



**April
2022**



Information Sheet #4

Intensification around suburban centres

During April and May 2022, Auckland Council is asking Aucklanders for their feedback on potential changes to the Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP) – our city’s planning rulebook – to allow for more housing at greater heights and density.

This information sheet describes council’s preliminary approach to intensification in and around some of Auckland’s suburban centres.

The government’s approach to more housing

The government’s National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) came into force in August 2020. The NPS-UD directs Auckland Council to enable more building height and housing density within and around Auckland’s city centre, metropolitan centres and rapid transit stops such as train and busway stations.

In December 2021, the government also made amendments to the Resource Management Act. The legislation now requires the councils of New Zealand’s largest and rapidly growing cities – Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Wellington and Christchurch – to apply new Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS).

Through the use of MDRS the government requires the council to enable medium-density housing across most of Auckland’s suburbs. Three dwellings of up to three-storeys, including terrace housing and low-rise apartments, must be permitted on most residential properties. Four dwellings or more dwellings must be enabled through a non-notified resource consent.

To deliver the NPS-UD and the MDRS, the council is required to publicly notify changes to the AUP by 20 August 2022.

Classifying Auckland's suburban centres

In addition to the intensification required in and around Auckland's city centre, ten metropolitan centres, and rapid transit stops (busway and rail stations) the NPS-UD also directs intensification around some suburban centres.

The council is required to allow building heights and densities in and around Auckland's suburban centres that is proportional to the amount of retail, offices, restaurants, services, community, and educational facilities in each centre.

The council has determined which centres have the most activities and services based on three criteria: zoning, size, and accessibility.

Neighbourhood Centres

The Business - Neighbourhood Centre Zone is applied to single corner stores and service stations, or small clusters of shops and services located in residential neighbourhoods. They are not considered suitable for further intensification beyond what is possible under MDRS as they are small and provide a very limited number of business activities.

Local Centres

The Business - Local Centre Zone provides for the convenience needs of surrounding residential areas, including local retail, commercial services, offices, food and beverage, and appropriately-scaled supermarkets. Residential land around **larger local centres** that have good accessibility is proposed to be zoned to the Residential - Terrace Housing and Apartment Buildings (THAB) Zone to enable buildings of up to five storeys.

The THAB zone is proposed to be applied to residential areas around 200 metres from the edge of the following local centres: Albany Village, Balmoral, Botany Junction, Dawsons Road, Eden Valley, Greenlane West, Greville, Grey Lynn, Kepa Road / Eastridge, Lynfield, Mangere East, Meadowbank, Meadowlands, and Ranui.

Town Centres

The Business - Town Centre Zone is applied to suburban centres that are typically located on main roads, which provide good access to public transport. Town centres serve a wider area than local centres and provide for a wide range of activities including commercial, leisure, residential, tourism, cultural, community and civic services.

The zoning of residential land around **smaller town centres** that have good accessibility is proposed to be the THAB zone. This is proposed to be applied to residential areas around 200 metres from the edge of the following town centres: Devonport, Ellerslie, Glenfield, Green Lane, Milford, Mt Albert, Newton - Upper Symonds St, Northcote, Otara, Parnell, Pt Chevalier, Remuera, Sunnynook, and Three Kings.

The zoning of residential areas around **larger town centres** that have good accessibility is proposed to be the THAB zone. This is proposed to be applied to residential areas around 400 metres from the edge of the following town centres: Avondale, Birkenhead, Browns Bay, Glen

Eden, Glen Innes, Highland Park, Hunters Corner, Māngere, Manurewa, Onehunga, Ōtāhuhu, Pakuranga, Panmure, Papatoetoe, Ponsonby, Royal Oak, St Lukes, and Stoddard Rd.

A number of the centres identified above will already have areas of THAB zone around them. In these cases, the additional THAB zoning is extending what already exists there. However, in some cases the application of the THAB zone will be completely new around a centre, bringing with it the potential for significant change and growth to that residential area.

Further intensification within suburban centres

The intensification proposals outlined above applies to the residential areas on land surrounding the suburban centres. The neighbourhood, local and town centres zones themselves (that is, the business areas) are not proposed to have further intensification enabled as they are considered to already allow enough building heights and densities proportional to their commercial and community offerings.

These centre zones currently provide for:

- Neighbourhood Centre zone - 3 storeys
- Local Centre zone - 4 storeys
- Town Centre zone - variable up to 10 storeys

Qualifying matters

The government has provided for building heights and housing density to be reduced from what would normally apply, where there is a qualifying matter. Qualifying matters can result in rules that do things such as limit building heights and densities, or require a resource consent to build within an area, or demolish or remove buildings or vegetation.

While buildings of at least six storeys must be enabled within walkable catchments around city centres, metropolitan centres and rapid transit stops, this scale of intensification may be changed if a qualifying matter applies. For more information on qualifying matters, refer to Information Sheets #6 and #7.

Further information

- To read more about the consultation on the council's preliminary response to NPS-UD and the changes to the Resource Management Act, and to give feedback, visit [akhaveyoursay.nz/housing](https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/our-auckland/consultation/akhaveyoursay.nz/housing)
- To learn more about how Auckland Council is planning for growth and development, visit [ourauckland.nz/growingtogether](https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/our-auckland/growingtogether)
- For detailed information about the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NPS-UD) visit the [Ministry for the Environment website](https://www.mta.govt.nz/).

- For more information on the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2021 and the Medium Density Residential Standards visit the [Ministry of Housing and Urban Development website](#).
- Visit the council's NPS-UD and MDRS preliminary response map viewer at akhaveyoursay.nz/housing to view the proposed planning maps.

Please note:

This information sheet is a summary document to assist with consultation during April and May 2022 on the council's preliminary response to the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 and the Resource Management Act as amended.

The proposed plan change to the Auckland Unitary Plan to be publicly notified by Auckland Council on or before 20 August 2022 may contain information that is different to or inconsistent with council's preliminary response. This may be for a number of reasons, including to address feedback received through consultation.

All information provided in this information sheet should be considered as being illustrative and indicative only.

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