

# ECOVILLAGE DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST



This sheet provides a quick checklist of subjects that should be considered by any group wishing to develop a community-oriented and environmentally friendly residential development.

Site Selection	Business Structure, Finance & Marketing	Engineering Design	Village Environment Design	Community Design Philosophy
<p><b>Legal Title</b> Check the title for significant limitations eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• easements and covenants</li> <li>• development limitations</li> <li>• access and egress</li> <li>• Iwi land claims</li> <li>• mineral rights and claims</li> </ul> <p><b>Site Contamination</b> Review old land uses and make assessment of likelihood of significant site contamination.</p> <p><b>Access, Location, and Image</b> Ensure the site location and transport access relates to the market niche selected.</p> <p><b>Physical Characteristics</b> The selection of physical characteristics will greatly influence price, availability, and suitability of land. Key aspects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetation cover and quality</li> <li>• Views and features</li> <li>• Soil quality and depth</li> <li>• Existing improvements</li> <li>• Topography</li> <li>• Water supply</li> <li>• Climate</li> </ul>	<p><b>Business Structure</b> The most appropriate form of business structure needs to be determined in conjunction with the market niche. Well-managed yet participative structures are more likely to support sustainable communities.</p> <p><b>Business Facilitation</b> Sustainable developments need to focus on the provision of livelihood opportunities within the adjacent area. Measures such as business incubators, co-operatives and timebanks can facilitate appropriate solutions. On-site accommodations and education facilities can leverage business training and commercial opportunities.</p> <p><b>Funding</b> The options for attraction of finance, materials and labour for the development will depend on the final market niche selected. Options such as community funding associations and sweat equity systems may offer attractive alternatives to commercial finance.</p>	<p><b>Utilities</b> The provision of engineering services and utilities for residential developments is well-established and conventional solutions that meet council requirements are readily available. However, proponents of ecovillage developments should also consider the following options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solar power coupled with grid connect or batteries</li> <li>• Wind or other renewable</li> <li>• On site reuse of wastewater.</li> <li>• Installing minimal roads</li> <li>• Utilising porous pavements and leaky drains to minimise runoff</li> <li>• Solar Passive subdivision layout and lot design</li> <li>• Communal heating systems</li> <li>• On site solid waste recycling</li> <li>• Integrating private and common water supply and effluent management</li> <li>• Integrating recreational and aesthetic water features with stormwater management</li> <li>• Community Data networks</li> <li>• Closed cycle resource management systems</li> </ul>	<p><b>Definition</b> The ideal thought is that “<i>An ecovillage is a human scale, fully featured settlement which integrates human activities harmlessly into the natural environment, supports healthy development and can be sustained into the indefinite future.</i>” Robert Gilman ‘Ecovillages and Sustainable Communities’, 1991</p> <p><b>Design Integration</b> The holistic design of the development relies on the effective integration of the environmental, economic, and social aspects of the philosophy behind the community.</p> <p>Permaculture principles are one example of an integrated style of thinking that can produce significant synergistic benefits</p> <p>Through effective integration the overall atmosphere of the site can become one of a safe and supporting living environment that encourages a diversity of people, nature, and activities.</p>	<p><b>Land Title</b> One of the most significant influences on the makeup and behaviour of the community will be the form of land title that is given. Choices include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual freehold/ leasehold title</li> <li>• Single party ownership</li> <li>• Multiple occupancy; and</li> <li>• Unit Title</li> </ul> <p>The relative benefits of these forms need to be determined in conjunction with other financial and management aspects.</p> <p><b>Community Relations</b> Aspects that can strengthen the social cohesiveness of the residents while will support a vibrant and sustainable community include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular interaction of residents of all ages</li> <li>• Community activities, facilities, and services</li> <li>• Some form of external goal or outreach activity</li> <li>• Internal compatibility of belief systems; and</li> <li>• Joint responsibilities and management.</li> </ul>