



**April
2022**



Information Sheet #3

Residential intensification in walkable catchments and the Terrace Housing and Apartment Buildings Zone

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.

The purpose of this sheet is to explain the council’s preliminary approach to amending the Residential - Terrace Housing and Apartment Buildings (THAB) Zone. The revised THAB zone provisions are not currently available for feedback.

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.

Changes to the THAB zone

The NPS-UD requires Auckland Council to change the Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP) to enable building of at least six storeys within walkable catchments of a city centre, metropolitan centre or existing or planned rapid transit stop.

The council proposes to achieve this by zoning residential sites within these walkable catchments to a modified version of the existing THAB zone within the AUP. Currently, the THAB zone enables five-storey buildings except in specific locations where building height can be changed. Therefore, the council must amend the THAB zone provisions to enable buildings of at least six storeys within walkable catchments. Additional building height will also require consideration of effects such as building dominance, shading, privacy, and on-site amenity for residents and possible changes to the development standards or rules that deal with these.

Intensification within walkable catchments

The council is seeking to achieve five outcomes for the THAB zone within walkable catchments around the city centre, metropolitan centres and rapid transit stops. These outcomes are:



Outcome 1: Enable building heights of at least 6 storeys on a typical site

The government requires the council to enable buildings of at least six storeys on a typical site within a walkable catchment. To illustrate what each outcome will provide in terms of buildings, we have chosen a typical site size of 801m² (18m wide by 44.5m deep).

The height and 'height in relation to boundary' standards of the current THAB zone only provide for five storeys in most locations. Image 1 (on the next page) shows how the existing height in relation to boundary standards limit building height on a typical front-facing site.

To enable the required height, we are:

- required to increase the height limit from five to six storeys
- considering changes to the height in relation to boundary standards, to allow taller buildings to be located closer to boundaries. This will enable buildings of at least six storeys to be constructed on a typical site, as required by the government

Note: some areas within walkable catchments may allow heights greater than six storeys. At this stage we propose to retain the existing 'Height Variation Control' heights in the AUP.

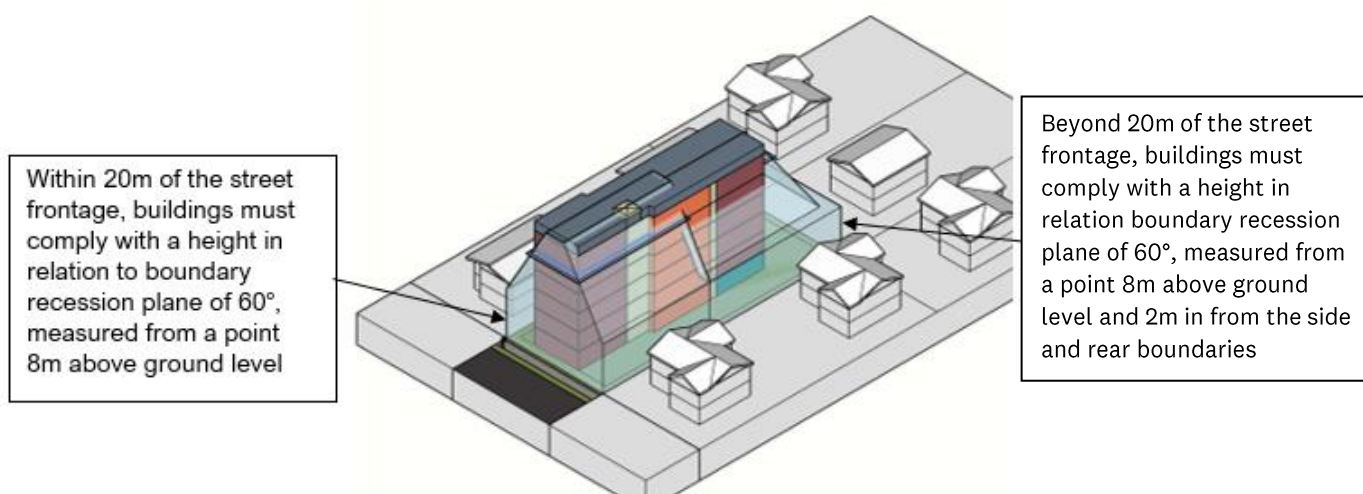


Image 1 (above) shows the existing height in relation to boundary standard

Outcome 2: Manage privacy, building dominance and shading effects on adjoining sites

Additional height enabled in walkable catchments could create shading, privacy, and dominance effects on adjoining sites.

We are considering:

- for front sites, encouraging buildings to face the street and have less building bulk at the rear of sites, to reduce dominance and shading over side boundaries
- encouraging outlook to be located over the street rather than over side boundaries, to help protect privacy
- standards to control the effects of taller buildings on sites that have much smaller buildings on them, such as special character buildings and buildings located next to open spaces

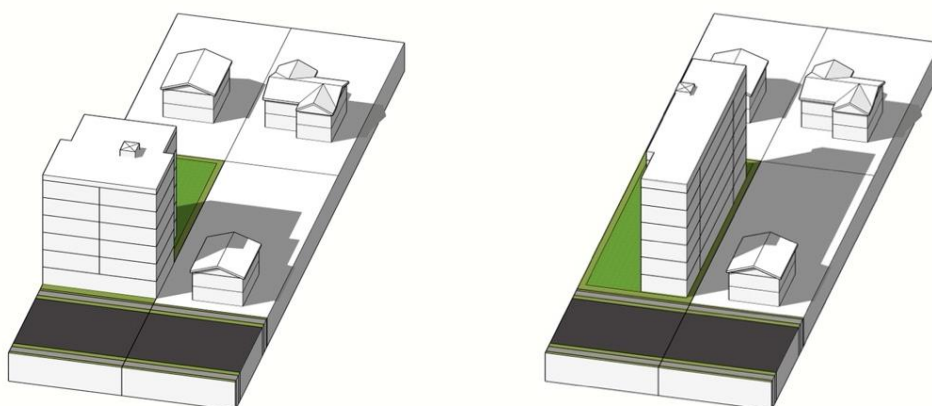


Image 2 (above) shows the effect of different building forms on adjoining sites

Outcome 3: Manage dominance and shading effects on the street

Additional building height in walkable catchments could create shading and dominance effects on the street.

To address this, we are:

- retaining the front yard setback (1.5 metres) and side yard setback (1 metre) in the THAB zone
- applying a 6-storey height standard and height in relation to boundary standards

Outcome 4: Ensure onsite amenity for residents

As part of providing people with a great place to live in walkable catchments, we want to protect their privacy, access to daylight, outlook spaces and outdoor living areas.

We are considering:

- requiring building setbacks and landscaping from private shared driveways and pedestrian footpaths
- how to maintain access to daylight in habitable rooms
- how to maintain outlook spaces that do not cause privacy issues
- retaining the existing outdoor living space requirements of the THAB zone
- Requiring communal outdoor living space be provided for larger scale developments

Outcome 5: Responding to climate change

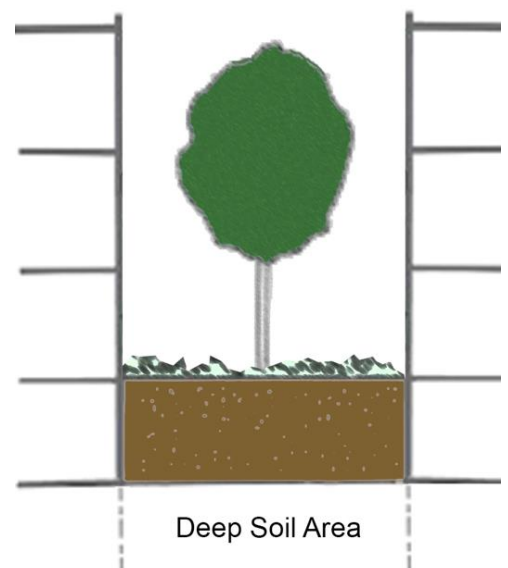
The NPS-UD directs that the urban environment must:

- support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions
- are resilient to the current and future effects of climate change

Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and reaching net zero emissions by 2050.

We are considering:

- standards that require deep soil areas to support trees



What about existing THAB zoning outside walkable catchments?

The current THAB zone enables greater height and housing density where appropriate. These areas are located close to transport, business and community services and can accommodate more intensive development.

We are required to:

- retain the five-storey height where already provided for
- amend the height in relation to boundary standard to apply to five storeys

We are considering the following:

- to manage privacy, building dominance and shading effects on adjoining sites:
 - for front sites, encouraging buildings to face the street and have less building bulk at the rear of sites, to reduce dominance and shading over side boundaries
 - encouraging outlook to be located over the street rather than over side boundaries, to help protect privacy
 - standards to control the effects of taller buildings on sites that have much smaller buildings on them, such as special character buildings and buildings located next to open spaces
- to manage dominance and shading effects on the street:
 - retaining the front yard setback (1.5 metres) and side yard setback (1 metre) in the THAB zone
 - applying a 6-storey height standard and height in relation to boundary standards
- to ensure on-site amenity for residents:
 - requiring building setbacks and landscaping from private shared driveways and pedestrian footpaths
 - methods to maintain access to daylight in habitable rooms
 - retaining the existing outdoor living space requirements of the THAB zone
 - requiring communal outdoor living space be provided for larger scale developments
- to respond to climate change:
 - standards requiring deep soil areas to support trees

Centre zones and the Business – Mixed Use Zone

Changes to the town centre, local centre, neighbourhood centre and mixed use zones may be required to enable buildings of at least six storeys in walkable catchments.

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
- To learn more about how Auckland Council is planning for growth and development, visit ourauckland.nz/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/ministry-for-the-environment/).
- 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](https://www.mta.govt.nz/ministry-of-housing-and-urban-development/).
- 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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