

Webinar 2

Online information session

Special character areas

Good evening, everyone. Tena Koto Katoa, I'm Warren McLennan, Manager Regional Northwestern Islands Planning for the Auckland Council, and I'll be facilitating the conversation this evening to make sure it runs smoothly. Thank you for joining us for the webinar. And the webinar is around the government's new housing rules and what it means for Auckland. Most of you will know that the National Policy Statement for Urban Development and the medium density residential standards required by the government are all about enabling intensification of housing in Auckland's urban areas, but we can reduce some of that intensification by applying what's called qualifying matters. Some of these are specified by the government, for example, matters of national importance or protecting nationally significant infrastructure, and others can be specified by Auckland Council as long as we can provide adequate evidence. Now, one of these qualifying that is proposed by Open Council is to manage special character areas and to protect their values and consultation on this runs for the next three weeks from the 19th April to the 9 May, so you can get further information from [Akhaveyoursay.nz\housing](https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/akhaveyoursay/nz/housing), and there are also ten information sheets there, as well as a link to the GIS viewer.

So tonight's webinar will focus on special character areas and how they've been identified across Auckland. First of all, I'll just run through a few housekeeping notes and some Zoom etiquette. You'll know that this session is being recorded and it will be available on AK have your say in the next few days so that those who haven't been able to attend can watch them and have the same information as you tonight. All members of the audience will have their cameras and microphones disabled. So the way that you can ask questions or make comments is via the Q and A function which is down near the bottom of your screen towards the middle. Now, note that due to time constraints, we'll likely not get to all questions, but we'll try our best to do that. You can start putting your questions in as soon as you like, but they won't be answered until the presentation has been completed. So joining tonight's discussion, Councillor Chris Darby, Chair of the Planning Committee, Councillor Fletcher, Councillor Thom, and so far, I think that's all. So we won't be also note that we won't be taking any questions about individual properties, and for that you'll need to go to the Unitary Plan Inbox and ask that question there.

So from the planning and heritage teams tonight, we've got the following staff members, Noel Reardon, who will lead the presentation, Emma Rush, Ross Muffin, Fiona Sprout, Rebecca Freeman and Megan Patrick. And they will take their turns at answering some of the questions. So the session tonight takes about 90 minutes and the format will be about that 20 minutes presentation from the Heritage team to give you an overview of the proposed changes and the council's draft response to those changes, and that will be then followed by the Q. And as I say, you can start putting those questions in there as soon as you like. I'll now hand over to Noel, the manager Heritage, for the presentation on special character areas.

Thank you, Warren. Can you hear me, everyone? Yes, can you hear me, Warren? So good evening and welcome, everyone. As Warren said, this webinar's focus is on special character. What we're proposing to do is to give you a high level overview from which you will hopefully gain a better understanding of council's approach to special character as a qualifying matter under the MPs. This should enable you to ask more direct questions if you should so wish, but also potentially provide a more informed submission through the process. I have a slight technical difficulty, so I am reliant on Ashley to change slides. So at the end of each one I'll be saying this. So thanks, Ashley. This is the agenda for the presentation, a brief overview. I'll then dive into the special character residential approach methodology and give you some examples into a similar process with business and then just conclude with some next steps. Thanks, Ashley. Yes, next one. So what are special character areas, but generally are the older established areas. They may be whole settlements or parts of suburbs or commercial areas. There are areas of special architectural or other built character value that have a collective importance.

They also can encompass landscape values. These areas physically link us to the past development of the city. They show us how the city expanded during different eras in response to different pressures and influences. While they're small in terms of the number of properties, I think it's only about 3% of the total housing stock. Special character properties. They have irrelevance beyond their immediate locality and have importance to people beyond those who live there. Key factor is that we are talking about those special character areas that are identified in the Unitary Plan. Thanks, Ashley. Special character areas have had a long legacy within Auckland planning processes. Special character residential has been within Auckland planning documents for over 30 years and business areas have been in for over 15 years. So they've been around for a good period of time. They were not challenged during the creation of the Auckland Unitary Plan. The Council predominantly rolled over from the legacy plans such as North Shore City and Auckland City Council both the spatial extent and the provisions that applied at the time. So this is the first time that all of special character has been surveyed. That's 21,000 residential properties and approximately 1700 business properties.

What we found is that most special character areas are of high quality and that's what you'd expect after being managed for so long for 30 years and 15 years. However, we did find some areas that no longer had the special character values that they were originally scheduled for and that's also, again, not surprising change does cure. Thanks Ashley. Of course, we all know the playing field has changed. The government is now directing us to enable increased housing density across the region, particularly within Walkable catchments. And some of these areas are where Special Character area overlay applies within the unitary Plan. And as Warren said at the beginning, the government has identified what it considered as qualifying matters and it did not include Special Character areas. It did include Historic Heritage Areas. However, the legislation enables Council to identify its own qualifying matters and the Council has proposed to include identified areas of Special character as qualifying matter and that will mean there would be reduced building heights and housing density to ensure the character values of these areas are retained. Just as a note that the zoning proposals shown in the NPS viewer that respond to Special character qualifying matter is called the two story single dwelling residential area.

Thanks, Ashley. Councillor has proposed an approach to the identification of Special character as a qualifying method to protect those values and we are seeking the public's feedback on that. Key questions are have we identified too much, too little? Have we got the areas right or wrong? Have we got our approach right? So what we're hoping from this presentation is you will know enough to ask some further questions. If so, please contact us through the UnitaryPlan@Aucklandcouncil.Govt.Nz and we can provide further detailed information and the public engagement process extends through that period. Thanks Ash Lee. So just going into some more detail around the Special Character residential areas. Thanks Ash. As said, we're proposing to include identified areas of Special Character as a qualifying matter. The Council is proposing that Special Character Residential is identified as a qualifying matter in Walkable catchments where 75% or more of individual properties strongly contribute to the special character values of the area. Slightly different for areas outside of Walker Ball catchments where we're identifying as a qualifying matter, those areas where 66% or more of individual properties strongly contribute to the special character values of the area.

So there is a slight difference within Walkable catchments and outside of Walkable catchments. Thanks, Ashley. As I said earlier, there are approximately 210 properties within the Unitary Plan Special Character Residential overlay. The Council's proposal at this stage is that 75% of the properties currently within the Special Character Residential areas are proposed to be identified as a qualifying matter. Within that 25% that isn't identified as a qualifying matter. We've identified three potential Historic Heritage Areas that we are currently evaluating and potentially would form part of the suite of plan changes in August. So just to give you a bit of a taste about what that looks like, this is clearly a map of the Isthmus and the part of the north that has most of the Special character. The red and blue is what is currently zoned Special Character within the Unitary Plan. The blue is what the council's proposal identifies as a qualifying matter and hence would be retained as a qualifying matter in a plane change. The red is what is proposed as not meeting the qualifying beta tests. And from that map you can see Devonport, there's very little change. Some significant changes in Birkenhead Northcote, some changes through Saint Mary's Bay, Hand Bay, a reasonable change through Mount Albert.

And the largest change through here is through that new market Epsom Remuera Parnell area extending out to the east. Next slide. Things just in that east. One of the observations in the east is that existing special character is quite fragmented. Very small areas. When we've looked at them, they don't meet the test for a qualifying matter. So the red areas of those areas that we do not think meet the test, the blue areas do meet the test and as you can see, it's a lot more fragmented out here than is in the central estimates. And minor changes to one or two or three dwellings in these areas have a significant change to the character of these areas. Next slide. Thanks. In the south, there's very little change. Most of the existing special character is proposed to be retained as a qualifying matter. Thanks, Ashley. So how did we do this? So we went out and looked at every individual special character residential property, \$21,000. Halfway through that process, lockdown occurred, so we had to do the remainder. By Google Street view, each property was awarded marks based on the five criteria in the blue circles below as either contributing neutral or detracting and they could gain a bonus point or loss of the point for the level of physical integrity.

So each property could potentially get a score of up to six and then the scores are aggregated to determine an overall value of an area. There are findings reports created for all 94 areas that are available. Individual properties. Sorry, could I just get that? Yes, sorry. Individual properties. That score of five or six are considered to strongly contribute to the special character values of an area. Yes, thanks Ashley. So just to give you an example, clearly that are on the left scores of six. It's pristine. The building in the middle, there's a few alterations. The roof has been popped, the garage in the front, it scores a four, which still contributes to the values of the area, but not strongly. And clearly the one on the right does not contribute to the values of the special character area. Next things, Ashley. So just to give you an example of the maps at a more detailed level, if you were looking at the findings reports, these are the sorts of match you would find. This is the raw data by individual property. So Eden Terrace, it's in a Walkable catchment. Each of those properties was given a score of 10 to six.

The darker the colour, the greater the special character values that it has there are 340 properties within that area, mostly villas with a high level of consistency and integrity. And in that area, 81% of properties scored a five or six and therefore is high quality. And remember I said that in Walkable catchments it needed to be 75% or higher. So this area meets that threshold and is proposed to be identified as a qualifying matter. Next one. Thanks. So this is Quadrant on Crescent in Mission Bay. At the top of the screen is Mission Bay and at the bottom of the screen would be eastward shopping centre. And this is somewhere in between. It's not in a Walkable catchment, so the test would be 66% threshold. There are approximately 100 properties. It's a lovely suburb. I was there on the weekend. It's beautiful. It has a varied housing mix with a lot of later info. It's got some English cottages, Art Deco, Spanish missions and lovely villas. Within this area, 43% of property scored a five or six and therefore it does not reach that 66% threshold. And it is not proposed to be identified as a qualifying matter.

So just some observations. One of the other issues that we have to take into account is the impact of special character or any qualifying matter on capacity. Special character areas residential as a qualifying matter have minimal impact on capacity at a regional level. As I said earlier, I think it's somewhere like 3% of the housing stock in the region are within special character residential. However, it may have a level of impact on ability to intensify in some of the Walkable catchments, particularly the city Centre, Grafton mounted in Kingsland. And we're still doing some work on how much the impact on capacity is going to be and that work is still ongoing. We haven't got those answers yet, but it is likely to amend some of our results. So just quickly moving on to the business areas. We also surveyed the special character business areas. We looked at every individual building. As I said, there's only 1700 in these areas, so it was a lot smaller in scale. Places were determined to be character defining, character supporting non-contributing sites or sites with no buildings or that are not visible. We also considered wider considerations such as the context, the subdivision pattern, natural features, visual coherence, et cetera.

And as per the residential findings, there is a report on each area that's publicly available. Thanks, Ashley. So approximately 1700 properties. And once we've done the survey, we found that 75% of properties are within an area to be identified as a qualifying matter. Outside of those areas, the 25% that weren't within qualifying matter, we've identified six historic heritage places to be evaluated for historic heritage values, which likewise would potentially be included in an August plan change. Next. So what

does it mean for the shopping for those business areas? The business areas at the top, Balmoral, Sandringham, Helensville and Howick, they were identified as business qualifying matters, with the extent largely unchanged. The next set below there, Upper Simon Street Devon Port Panel that group. They have been identified as meeting the thresholds for qualifying matters, but with revised extent allegedly did not meet the threshold as a qualifying matter. Next. So just to give you some examples of what that meant, Balmoral Shopping Centre The area in black in that slide is the area currently identified in the Unitary Plan is Special Character and as you can see, the dark pink character defining buildings. And as you can see, all the buildings that area have been identified as character defining buildings and therefore Balmoral has been identified as a qualifying meta.

Next slide. Devon Port Once again, the area in black is the area that is identified in the Unitary Plan as Special Character. The bright pink are the areas that are character defining. The light pink are the characters supporting, the Grays are the buildings that don't contribute. The blue dots are individually scheduled properties within Dev Import When we've looked at Devon Port, we can justify a special character area which is encompassed by the area in yellow. So Devonport has identified the Devonport business area is identified as a qualifying matter, but with the proposed revised extent. Ellis Lee Once again, the black area is the area identified in the Unitary plan is Special Character Business. When we've gone out and had a look, they're mostly non-contributing buildings and sites that are not visible or vacant. There are some really lovely buildings, four or five of them, but they're not sufficient to demonstrate meeting a threshold of special character. And so that area has not been identified as a qualifying matter. So next steps. And this is the same slide that I had earlier, and it's the last slide I have we have gone out and met the NPS requirements to do a site by site analysis of Special Character as a qualifying matter.

We've identified the values that exist on a site by site basis, and we have proposed this approach. The Council is now seeking feedback as to whether that approach is adequate. As I'm sure you're aware, the NPS requires us to take a slightly different approach than what we did through the Unitary Plan process, but the Council feels that it has struck the right balance here and we are seeking feedback on that view. If you have any questions around the methodology, because I've just given you a brief taster and the results, please contact us through the Unitaryplan@Aucklandcouncil.govt.nz and we can send more information out. The methodology is actually online, probably as of tomorrow. The findings report you would have to ask for. It is not possible to put them all online. They're in 94, but we're happy to provide them through this process. I think that's the end of the presentation.

Thanks for that, Noel. It was a great presentation and well done. First of all, I would just like to ask if there are any councils who have any comments, any sort of top of mind reflections that they would like to make as a result of the presentation, any Councillor Derby birds start with.

Welcome, everyone, and thank you, Noel. Thank you, Warren, for the introduction. Here the thrust of this. I just want to reiterate that we're dealing with a national policy statement that comes from central government that was amended by the medium, the Enabling Housing Supply Act that was put through in six weeks. Council submitted pretty strongly to that. We supported parts, but we expressed a lot of concern in other parts. So we are dealing with a situation where the special character areas of Auckland

have been extinguished by the legislation. And is it Council that is identifying special character as a qualifying matter to reinstate? But we got to do that by passing a pretty tough test that government has put in front of us and NOL has outlined that. And that's why we have to when we notify our plan change in August, which is a mandate from the government, we have to have very strong evidence for the special character areas to stand up and stand the test of other submitters, and those other submitters might be ministries as well. So it's a very high hurdle to pass. And this is our preliminary position that the planning committee has arrived at.

Thank you for being in this discussion and posing your questions tonight. And we'll start to address those now after I think other councillors have had a quick chat, too. Thank you.

Thank you, Councillor. Any other councillors wish to say anything?

Yes, Kiara. And like Chris, I want to thank you very much for coming along and participating. I think many Aucklanders and New Zealanders indeed feel a bit sort of consulted out there's been so much happening so quickly. But I just want to reiterate the sense of frustration perhaps you're hearing from Chris Davy. And that is, we know with the unitary plan, we've got 30 years supply already. We've got 900,000 sites. And Interestingly, in the covered world, we're living in Auckland's, experiencing negative net migration. So the fact that we're going through this exercise, for me, at any rate, is really frustrating. But I want to reiterate that the staff have done their very best with the work that we're presenting to you. I think that there's more that we can do, but I do want to support staff this evening for what they've undertaken. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you very much. Anymore or we'll go straight to questions.

Councillor Coyote, I was going to know that was a thumbs up. I think you need to get on with the questions because there's lots piling up and appreciate the time, but thank you for everybody who's joined tonight. And this is obviously a big topic and a focus of attention for the consultation, but it's important to emphasize that it is a preliminary response so important to get the feedback as to what we've got right, what we've got wrong before we notify in August. So thanks for the team and for the work and everybody for attending this evening.

Okay. Thanks for that. And we'll start with questions. Let me see. There are a host of them coming through at the moment. So let me just start from the top. All right. So the first one question for Fiona or Ross, do medium density residential standards the density standards, part two, schedule three A, excluding nine A, also apply for development sites of four or more that have no character or qualifying matters from August 22?

Yes, the MDRs standards do apply from the notification date, but we're still really working out the residential provisions that apply to the MDRs four units and over, so we can't sort of categorically say that they will apply to the four units and over. At this point, part of the preliminary response hasn't been able to show any detailed provisions for this is sort of the zoning that we've indicated in the planning maps, but

other than obviously the existing zones that we have, like terrace housing and apartment buildings and what's going to be modified for urban and also with catchments with the. So we just have to wait and see on that.

Thank you for us. Question, I guess, for planning as well. How does the upcoming MDRs and NPSUD plan changes affect the ten year review of the unitary Plan? Is this still going to be a review? If yes, when is that going to take place, and what will the ten year review include? And excellent. And I guess if I can make a bit of a stab at that one, then yes, we still have to do a review. That part of the Resource Management Act hasn't changed at this stage, and the unit pre plan was made operative in 2016, so we should be starting that review by 2026. And clearly it will still involve MDRs. That's part of the rule. Anyone else like to comment on that one? No. Sounds good question for null, are trees affected in special character?

So, yes, good question. Trees are an interesting issue in the NPS in terms of the special character provisions. We don't generally manage trees. Those provisions generally are focused on buildings. The trees per se across the region are the subject of a different approach, which the Council is still working its way through. Thanks, Warren.

Thanks for that. Now another one. Could you please explain what the rules will be in the new two storey, single dwelling residential area? Maybe some brief explanation there?

I think that's probably a question for Ross or Fiona.

Thank you. No, sorry, my sound may not be too high. I've been trying to fix that, but we'll see how we go. The two story residential areas, the two versions of which that there are the provisions for those. We're still working on the fact that there are two different two story areas indicates that there will be different standards applying within those areas, both to the building standards, the height relation to boundary and the other development controls, as well as potentially other factors to do with setbacks and all the other standards you would expect to get to the outcomes of either a single dwelling or medium density. So we don't have those provisions yet. They are still being developed, but we wanted to give a clear indication about the sorts of outcomes that we would expect in those areas.

Thank you. Thanks for that. Ross. A scar question now, special character area. What sections of the RMA have you used to identify SCAS?

Yeah, I can answer that. As I said in my presentation, special character areas had been around for a long time and they were justified under section seven of the RMA through this process. As Councillor Darby said, we're having, to an extent, rejustify them as a qualifying matter via the MPs. So it's not quite as simple as what that question implies. The second part of that is, are you going to roll over the current provisions? And at this stage, yes. But as Ross has just said, those provisions are being worked on. It was our view that we best get the broad strokes of council's approach out to the public prior to confirming every last detail.

Thanks for that one. Next one is the new rules take effect from August, so resource consent and building consent issue from August will use the new hybrid boundaries, maximum heights, et cetera. But when will a Council start accepting applications using these standards? So we might refer to the provisions in the act, but generally day one for resource consensus, the immediate effect day, unless there are specific transition provisions. Anyone like to comment on that?

Warren? It's not here. We've had a brief talk about this in terms of special character, and there is no definitive answer to that question yet. As I said, we're just going out with the broad strokes of this proposal and those sorts of questions, and it's a very good question will help inform us of what will happen come 1 August.

Okay. Thank you, Noel To. Maybe the planning team, maybe. Fiona, what planning rules would apply to the two storey, medium density house? Is it the same as the three story rules except the maximum height?

Thanks for everybody. So I think Ross answered this question before. So when you see on the planning maps the two story or three story medium density residential zone, that zone is just an indication of the kinds of outcomes that we're expecting. So if there is a special character area overlay over that zone and the planning maps, that just is indicating that that's the level of development outcomes that might be expected. So that's probably not what the underlying zone is going to end up being, but those are the outcomes that we're signaling so I hope that answers your question.

Thanks for that, Fiona. A star question now, and I think we probably covered some of this in the presentation for clause three, point 33. The NPSUD to apply to make something a qualifying matter, there needs to be a site specific analysis. Clause three, point 33. B. Is it the case that Auckland Council has or will assess each and every individual site and allow for submissions in relation to each specific site prior to its inclusion or listing as a property which is the subject of a qualifying matter?

Yes, the Council has done that site specific survey. We have gone out and looked at each site or looked at it via Google Street View and identified the values on a site specific basis that potentially would limit capacity. So we have met that part of the NPS test in terms of what people can submit on. Certainly they can submit on. They can provide feedback at this stage on any aspect of that survey that they want to. The corollary to that question is where are the findings reports? If you email the unitary plan inbox, then we can email out those whatever area findings reports you want. Thanks, Warren.

Thanks, Noel. Two questions for one. Great question for planning. Maybe Fiona, Rod or Ross. Please clarify the book or catchment black line and policy 3D up zoning around central zone, the Brown line and the implications of one or both lines lies in the special character area. What if a special character area is also part of an identified SCA?

I can have a go at that one. Thanks, Warren. So, yeah, if your site is within the walkable catchments, so within the black line and your site is a special character site, and on these proposed maps, it's got red dots showing that the special character overlay is to be uplifted. Then because you're in the walkable catchment and you're a residential zone, then it's likely that you'd be zoned terrace and apartment housing. So you'd be going up to six stories if your site is within the Brown line. So the policy 3D around centers and you're a special character and your special character is showing the red dots, which means it's being uplifted, then you would be going to sad with four stories. If your special character is in either of those places and it's showing blue dots, then your special character is proposed to be retained and the outcomes would be commensurate with that special character. And if your special characters also got more than one qualifying matter over top of it, then it will depend on which qualifying matter has the most lenient rules. So, for example, if you've got an sea and we're proposing to keep setbacks for the sea, then that would apply as well as the special character qualifying matter applying.

Thanks, Warren.

Okay, thank you. And perhaps Ross, can you please explain whether the proposed FCA overlay applies where the light rail under investigation also applies.

Thanks, Warren. I think that the short answer here is that it's all under investigation. Still, we will have that answer with plan changes notified and it will be fully resolved at that point in terms of what is special character area overlay and all of the zoning that will apply at the notification stage. So at this point, we haven't resolved those matters for that corridor yet. But that is going to be with us in August when the notification occurs. Thank you.

Thanks for that, Ross. Question now for Rebecca looking at North Coat appear to have been disproportionately affected. Were they assessed by site visits or by Google Street View?

Thanks for that question.

Birkenhead and North Coat were both surveyed using Google Street View. That was because they were surveyed toward the end of the survey. We started initially in the Walkable catchments near the city center. So those were done by Field and further out are more likely to have been done by Google Street View.

I think this next one has already been answered. I'll just quickly go through the new rules take effect from August. So resource consent, building consent will use the new heightened relation to boundaries. But when will the Council start accepting? We have, I think.

Covered.

Let me say next one, planning the owner. Is the Council proposing that the two story single house zone be different from those in the current single house zone? And if so, how?

Thanks, Warren. We have not decided. So I'd really like to hear from you guys what you think through the feedback opportunity. We'll be drafting those provisions between now and August. So if you feel strongly about that one way or the other, please let us know. That would be great. Thank you.

Fiona. A question. Is Council considering as a qualifying matter under the proposed Rup, the areas of substandard infrastructure should be considered as a qualifying matter. Who makes the decision as to whether or not the infrastructure is substandard? Frost, do you want to talk to that one?

Thanks, Warren. Yes, we are proposing as a preliminary response position to include this as a qualifying matter, that there are areas of significant infrastructure constraint. We don't have yet a proposal for how to actually incorporate that. But we are very interested in as part of the feedback form that we have is whether there is support for such qualifying matter. And in fact, if there is, what approach would people want us to take? Obviously, the key infrastructure providers for transport, obviously transport from water and supply, wastewater care, and obviously, Council with stormwater in this other infrastructure as well. We are certainly in discussions and they're involved in the establishment of what a qualifying matter standard would be and how that would be applied on the maps in terms of zoning and other overlays. So it's a very open question. We're very interested in everyone's input on that one. And we'll look forward to receiving that.

Thank you. Thanks for us. Another question about where light rail is. I think we've answered that one now. And just to remind that if you want any of those finding reports, go to the unitaryplan@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz. That's a good place to find all of the information there. Next one, let me think for no. Why did you decide on 75% as high quality? Why not 66% overall to reach the threshold of spiritual character?

Thanks, Warren. It's a good question. One of the issues that the NPS requires us to consider is impact upon capacity. And as I said in the presentation, at a regional level, special character has limited impact as a qualifying matter on residential capacity. However, it does have an impact on the ability to intensify in some localized areas, particularly in some of the walkable catchments. To achieve a better balance within those walkable catchments, we have proposed a higher test, a higher threshold being 75%, whereas outside of walkable catchments, where there is plenty of capacity and special character does not impact or limit it as much, we've proposed a 66% threshold. Those two thresholds are areas that will obviously be subject to feedback. Thanks, Warren.

Maybe one for Fiona here. Can we anticipate changes in subdivision provisions on the two story simple house? Are you smaller lots or the current 600 m²?

Thanks, Warren. So the government have been really clear in the MDRs standards that subdivision for residential units should be a permitted activity. However, we can modify that if we think that a qualifying matter applies. So it's a question for the Council to decide whether or not whether or not it thinks that subdivision for special character areas should modify. That approach from the government and the

special character team are still working through whether or not they would like to include that subdivision provision in the overlay chapter. But if you have any thoughts on it, we'd love to hear them through the feedback channels.

Next one is another scar question. If a pre 1920 property has had its top popped and is in excellent condition, does of this alteration of the top being popped degrade the score of the property?

Good question. And I might ask Rebecca to come back on board and provide an answer. If you're there, Rebecca.

Thanks for that.

The short answer is it might affect the score.

But it might not.

It really depends a lot on its scale and its relationship to the existing house, how it's been designed, its materiality. It's difficult to say without seeing it, so it may or it may not affect the score.

Next question. Will the existing historic heritage areas be retained in their entirety? My guess is yes, but no.

Yes. Short answer yes.

Great. Next question might be Fiona here. I think those volcanic view shafts around Eastern Beach come under qualifying matters.

Thanks, Warren. Yes, volcanic fuchsia and the height sensitive areas very dear to my heart been working on them for decades. We consider that that overlay is definitely a qualifying matter. We think that it's a qualifying matter for several reasons, including outstanding natural character and landscapes, including the volcanic features overlays and also for historic heritage and of course, for cultural heritage reasons. So there are several avenues that we're going to be providing evidence on, but we plan it's the council's proposal at the moment to keep all the volcanic view shafts intact and to provide protection for those height sensitive areas. Now, that doesn't mean that we won't be changing the underlying zone, but we will be ensuring that the overlay which currently protects those features will be robust and enough to defend those features. We definitely love the view stuff.

Fiona. Here's an interesting one. Are there any areas becoming less intensified as compared to the existing unitary plan, e. G. Suburban area becomes single house, two levels, the owner, again.

Very technical difficulties with the Mic, so sorry, Warren. With that question, can we anticipate subdivision provisions changing?

Well, are there any areas becoming less intensified? Sorry, to the existing unit free plan?

We don't know yet is the short answer. Normally, we wouldn't expect to see a lot of down zoning as a result of the PSU D, because obviously the government's intention is to provide for more housing. But there may be occasions when a qualifying matter, such as flooding, for example, or infrastructure constraints, might mean that the current level of development is inappropriate. And so you might see some down zoning, but again, that's not part of what we're proposing in this viewer, but we'd welcome people's feedback on particular constraints if they think that downzoning is required somewhere.

Thanks, Fiona. Let me think. He's the next one for cleaning one. Ross, will Council be able to regulate development in residential areas designed for high density housing to ensure residents are not adversely impacted by poor quality and poorly designed housing? High density housing need not have a negative impact on the character of a neighbourhood if it's well designed.

Thank you. The issue of design quality and amongst the NPSUD and the push for additional height and particularly density, is one that's reasonably difficult when we have additional bulk height around us in the suburban and urban areas. However, we are looking at improvements to design standards that we can achieve through this plan change within the bulk and location changes that it requires, but it is reasonably tricky to do that. But we have a commitment to want to address the design outcomes that come from the additional heightened density. So it is work that is underway. It may not feature in the plan change that implements the NPSUD directly, but we consider it as part of what's called a well functioning urban environment, which is certainly across the top of this NPSUD that we have some mandate to achieve better design standards. So we're trying to do the best we can and the most we can within that framework, which is essentially about the improvements.

No, some FDAs include dwellings for which there's no limitation on demolition. These do not appear in the recast overlays. Why not?

I'm not 100% sure what the question is asking, but what I would say is that the survey looked at the values of the buildings at a particular point in time. It's not possible to do a survey and guess what might happen, and it's not possible to make that guess depending on existing planning rules. However, it is a very good point and hopefully someone will make a comment about it through the feedback and we can address it properly.

It looks like Emma may have a comment on that.

Yeah. The question may be relating to the additional information that's in the Unitary Plan for Special Character Residential, which applies a demolition control to some properties. Those maps still sit in Schedule 15 of Unitary plans, but they're not showing on the overlay. So if the question was relating to that, those nets are still in the unitary plan, but they don't show up in the Unitary Plan your maps. So I'm not sure if that was question, but if it was.

A good answer. Thanks for that, Emma. Another scar question. Where business or residential areas have too few buildings to form a special character area, will the individual buildings that have a high point basis be listed in Schedule 14.1 Eg the buildings that did score high?

That's a good question. And it also relates to the question above. If there are no character defining or supporting buildings in the Scar, why would you not remove them? The short answer is we have and in terms of where we have but individual buildings score highly. As I indicated, we are looking at the buildings that we think potentially would meet a historic heritage threshold and they would be part of the plan change.

Okay. Thanks for answering both of those. No, you want me to keep going, Warren? You can do so.

The next question is, will the special character area as exists be changed through the August Plan change to reflect reviews undertaken as part of this NPS exercise? The feedback that we've received through this process will be put to the Councillors and they will make decisions about what's in the plan change. At this stage, the spatial extent of those character areas could well be changed based on feedback. At this stage, the provisions that apply are still being worked through.

Again, a scar question. How does the Council see the concept of an area to which a qualifying matter applies as relating to the requirement that a qualifying matter must relate to a specific site?

Good question. So, as I said, we have done a site by site survey and assessed each site in terms of the values that site has from a special character perspective. But special character is an area based amenity control. It is a bit meaningless to have special character controls, only applying to a site by site basis. There isn't much character in one site, only the character is part of the wider area. So we have aggregated individual results to form an area based vehicle.

Thanks for that planning question. Maybe, Fiona, what will be done to mitigate extreme scale change between heritage buildings, individual or areas and new buildings, two to three stories that are then dwarfed by six stories?

That's a really good question. And it's one that we've been asking a whole team of both planners and urban designers and heritage experts to have a look at for us. So there's a number of methods that we could use to create that transition between the six stories and the one or two stories of the special character. Things like heightened relation to boundaries and yard setbacks are part of the tools that we're investigating to manage that transition.

Thanks for that, Fiona. Planning question for Ross, how can panel railway station be used to calculate a walkable catchment? Many people would consider the topography. Where is it the topography around the station as being a barrier to walking or from this transport to and from this transport hub? What age and

ability is used to calculate the distance that can be walked? Or maybe Fiona might want to answer that, too.

Maybe. Lauren, I'll start. The walkable catchment at train station is actually one of those center areas around the station. It's not one of the walkable catchments, as such, around the bigger centers or around the central city. So I think it's a 200 meters walking distance from station. So, yes, absolutely, there is some pretty substantial topography, both going up to Parnell Road and down to the rest of the Parnell area. So the 200 meters is reasonably short as a distance compared to some of the other local catchments and some of the other larger centers. So we do take account of topography and where it's extreme, we managed to pull that distance inwards, and that's exactly the sort of feedback that we'd like to see come through about where we could adjust it depending on how local folks see those local walking conditions. So that's definitely something we seeking feedback on. But yes, we do take account of topography. Thanks.

Thanks for that, Ross. And perhaps also for you, can you explain the independent hearing panel hearing 2024 timeframe referenced on your website, and I guess that might relate to the two year time frame at the moment. Is that correct, Ross?

That's correct, Lauren. The time frame will go through 2023, from notification in August through the hearings until 2023, and likely to 24 before we get the resolution through recommendations from the panel to the Council. We don't have the specific dates yet, but that certainly will be in 2024. And I think there was another part to that question.

It looks like the question repeated, actually. Will there be more than one plan change release and all.

Yeah, we're investigating that, whether we can put all of this into the single plan change or whether there's aspects of the whole NPSUD and response to the Amendment Act as one plan change package, or whether it is too. So we got some options about that in what might be outside of the main it's called the IPI plan change.

Thanks for us.

Warren. Sorry, it's Fiona here. I was just going to expand a bit on what Ross was saying because I just wanted to point out that the IPI plan change, which is the council's response to the NPSUD, and I know we're talking a bit of jargon here, but that's going to go through a very special process which the government have written a new piece of kind of legislation for. So it's a special kind of fast process which doesn't allow that much public involvement at the end of the process. So, for example, there's very limited appeal rights at the end of that process. So if we find that we have to do some things which we can't do as part of that plan change, we're also thinking about doing a normal process, plan change, which would follow Schedule One of the RMA, and that would accompany the IPI. But we just have to be really careful because if we put things into the special fast process designed by the government, then people won't get

as many as much of a say about it. So we're trying to be very judicious in how we choose what will go into each process.

Thanks, Warren.

All the changes to the original policy statement which lie outside the IPI as well. Right. Next one.

Rebecca, how does going up two stories help to protect character? For example, most are single story villas. You will unmute. Rebecca.

Sorry, but I unmuted, but obviously missed it.

As the character areas are currently.

You can already go up to 8 meters, which is two stories. So I think that doesn't represent much of a change in terms of the current provisions. Hopefully that answers that question.

The government's legislation is designed to increase the availability of affordable housing. It's very unlikely that any intensification of central city housing will contribute to the same. Does the Council not think push back against the legislation is worthwhile considering? The value heritage areas give to our well, that's an interesting we are a creature section as a Council and we have to follow the legislation. And as Councillor Darby said earlier on, the Council has made some pretty strong submissions in the past in relation to this legislation. But once it becomes law, we, as the Council have to follow. So that's where we are at the moment. What we're trying to do through this process is, I guess, to put an Auckland viewpoint over the legislation that the government has passed and why we see special character clearly is more important than the government necessarily does. Next one scar question very impressed with the methodology for the survey conducted. It's an impressive, comprehensive undertaking. How confident are you these results will contribute to having spa, as will find me.

Thanks, Warren. I'm always happy to answer a question that starts off by praising us. So we are reasonably confident that we've done a good job in terms of the survey, given the limitations of being in a lockdown during a global pandemic. The results of what we expected to find based on ten years of managing these areas as part of Walking Council and also the legislation is quite clear that the Council can identify other matters as qualifying matters and the tests are then around the values of those qualifying matters and its impact upon capacity. In terms of special character values, we are confident that we have met a pretty high standard of evidential basis in that regard. In terms of its impact upon capacity, we're still doing work, particularly around Walkable catchments.

Okay, thanks for that. No, the next question, probably Ross, relates to the Walkable catchments in Lake rail corridor areas. Is there an option to increase the density beyond the six levels proposed in terrace housing and apartment zone Eg, going to eight stories to offset the retention of special character areas properties in the same area? Actually, that might be an old one when I think about it.

Sorry, Warren, I missed that. What was that again?

It's really asking about in order to offset special character areas, could we enable going to eight stories?

Yes. As I have mentioned a couple of times, we are still looking at the impact on capacity that retaining special character will have within Walkable catchments. And yes, one of the options we potentially could be looking at is offsetting by going higher elsewhere. Now, whether that is a good idea, we would appreciate feedback on that point.

That's a good point. Good to have some feedback there. Next question. How can a site specific analysis apply to an area? A site is not an area. I suppose the answer is each site has been analysed.

Yeah, I think I've answered that question and I think it's mixing up the tests and the MPs. The Council can identify any other matter as a qualifying matter, and then when it does that, the test is a site specific test.

Okay. And the next one perhaps. Fiona, what if my site has governance restricting development below that permitted under the Mdrres?

Thanks, Warren.

Yes.

If you have covenants against your title, they will continue to apply. And if they are more stringent than the NDRs, then they will continue to apply unless you have been removed.

Warren, we're at the question of why are you intensifying areas such as some areas, Bay and Freeman's Bay, when there is huge free land already zoned multilevel in the Wynyard quarter? From a special character perspective, we have looked at those areas and it's a mixed bag in some areas, Bay and Freeman's Bay, there are some areas that will be retained as qualifying matters in some areas that won't. And where those areas aren't, then the government's legislation kicks in. The government then requires or enables intensification to happen where there isn't a qualifying matter that limits capacity.

All right. Thanks for that discounts. I have any studies that show this legislation will provide affordable housing. I think we previously answered some of that. We've had some work done on that and those reports are also available on the website. Next one, what if my site has coverage? We've covered that one. Do any of the planners know why a large pocket of housing located in a walkable distance of the train in Alice Lee has been zoned for two level single residential and not sad when its existing star is proposed is being proposed to be removed.

Rough.

You look like you're jumping in.

So go for it if you'd like to please assist. Fiona, if you wish. It may be that there is one of the other qualifying that is applying across that property, that area which brings that area into play. So it's not certainly just the special character areas that have that area application, if you like. Thank you. What that actual item is, I don't have the viewer open to be able to explain to you, I'm afraid.

Do you want to add anything there?

No, I was going to say exactly what Ross said.

Excellent. Let me start complaining. It's the approach to Scars being taken by Auckland, being taken by other tier one cities, perhaps that might be. No.

Yes. Thanks, Warren. Broadly speaking, yes. All the tier one councils have the same requirements placed upon them through the NPS. They all have areas of special character, so they are all doing surveys and identifying them as qualifying matters. There are variations, but those variations relate to the rules that do apply in the various tier one Council. So it's not quite comparing apples with apples.

All right. Okay. I see we've got ten minutes left and we've got a raft of questions yet, and if we don't get to your question, we will be responding to it and putting it up on the website as part of this presentation. So I'll just ask a couple more. There planning. I think this might be Ross, how will the underground infrastructure cope, say St Mary's Bay, which has old pipe work?

That's a great question that we're all grappling with. And it is certainly one that, as I said earlier, that we are wanting to propose as a qualifying matter where there are significant infrastructure issues to service development that is anticipated to come into these areas. So we haven't got the areas mapped or the approach sorted, but we're interested mainly about whether we actually go down this path at all of having a qualifying matter around infrastructure constraints. So very interested in people's feedback on that. Thank you.

Okay, I got the last one here. Which I think we've answered. How has Council decided where the boundaries of areas are for the purposes of the 66 75 tests? And I'll get no to comment on that one.

So what I will do is pass this to Rebecca Freeman. But before she answers, I would say that this is a very good question. The boundaries of the areas, we have to find it, and we would be seeking feedback on whether we've got those boundaries correct. But Rebecca, are you online and can you assist?

That's right.

So the boundaries between the 66 and 75% is the walkable catchment. So within walkable catchments, areas need to score 75% of places scoring five and six. And outside of the walkable catchment, they need to score 66% of places scoring five and six.

Excellent. Thank you for that, Rebecca. I think I will stop there. The next one is really just a comment to acknowledge all the panellists for the time given, not only in the session, but each of the sessions planned, both online and in person. Thank you for the marking you were putting in, so thank you for that. And that really brings us to near the end of the season, I guess I was going to ask Councillors, having heard all of these questions, whether there are any particular comments that you wish to make. Before I wrap up.

I just wanted to thank all of the people that attended tonight. The questions are really helpful for me and I know they will be for other counsellors as well, and some of them are reasonably consistent with our own, but some are pretty new as well. So just thank you and thank you to the team. Wonderful job.

Again, thank you, Councillor. Any other comments, any reflections?

Likewise. I just want to thank people for participating tonight. It's really important that we hear from you earlier. We did not want to go just straight through to the statutory consultation stage. It always feels just too late. Our teams have been working really hard since the legislation was passed. I think it was on the 20 December. Harvey had a holiday. We've got strict deadlines the government have imposed. We're not pretending that we've got it all right at this stage, and that's why we are wanting to hear feedback. So please, I know this is a complex issue just around the special character areas alone. There are many other aspects of this national policy statement on urban development and the subsequent legislation that is also quite demanding. But look, we are very accessible and open. Please use the email that Warren mentioned earlier. Pose those questions. We will definitely get back to you. If there's anything that's not clear, we will, as best we can explain it. And all your feedback is valuable and it does make a difference. Of course, when we receive feedback, we receive various viewpoints and we're expecting various points on the special character area, part of the National Policy statement but thanks for your participation tonight.

Please stay with us and give us that feedback formally and we'll be reviewing the position moving from preliminary position to the position that we feel that is strong enough to notify a plan change in response to the government legislation.

Thank you, Councillor Darby. Anyone else wish to make a comment here?

Yeah, the site to add my thanks to everyone who has participated tonight and for the panellists. It has really highlighted what a complex topic this is and there's lots to learn and these sessions are really good for that and understanding the questions that are coming through. I just wanted to emphasize a lot of really good information on the Council website and fact sheets that explain a lot but also to acknowledge that it's come up a few times in the questions and comments about the number of acronyms and just I need to make sure that we keep the message really clear. And so there are more of these webinars coming up and if there are gaps in the information online or what's being provided, then we really will

make sure that we follow that up and also make sure all the questions are answered, too. So thank you for everyone for attending tonight. Nga mihi.

Thank you, Councillor Cone.

Thank you very much for attending. Can I add to what Pippa has said in terms of demystifying this complex process where I see there's a question about whether people can have access. If they want to see the Zoom again, where can they access that material? Can you let them know?

Yes, that will be on again on the have your say website and everything relating to this is within that part of it. As we said earlier, the session has been recorded and you can listen to it all over again.

Thank you.

If that's everybody, then what I'd like to do is again thank the heritage and planning staff who've been answering a lot of questions and particularly the details around start process which Noel has explained so well. I would remind people to give any feedback to [akhaveyourhousing](#) by the 9 May. So there's still plenty of time. There are a lot of resources on the Council website. There there's ten information that you can look at, including one which shows you how to use the GIS viewer, which shows the changes in zoning that you might be interested in. But importantly, I also want to thank all of the audience for attending tonight. It's a great thing to do to come out on a Thursday night of a short week to listen to all of this and I hope you've got a whole lot of information out of this. I hope we've answered your questions and you may have plenty more. And as I say, the website is a great place to go to continue with the question answer program. So thanks very much, everybody. Have a good evening.