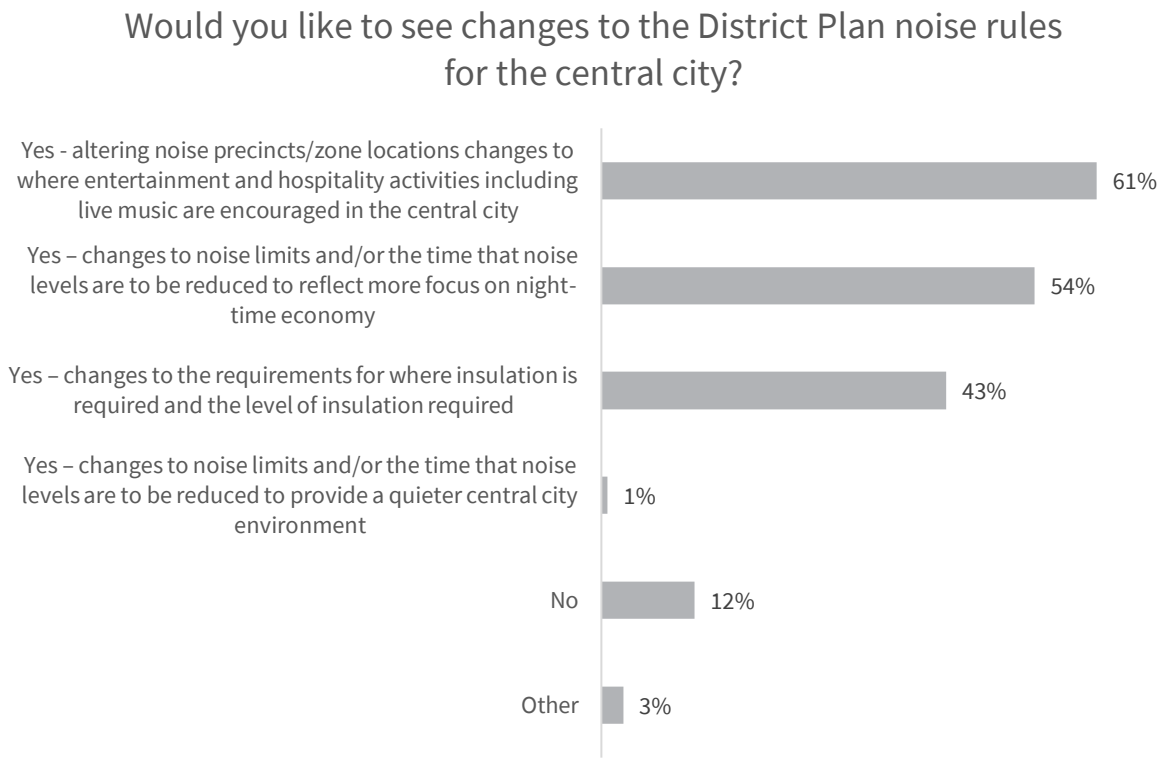
The majority (89%, n=1997) of wider Christchurch respondents felt that living in the central city means that noise should be expected and tolerated at much higher levels than the suburbs. Just 1% (n=25) believed that night time noise should be minimised if residents live in an area.



*Please note that respondents could select multiple options so totals will sum to more than 100%.

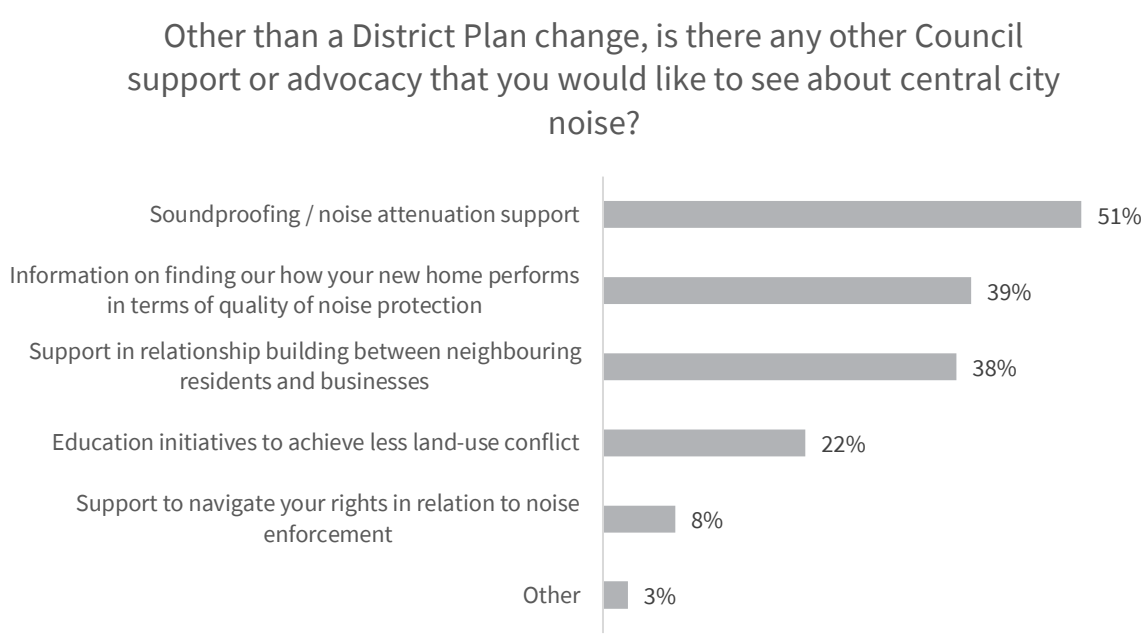
Changes to the District Plan

When asked if they would like to see changes to the District Plan noise rules for the central city, 61% (n=1327) of all wider Christchurch respondents felt that changes should be made in areas where entertainment and hospitality activities are encouraged in the city. Over half of this group (54%, n=1161) felt that noise limits and/or the time that noise levels are to be reduced should be changed to reflect more focus on the night-time economy. Just 1% (n=17) felt that changes should be made to provide a quieter central city environment.



Additional support or advocacy

Half (51%, n=1140) of all wider Christchurch respondents would like to see Council provide soundproofing/noise attenuation support, and one in five (39%, n=877) felt that Council should provide information on the quality of noise protection in new homes.

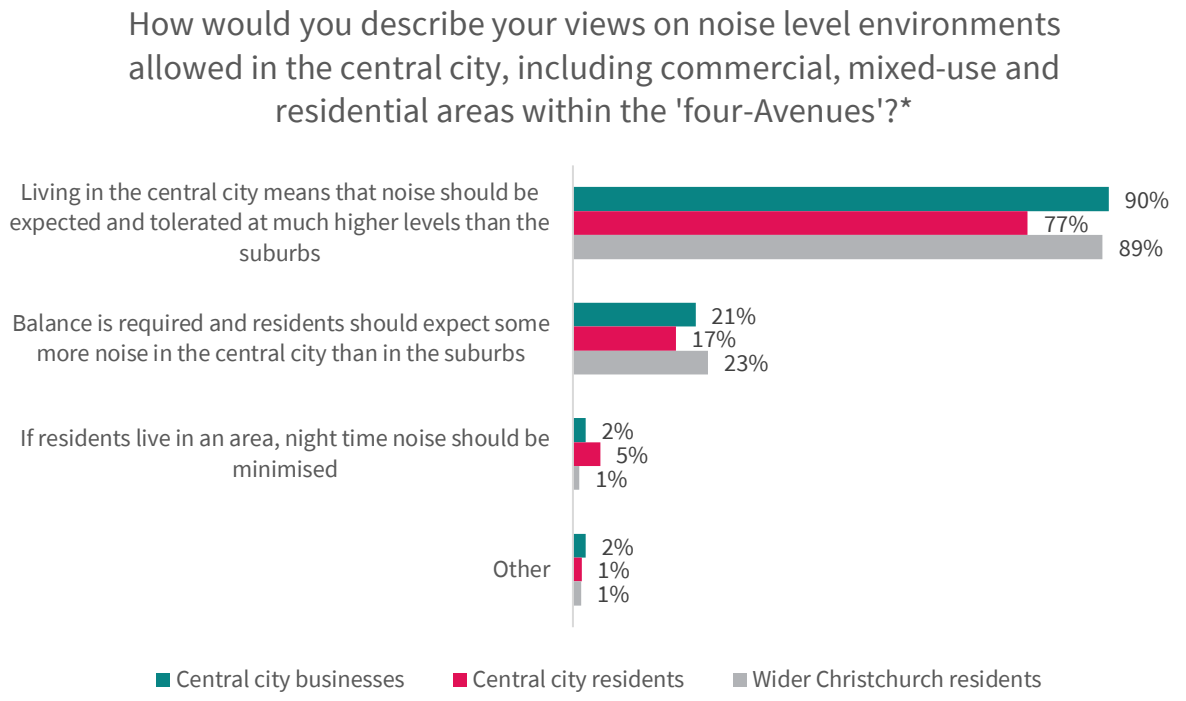


All groups

The following questions were asked consistently across all groups.

Views on noise level environments

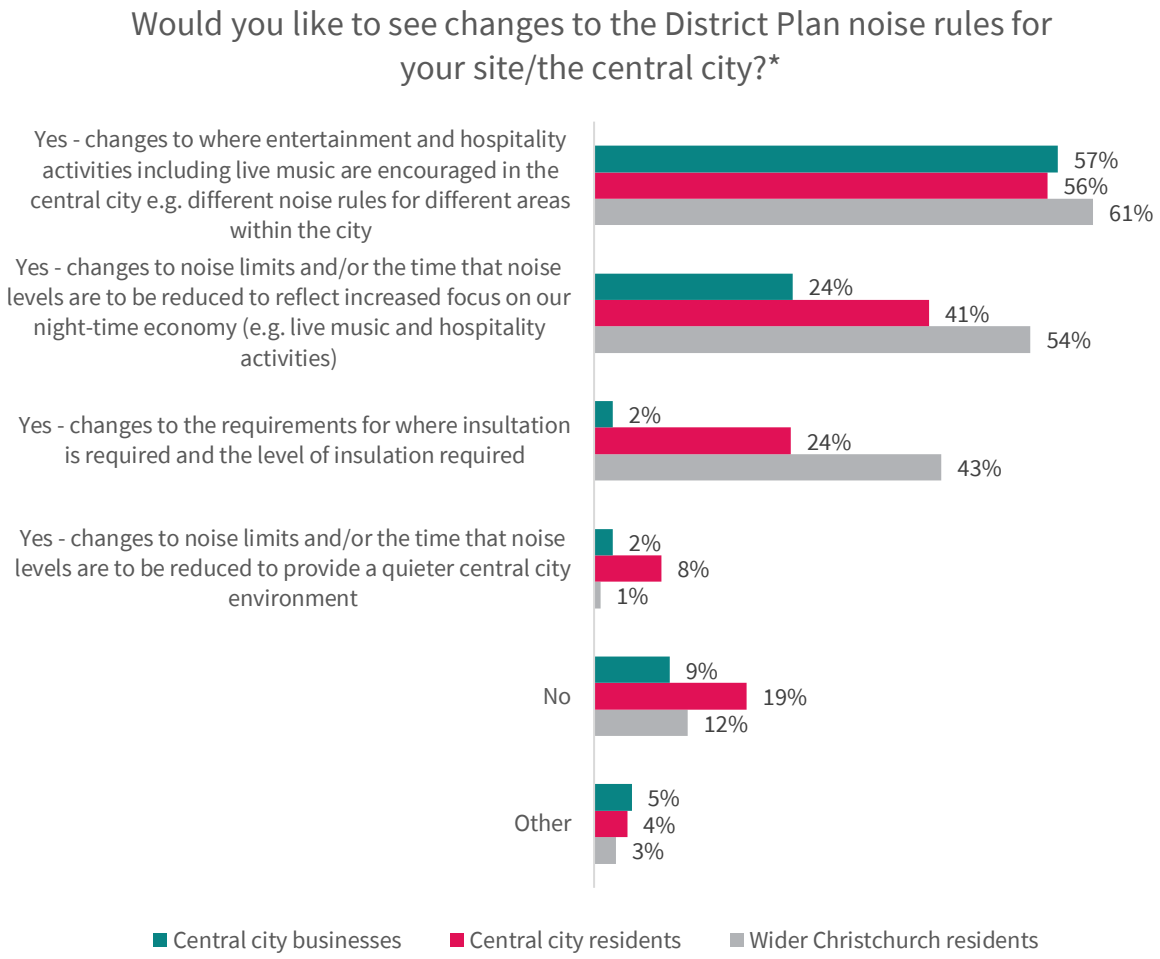
Central city businesses and wider Christchurch residents expressed similar views on noise level environments, with the majority of both groups agreeing that central city noise should be expected and tolerated at much higher levels than in the suburbs (90%, n= 83 and 89%, n= 1997 respectively).



*Please note that the results displayed in this graph should be treated with caution because central city respondents were only able to select one option (totals for this group therefore sum to 100%), while respondents in the other two groups were able to select more than one option (totals for this group therefore sum to more than 100%).

Changes to the District Plan

Similar proportions of the three groups would like to see different noise rules for different areas within the city. However, views on reducing noise limits differed markedly between the three groups, with more than half of all wider Christchurch respondents (54%, n=1161) wanting to see noise limits reduced while only a quarter (24%, n=21) of central city business representatives would like to see this change.



*Please note that the results displayed in this graph should be treated with caution because central city business representatives were only able to select one option (totals for this group therefore sum to 100%), while respondents in the other two groups were able to select more than one option (totals for this group therefore sum to more than 100%).

Open-ended question: Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about noise in the central city?

It is important to note that an overwhelming majority of respondents who chose to tell us more about noise in the central city were in support of central city noise. Responses to this question reflect this. Responses were analysed for common themes, which are reported on below.

Value of hospitality and live music venues

Respondents across all groups expressed the value that the city's hospitality and live music venues bring. Described as 'incredibly important' and 'culturally influential', these venues play a critical role in supporting and enhancing the city's art, economic activity, cultural heritage, social cohesion and community, and quality of life of its residents. Many are disappointed that 12bar closed – the Council 'really dropped the ball on that one' – and there are concerns for remaining venues, such as Darkroom and Space Academy, which must be 'protected at all costs'. There is a sense among respondents that without these 'culturally-embedded businesses', the art and music culture of Ōtautahi-Christchurch will be at risk.

Providing a service to the community

Live music is understood to be an important service that smaller venues provide to the community, particularly for those who don't have access to the 'bigger corporate venues'. According to respondents, these venues provide numerous other benefits to communities and the cultural landscape of the city. They provide a space for people to form connections, make friends, and express themselves. Some respondents understand small live music venues to not be financially driven, but rather driven by their commitment to the city's music and arts scene. There was a sense that diverse communities are reliant on these venues and the social, economic and cultural services they provide.

> *Live music in the CBD is one of the few areas that cultivates artistic expression in this broken city. By enforcing stricter noise rules you are ruining livelihoods, killing culture and denying a diverse group of people a community where they are welcome to express themselves.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

> *[without these venues] how are people meant to form community, make friends, have fun?* (Central city resident)

> *Please, please help them. They are indie venues that have little resource but they are the ones that are giving people reasons to live in this city at all.* (Central city resident)

Supporting artists

A major theme running throughout comments was the service provided by these venues to artists and musicians. Many respondents noted that Ōtautahi-Christchurch's live music venues have been instrumental in the careers of major New Zealand artists, with one describing these venues as the 'epicentre' of the city's music scene. They provide a space for local musicians to practice and earn an income, and serve as 'hubs' for artistic expression, creativity and innovation.

> *Without them… the growth of music arts for younger generations in Christchurch will suffer.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

> *Without venues, music cannot thrive…*(Wider Christchurch resident)

> *Smaller venues are the backbone of creative development and should be given just as much support as the larger art venues that host international and established artists.* (Central city resident)

Being a safe space

Safety was a key theme running through open-ended responses. There were concerns that without these smaller live music and hospitality venues, those who do not feel comfortable at larger, 'more popular' venues will be without safe spaces to socialise.

> *I don't condemn noise restrictions for places without bars etc to deter large house party's and gatherings - but our business are there for one reason - to safely have fun. Please don't take this away from our amazing city!!* (Wider Christchurch resident)

> *Clubs like this are really cool to see as the "strip" clubs like fat Eddie's and sin are quite often not a safe environment on a night out wheres smaller dance focused clubs are always friendly environments lots of people enjoy.* (Central city resident)

> *The current night life in Christchurch i.e. the strip has a culture of disruptive binge drinking and there are so many people that want an alternative to that.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

The consequences of not having safe, regulated spaces for people to go at night were a source of concern for many. Questions were raised about where people would go instead, how safe this would be for them, and the impact this would have on other residents:

> *If you turn away these night lifers from the city, then they are more likely to go to house parties, which are more wide spread and not controlled by trained security like clubs are. More people will get hurt, more people will get annoyed from noise, and more trouble will rise.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

Many respondents also explained that the city's smaller live music venues are safe spaces for rainbow communities in comparison to the 'popular bars':

> *Music venues are important queer spaces* (Central city resident)
>
> *Borderline homophobic to ask people to turn music down in the one Safe place in Ōtautahi* (Central city resident)
>
> *An attack on nightlife is an attack on the queer community.* (Central city resident)

Reviving the city centre

Another common theme running throughout open-ended comments relates to the significant role that live music and hospitality venues have played in the post-quakes revival of the city centre. They are helping to 'bring life back' to the area and to get the city 'back on its feet' by attracting visitors and enhancing vibrancy; placing restrictions on their operation will only put the city 'back to sleep'. There was also a sense amongst respondents that the city is indebted to these venues for keeping it alive post-earthquakes.

> *We are finally getting back to a fraction of what we once were pre earthquakes, why ruin it by putting restrictions on people/businesses that are already trying their best to make the city a place that people actually want to visit and spend time in.* (Central city resident)
>
> *The revival of live music venues after the earthquakes has been a vital part of the revival of the city as a whole* (Wider Christchurch resident)
>
> *The so called "noise" of places like the Darkroom kept Christchurch alive after the earthquakes…It would be criminal for a venue such as the Darkroom to have to close when it has given so much to the city. It was the first to open after the earthquakes and it still hums. Let it continue to do so for years to come* (Wider Christchurch resident)

One respondent expressed the view that rebuilding the city centre needs to be about not only what we want to be as a central city, but also about honouring the buildings, people, ideas and businesses 'that came before':

> *…people who helped the city be a city in times of growth or hardship. In this way we are honoring our whakapapa, the people that pushed our city in (hopefully) positive direction for a time and left a platform for us to build our own ideas, and as residents we should feel the framework of the past in certain areas and let other spaces have a chance for organic growth.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

Balancing residential interests with culture and commerce

Many respondents expressed a desire for balance to be struck between the push for more residential density within the four avenues, and the city's night life and live music industry. There

was a sense that while creating more housing in the city is a good thing, this should be done in a way that does not negatively impact established businesses.

> *The ability to live in the central city should not come at the cost of the nightlife.* (Wider Christchurch resident)
>
> *Ōtautahi has all of the makings of an incredible city for nightlife, please protect this as density is increased.* (Central city resident)
>
> *Where musicians and artists can go if the central city is residential now?* (Central city resident)

Reverse sensitivity effects were frequently touched on in open-ended comments. The morality of central city residents complaining about noise and, in some cases, causing venues to be closed when the venues were 'here first', 'have always been there' and are 'already established', was questioned by many. Responsibility was placed by some on the Council, who is thought to be 'siding with the landlords' at the expense of the city's venues and nightlife, and some felt this was a planning and consents issue.

> *Other people should not have to be quiet when you move into THEIR space.* (Wider Christchurch resident)
>
> *Consideration should be given to pre-existing ensues in the event of new residential developments moving into close proximity to venues that had already established themselves in the community.* (Wider Christchurch resident)
>
> *I would hate to see well-established venues closing because residential developments have come in by stealth. The venues are a treasure, and part of the reason why I (as a performing artist) live in the city centre.* (Central city resident)

Ōtautahi-Christchurch's live music industry

The importance of the city's live music industry came through strongly in open-ended comments. Ōtautahi-Christchurch is understood to be a 'hub' for New Zealand music and the capital of the electronic scene. With a 'long history' of supporting and nurturing New Zealand artists, the city has a 'unique', 'fantastic' and internationally-recognised music scene that will be put at risk under noise restrictions.

> *Mainstream nightlife will be affected, but there is a thriving underground music and culture scene in Christchurch that most of you are completely unaware of, that is already suffering because of a lack of viable venues and further restrictions would risk destroying what so many have worked so hard for.* (Wider Christchurch resident)
>
> *Please let the night clubs thrive, Christchurch IS the home of electronic and dance music, aswell as being the sound system capital of New Zealand. Home to sound system culture, arts and events.* (Central city business representative)

Many respondents believed that live music is an essential part of a city's culture and wellbeing.

> *Live music is the heartbeat of the city's alternative culture. It's an amazing thing that brings people of all races, genders, religions and sexuality together. imposing bullshit regulations will completely kill the thing that makes Christchurch the greatest city on earth to me.* (Central city resident)

> *Music is the heart of humanity and without a vibrant music culture a city will die and become a barren wasteland of depression. Don't let Christchurch die* (Wider Christchurch resident)

> *…the culture of live and electronic music is important to many people in Christchurch, both for its heritage and future contributions. the council must protect the heartbeat of the city.* (Central city resident)

Managing expectations

One of the most common messages we received from respondents is that if people move into the central city, they must expect higher levels of noise than if they were to live in the suburbs. For some, noise is 'part of the deal' and a necessary 'sacrifice' for the privilege and convenience of central city living.

> *People can't expect the convenience of CBD living without noise. If its not music, then it'll be rubbish trucks, sirens, alarms, car parking. Christchurch residents unrealistically always expect big city amenities with small town convenience. You can't have both.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

> *Those who choose to live in the central should suck it up and live WITH the city not against it. Go to a pub and enjoy yourself instead of sitting at home and complaining about the best thing on your doorstep.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

> *When I moved into central, I was well aware there would be additional noise, but it was traded off for being in town.* (Central city resident)

Most respondents who touched on this issue placed responsibility squarely on residents themselves for managing their expectations of central city living. There was a sense of incredulity that people would move into the city with the expectation of peace and quiet. However, some also felt that the Council and developers have a role to play in ensuring potential buyers are made aware of central city noise levels before making the move.

Choice

Closely related to the idea of central city residents needing to manage their expectations is the idea that moving to the central city is a choice that people make – if they do not want to live in a noisy environment, then they can and should choose to live elsewhere.

> *People know full well that they are moving into a city centre when they move here. If they want peace and quiet they should move to Pleasant Point, not the centre of the biggest city in the South Island.* (Central city resident)

> *For me the cbd should be a place of vibrant activity, culture, entertainment, and business. If this doesn't suit someone's preferred living environment they should consider living in a suburb rather than trying to make the cbd into one.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

> *Anyone who has issues with noise from live music can easily choose to live in one of Ōtautahi's many suburbs rather than moving into the CBD.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

Some respondents noted that if people were able to afford a home in the central city, they would have alternative options available to them if they wanted to live somewhere quieter (i.e., the suburbs).

The music and night life in Christchurch is so important and should not be made to 'quiet down' so the people who chose to live close by aren't inconvenienced. They are all rich enough to find somewhere quieter to live. (Wider Christchurch resident)

You should not be able to afford the privilege of both the convenience of living in the city and the quietness of the suburbs. Choose one or the other. (Central city resident)

There was also a concern amongst respondents that the needs of an 'affluent vocal minority' are unfairly being catered to above the needs of the majority. One respondent felt that the act of moving into a noisy area and then complaining about the noise displays an "almost offensive level of entitlement". There was a general sense throughout comments that the central city is being put at risk by the few who do not appreciate it. One respondent requested that the Council:

Please stop listening to the few, loud, old voices and think about Christchurch Inc and the people who come to town for enjoyment. (Wider Christchurch resident)

Noise restrictions and concern for (the health and future of) the city

Concerns about what noise restrictions will mean for the health and future of Ōtautahi-Christchurch, a city that is still in post-quakes recovery, were common. There is a sense that the city centre has suffered enough, and that placing restrictions on its noise and nightlife will be the nail in the coffin. The following sentiments were also common:

If there noise limitations in the CBD then we may as well just give up. Haven't we lost enough with the earthquakes?? (Wider Christchurch resident)

It is idiotic to make sound restrictions and squash what little music scene there is in Christchurch. It will literally turn into a retirement village. It is embarrassing. (Central city resident)

After the earthquakes, the night-life was terrible and it very negatively influenced a whole generation of young people. Please make sure that our city doesn't die! (Wider Christchurch resident)

Some respondents felt that the city has missed its opportunity to rebuild as a vibrant, international city; others feel that the window of opportunity is still open, but that noise restrictions will severely hamper what momentum the city has. Respondents also expressed fears that the city will not be able to attract visitors or investment, or keep its young people without a vibrant nightlife to offer.

Christchurch is already not a hugely attractive place for young professionals to live and therefore I see it as hugely detrimental if the night life gets taken away, because there is little else holding us back from moving out of Christchurch. (Central city resident)

I don't like that the clubs close at 3am, it has felt like for a long time that we tell our visitors ..... hey come to Christchurch, but make sure you have an early night. (Wider Christchurch resident)

Christchurch should aim to be a modern and world-class city. Reducing noise in the central city from nightclubs, events, sports etc turns Christchurch into a second rate sleepy town which will not attract the global attention or investment it deserves. (Wider Christchurch resident)

Zoning

Respondents had mixed views on the merits of zoning and noise precincts. Those with concerns about the use of noise precincts worry that such an approach dampens the ability for growth to

occur organically, concentrates noise too heavily, and disadvantages smaller businesses who may not be able to afford the cost of leasing a space in the newly defined zone or precinct.

> *Creating precincts stops organic growth and does nothing to support the businesses that have created life in the central city over the years.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

> *Nightlife precincts are a good idea in principle but makes cost of commercial renting in those areas inaccessible for "alternative" venues. We're left with large commercial binge drinking areas that don't encourage responsible nightlife behaviour and are very restricted in terms of the cultural diversity, music genre and overall experience they offer.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

Another concern amongst respondents regarding zoning and/or noise precincts relates to what will happen to existing venues that find themselves suddenly under heavier noise restrictions due to new or updated zones/precincts. Many respondents believed existing venues should not be bound by introduced changes.

> *Existing hospitality businesses should be permitted to continue with higher noise levels, even if they are outside any hospitality zones crested.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

> *…overall I feel that if tighter restrictions or zones are set up, existing tenants should be 'grandfathered' in, or the boundaries of higher noise zones be set to include them.* (Central city resident)

Those who supported zoning and noise precincts, however, saw it as a means to ensure both central city residents and music venues can prosper within well-defined and understood borders.

> *…a well-advertised high noise night-life zone seems like a solution to reduce stress and conflict for those who do want to live in the city.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

> *Implement noise zones FOR the music venues so that they are not faced with the possibility of being shut down in future with these developments.* (Central city resident)

> *Having council provide areas where higher noise is tolerated in the city would be an opportunity for Christchurch to regain some of the prequake vibrancy.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

Building rules and soundproofing

Effective noise insulation/soundproofing was seen by many as key to enabling housing and music/nightlife to co-exist in the central city.

> *Rather than forcing venues to turn down the volume and disrupt the night life of town it should be up to the council and those living in town to have ample sound proofing so that both groups, residents and visitors, can co exist.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

Many believed that the onus for ensuring effective noise insulation/soundproofing should be on the developers of new residential builds. The need for Council to provide soundproofing support for existing businesses was also highlighted by many respondents, particularly because existing businesses may not be able to afford the costs of retrofitting their building.

> *…we would like to see profit-seeking developers providing appropriate insulation and planning in their builds… We believe that the developers should play their part to avoid creating a huge*

cost in energy, stress and money that will otherwise be passed on to property-buyers and existing local businesses. (Central city business representative)

These existing businesses/landlords cannot afford the compliance that might be needed for sound insulation, retrofitting old buildings is expensive. New builds should however have to comply with sound insulation rules. (Wider Christchurch resident)

Grants should be given to assist existing businesses to soundproof as much as is realistically possible, and also to ensure they stay in the CBD. (Wider Christchurch resident)

Other common themes

Other themes that were not so widely expressed, but still quite frequently mentioned included Te Kaha, street noise, and comparisons to cities overseas.

Te Kaha

Respondents expressed concern over how stricter noise regulations in the central city would impact the future success of the stadium, highlighting the positive relationship between hospitality and music venues, and the stadium.

We're building a stadium that should be able to operate any day/night in order to use it to its full capacity. Noise restrictions are ridiculous and should not be an issue in the city centre. (Central city business representative)

To make the most use of our amazing new stadium, hospitality venues for pre and post events should be encouraged. Limiting noise will adversely affect this. (Wider Christchurch resident)

A vibrant, thriving city needs a vibrant thriving night life. If we want to attract tourism (especially now with the stadium being built right in the middle of the city), we need sensible noise legislation that will encourage and support the night time economy. (Wider Christchurch resident)

Street noise

Noise from cars (specifically boy racers), rubbish trucks and sirens were highlighted by numerous central city respondents as often more disruptive than noise from live music venues or bars. Noise from antisocial behaviour in the city was also indicated to be more intrusive than music.

Our main issue isn't music or noise from evening entertainment, it is mainly traffic noise - in particular early rubbish collections with very noisy trucks from hotels and businesses, and 'boy-racers' on Bealey Ave etc. Those noises are much more intrusive than music, and people having a good time. (Central city resident)

What about the noise of car enthusiasts? They are in the streets continuously. I'm more troubled by this noise than live music inside music venues. (Central city resident)

I live very close to a number of bars. Cars driving at speed is often what wakes me up at night. As well as heavy vehicles. People who argue on street can also wake me up if it is right outside my window. But rarely in last few years have i heard music or had issues sleeping with music outdoors. Actual noise from bars is low. Traffic and people is where most noise comes from. (Central city resident)

Overseas comparisons

Some respondents questioned why Ōtautahi-Christchurch should be any different from other major cities around the world, where noise is 'the norm' and "expected right into the night". These respondents felt that the stringency of Ōtautahi-Christchurch's noise rules was unique in both the national and international context.

> *If you live in Bangkok, Auckland, Sydney there is noise around you, but people living in Christchurch won't accept this?* (Wider Christchurch resident)

> *Christchurch is the only city that seems to have this issue. I have friends living in central city housing across New Zealand and overseas and none of them have heard of complaints like this ever, nor have they heard of business closures because of noise.* (Wider Christchurch resident)

Separate submissions

We received a submission from the Canterbury branch of Hospitality New Zealand who represent around 3000 businesses throughout New Zealand. The main points of this submission have been included below. Specific comments and recommendations can be found in the full submission, which can be made available on request.

The key challenges for hospitality venues are:

- Limitations on business operations because of noise rules
- Residents neighbour noise complaints
- Managing new neighbours with different expectations
- In some cases, managing noise generated by neighbouring businesses.

When a business is subjected to a noise complaint there are consequences for renewals of liquor licences. To mitigate the complaint objections, they have gone to a lot of expense to mediate with the complainant. In some cases, this has resulted in shutting down live entertainment, and earlier closing times of venues.

Having a night-time economy brings vibrancy and a sense of uniqueness to city, contributing to the overall economic growth by providing employment opportunities, boosting tourism, and encouraging cultural development, and nurturing the artistic and creative industries.

For the central city to be a place that has both a vibrant night-time economy and is an attractive place for people to live, we believe a balance is required and residents should expect some more noise in the central city than in the suburbs.

We would encourage Christchurch City Council to further investigate how a 24-hour strategy could support the city's growth.

The current noise categories within the central city are historic and with the new build of many hospitality venues, i.e., The Terrace and other venues within the city, the category needs to be rezoned to enable these areas to operate a considered and vibrant night-time economy.

There is general consensus that the decibel threshold is too low, and there needs to be a higher scope of decibel ratings to enable venues to manage all noise levels including peaks.

Building standards for walls/windows facing the noise source should be double glazed or appropriately acoustically treated to absorb/block sound from penetrating

Whilst hospitality venues can go to high lengths to mitigate noise, there is an element of residents living in the central city accepting certain thresholds of noise, along with residential buildings being built with noise cancelling materials.

We support any initiative that can be approved for people buying/renting in the central city that they acknowledge they are living in a location with live entertainment, and a vibrant night-time economy

Non-regulatory Council initiatives

There are some good suggested non-regulatory council initiatives that would support mitigation of noise, such as:

- Support to hospitality venues to navigate planning, building and licensing information.

- Educate/promote the central city to buyers as a vibrant environment, shifting the narrative with media and tourism promotion.
- Continue advice to support quality residential and mixed-use development with pre-application urban and eco design, enabling direct noise mitigations.
- Improve public advice when buying within the Central City, understanding they are living in a vibrant location with live music and a night-time economy.

We would like to see changes to the District Plan noise rules where entertainment and hospitality activities including live music are encouraged in the central city, with category 1 being applied to high density hospitality areas.