

HOUSING – THEN AND NOW

Since World War II, the face of New Zealand housing has changed. Some of the key points are shown in this look back to the 50s.

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The 1950s marked the beginning of a period of change when new home builds and home ownership began to accelerate. Before then, the average

number of new dwellings was around 5,000–8,000 per year. In the mid 1970s, migration peaked and so did new housing, with nearly 40,000 houses built in 1974, followed by a

collapse in the late 1970s to around 14,500 new houses in 1981. The rocky road has continued as we again reach a similar low following a high of 31,400 new dwellings in 2004. ▀

Fewer people in bigger houses

Average house sizes in the 1950s, about 100 m² floor area, were quite small by today's standards. Over the years, many of these houses have been added to (see Figure 1).

While floor areas have increased, the number of persons per household has decreased – the floor area per occupant has almost trebled (see Figure 1).

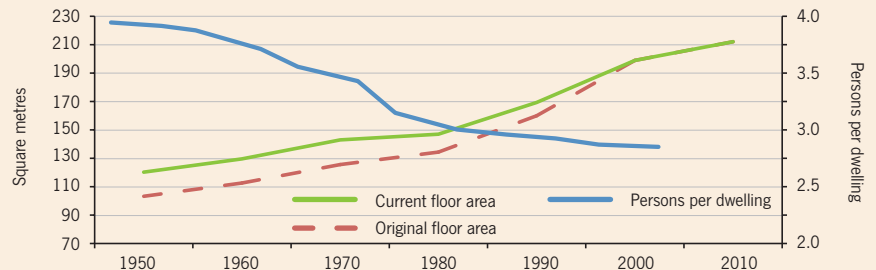


Figure 1: Average floor area for detached houses (Source: Quotable Value NZ and BRANZ) and declining number of people per dwelling (Source: Statistics NZ Longitudinal Data Series).

Rise and fall of home ownership

Home ownership increased from the 1950s, peaking in the mid 1980s (see Figure 2). The 2006 census showed a significant decline, probably due to affordability. This trend is likely to continue in the March 2013 census.

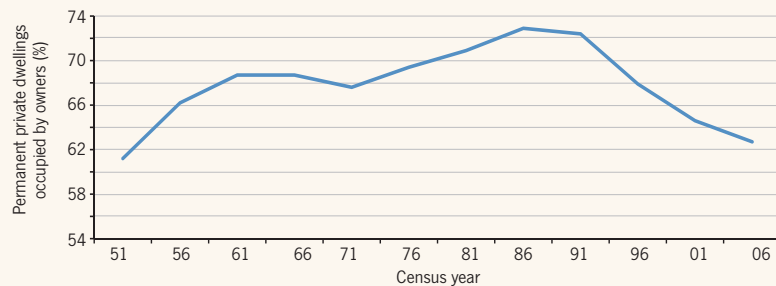


Figure 2: Owner-occupied dwellings. (Source: CHRANZ, Morrison 2008.)

Multi-units go skywards

Much of the social and low-cost housing in the 1950s and 1960s was multi-units. Consent data was not broken into detached and multi-unit before 1976, but then, over a third of new housing was multi-unit (see Figure 3). Initially, most were single-storey linear developments or duplexes, but now most are medium and high-rise.



Figure 3: Multi-units of a percentage of all dwelling consents.

Changing face of claddings

Before the 1970s, house cladding was mostly brick or timber weatherboard. Since then, claddings have included EIFS, concrete masonry, bricks and panels, PVC and fibre-cement weatherboard, sheet steel and plywood (see Figure 4). The current trend for traditional materials reflects weathertightness concerns. ▀

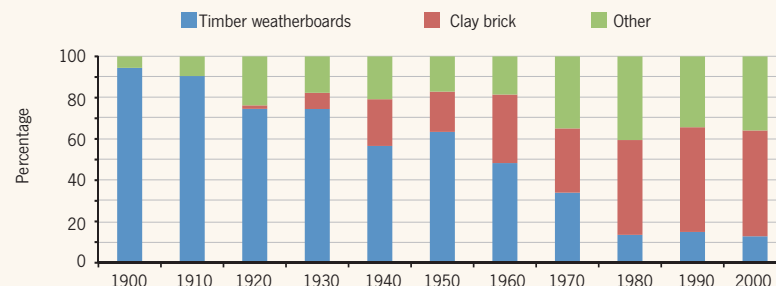


Figure 4: House claddings. (Source: 2004 BRANZ House Condition Survey.)