

Webinar #2: Special Character Areas
Wednesday 21 April 2022
5.30pm – 7.00pm

Unanswered Questions

Question	Answer
Where can one access the reports required under s32 of the RMA for SCAs	Owen, the s32 reports will be available with the plan change documentation once it is notified.
Are the rules for the qualifying heritage areas going to change from those that currently apply or will they just be moved across?	The rules for the Historic Heritage Overlay will remain the same. The rules for the Special Character Areas Overlay are likely to be subject to some amendment, but the intent will be to continue to manage the special character values within those areas in a similar and an appropriate way.
Can you define what Two-storey single house zone means, ie how does this compare with the current single house zone	The “two-storey single dwelling residential area” is a preliminary zone that reflects the level of development in the current Single House zone after the government’s Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) are incorporated, and serves to indicate that because of the presence of qualifying matter/s, the MDRS standards that would otherwise apply to the site may need to be modified. The particular MDRS responses in order to accommodate each qualifying matter are still being worked through.
Areas affected by 'Ridge Protection' overlays which are a leftover from the old Waitak council; have these been reviewed / justified in the same manner as your treatment of SCAs?	The ridgeline protection overlay in the Unitary Plan has been identified as a qualifying matter as well. Staff have commissioned a specialist landscape architect to assist in the review of these areas, in the same way that Special Character has been reviewed.
Thanks for the presentation. Are you able to say anything more about the extent of the planning controls that are likely to be possible within the two-storey residential areas?	The “two-storey single dwelling residential area” and the “two-storey medium density residential area” are preliminary zones that reflect the level of development in the current Single House and Mixed Housing Suburban zones respectively after the government’s Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) are incorporated, and serves to indicate that because of the presence of qualifying matter/s, the MDRS standards that would otherwise apply to the site may need to be modified. This zoning currently applies to any site that has been identified to be affected by one or more qualifying matters. The particular MDRS responses in order to accommodate each qualifying matter are still being worked through. As such, the rules may vary depending on which qualifying matters are applicable.

Can you expand on what impact identifying special Character areas as qualifying might have on future development in those areas?	Areas that are identified as a Special Character Qualifying Matter are likely to retain a low-density residential zoning and be subject to the same kind of provisions that the Unitary Plan currently has to manage the special character values that are present in those areas. Areas that are not identified as a Special Character Qualifying Matter will be subject to additional intensification via a change in zone to Mixed Housing Urban or Townhouse and Apartment Buildings, unless there is another Qualifying Matter affecting the area.
Why is the northshore, especially Birkenhead/northcote point, disproportionately affected in regards to these changes? Especially When these suburbs have extremely sub-standard public transport and are not major (or near) transport hubs .	All 23,000 properties within the Special Character Areas Overlay have been surveyed to identify their special character values. There are separate methodologies for residential areas and business areas and these are available on the AK Have Your Say website. Residential areas are required, in the preliminary response, meet specific thresholds for Special Character to remain a Qualifying Matter. The Birkenhead and Northcote Point areas did not meet these thresholds. Sub-areas of special character value have been identified in these areas that do meet the stated threshold.
St Marys Bay one of Aucklands oldest and most historic areas full of special character homes has largely been zoned 6 storied terraced housing and apartments. please can you comment how this has happened	St Mary's Bay is within the walkable catchment of the City Centre. All 21,000 properties within the Special Character Areas Overlay - Residential have been surveyed to identify their special character values using a methodology (this is available on the AK Have Your Say website). According to the methodology, residential areas must meet specific thresholds for Special Character to remain a Qualifying Matter, being 75% within a walkable catchment. The St Mary's Bay area of special character did not meet this threshold in the survey. Sub-areas of special character have however been identified. For more information, please see the special character findings reports on St Mary's Bay on the AK Have Your Say website. Your feedback on the St Marys Bay area is encouraged and should be lodged on the AK Have Your Say website.
Will there be sites that retain special character and have the mdrs rules ? Or does special character overlay mean they will retain single house zone ?	The underlying zone for special character areas identified as a qualifying matter has not yet been finalised, but is likely to be a low-density two-storey residential zone.
What "landscape values" have been considered when evaluating SCARs and scoring properties?	Special character areas have been identified using a methodology, which is available at AK Have Your Say. Please have a look at the methodology for more information about how special character areas were surveyed and scored.

Will there be an opportunity for public feedback on the standards in the two storey single house zone?	After this consultation, the council will work up the proposed plan change for reporting to the Planning Committee in August for approval to notify the plan change by 20 August. There will be no further opportunity therefore to provide feedback until the statutory submission phase on notification of the proposed plan change after 20 August.
Top Candia road can change to city zone?	No changes are proposed to the extent of the existing Business - City Centre zoning. The Medium Density Residential Standards apply to all relevant residential zones, which includes the Single House zone and the Mixed Housing Urban zone found along Candia Road, subject to qualifying matters.
In the character overlay in Hillpark - the trees play an important part in the character of the area - the houses are in an urban forest. We understand it is one of the only ones in the region - therefore how can the trees be separated out of the equation as a qualifying matter. In addition we have SEA provisions and a character overlay on the same property - but some of those considerations have been dismissed in the latest considerations. These are mature native trees - once destroyed they cannot be replaced. Yet other areas in Hillpark without an SEA have been included. It doesn't seem to be a consistent approach?	Following an amendment of the Resource Management Act 1991 in 2009 (RMA (Simplifying and Streamlining) Amendment Act 2009), the government changed the tree protection rules in New Zealand. When this amendment came into force in 2012, Council no longer had the ability to include blanket tree protection within its district plan. The only way now to protect trees is to identify them specifically as notable trees. Council therefore is not able to manage trees through the Special Character Overlay.
recognising the difficulties of COVID, do you believe google maps is adequate to base these decisions on?	Approximately 50% of the survey of special character areas was done via field survey. After Auckland entered the level 4 lockdown in August, we needed to continue the survey to meet the government timeframe for the NPS UD. This required the use of Google Streetview. Ideally, all survey would have been via field survey but Google Streetview was the best alternative we had available to us. Note that the photos are regularly updated and there were very few properties that were unable to be seen from Google Streetview. A small amount of follow up field survey has occurred, where particular streets were hard to see on Google Streetview or where we were aware that houses were not oriented to the street.
Does Single housing zone around Melloons Bay will be coming under qualifying matters	The AUP zoning for Mellons Bay was mainly SHZ and MHS Zones. The viewer shows some QMs will apply, particularly coastal erosion overlays which may affect minimum lot size. Further investigation will occur between now and when the IPI is notified in August.
Central Get Policy for intensification is that it should be considered in appropriate areas. The roading and public transport in Devonport (cancelled Stanley Pt ferry) would surely	The government has intentionally not included infrastructure constraints as a qualifying matter. Council does consider that infrastructure is a qualifying matter and is

present Devonport as unsuitable. Why hasn't the council considered infrastructure when applying the methodology?	currently undertaking work with Auckland Transport and Watercare around how such infrastructure constraints could be mapped and justified on a 'site-by-site' basis as required by the NPS-UD.
follow up from previous comment i heard Noel say "we have driven out or used google street map". what proportion of which?	Approximately 50% of properties were surveyed in person and 50% via Google Streetview. The survey started in the Isthmus so properties in those suburbs are more likely to have been subject to field survey.
Google street view has incorrect information. Therefore the analysis for specific properties will be incorrect. How do you propose resolving this?	It is acknowledged that properties change over time. This is a factor for using both Google Streetview or using field survey, as either approach is just a point in time. Recent modifications may not have been considered for individual properties within the survey. However, it is not thought to be the case for a very high percentage of the 21,000 residential properties that were surveyed. We welcome feedback if it is thought we have the score of a particular property, street or area wrong.
Mr Reardon noted that a substantial number of the "site-specific" analyses had been carried out by "Google Street View" - suggesting that a consideration of the front of properties is sufficient. Is the Council concerned about its site-specific assessments being liable to criticism of the basis that a facadist approach has been adopted?	The survey of special character areas was undertaken either via site visits from the public realm (i.e. the street, also known as field survey) or via Google Streetview (after we entered the Covid lockdown). Properties that we not visible, such as rear sites, were not given a score in the survey and these results were not taken into account when analysing the overall value for each area. The field survey and Google Streetview usually allow more than just the facade of a building to be seen and elements that were assessed include the relationship of the property to the street and its integrity i.e. more than just the facade. Council welcomes any feedback on the methodology it used to survey the 23,000 properties within the Special Character Areas Overlay. The methodology that was used is available to view at the AK Have Your Say website.
We do not feel a 2 storey houses contribute to character given your standard for assessing character in your survey removes points for popping the roof etc.	All buildings within the special character overlay were assessed using a methodology, which is available at the AK Have Your Say website. Two-storey buildings have the potential to strongly contribute to the special character values of an area, however significant alterations or additions, such as a large "pop-top" roof addition may cause the score of an individual place to be marked down, such as for its integrity value.
Can you expand on what impact assessing Special character areas as qualifying would have on future development. ie capacity to intensify	Areas that are identified as a Special Character Qualifying Matter are likely to retain a low-density residential zoning and be subject to the same kind of provisions that the Unitary Plan currently has to manage the special character

	values that are present in those areas. Areas that are not identified as a Special Character Qualifying Matter will be subject to additional intensification via a change in zone to Mixed Housing Urban or Townhouse and Apartment Buildings, unless there is another Qualifying Matter affecting the area.
What would be the rationale for zoning an area in a walkable catchment to Two Storey Single Residential, while also removing the existing SCA?	The only way a residential area inside a walkable catchment could not be zoned for intensification is if a Qualifying Matter is present. Special Character Areas are just one of the Qualifying Matters and the sites you are referring to must be impacted by another qualifying matter(s).
what guarantees do the people of Auckland have that these qualifying matters finally agreed to will be adhered to?. It would appear that over the last 5 years in order to speed up building/development work that Council has let some of these standards slip?	Council has been directed by government to apply a specific range of qualifying matters prescribed by legislation. There will be further opportunities for the public to comment on these in August when the IPI is notified. It is always possible to apply for consents to infringe rules supported by specialist reports.
Has council looked at size of site required to accomodate 3x3 storey houses within the planning rules that apply to mixed housing zones? Some diagrams appear to have much more than 50% site coverage.	The MDRS does not require a minimum site size. Therefore the development of up to 3 dwellings of 3 storeys is permitted and does not require resource consent (if it complies with all other density standards).
Is the walkable catchment densification change motivated by climate change or housing affordability goals?	The walkable catchments requirement are part of the NPS-UD which seeks to promote "well-functioning urban environments" and this includes reference to both housing affordability and climate change (see NPS-UD Policy 1).