



**August
2022**



Proposed Plan Change 78 Information Sheet #3

Intensification around suburban centres

In August and September 2022, Auckland Council is inviting submissions on changes to the Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP) – our city’s planning rulebook – to allow for greater building heights and densities in urban Auckland. This is known as Proposed Plan Change 78 - Intensification.

This information sheet explains the council’s plan change response to intensification in and around some of Auckland’s suburban centres.

Submissions are now invited on the proposed plan change. The period for submissions closes on 29 September 2022.

The government’s approach to more housing

The government’s National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) came into force in August 2020 and was updated in May 2022. 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. The NPS-UD also requires more building height and housing density within and around neighbourhood, local and town centres.

In December 2021, the government also made amendments to the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). The RMA now requires the councils of New Zealand’s largest and rapidly growing cities – Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Wellington and Christchurch – to incorporate new Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) in relevant residential zones.

Through the use of MDRS the government requires the council to enable medium-density housing across most of Auckland’s residential suburbs. Three dwellings of up to three storeys,

including terrace housing and low-rise apartments, are to be permitted on most residential properties unless a ‘qualifying matter’ applies (see information sheets #7 and #8). Four or more dwellings are to 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, 10 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 highest levels of activities and services based on three criteria: place in the centre zoning hierarchy, the size of the centre, and the catchment of the centre (population and jobs).

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 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 high population and employment catchments 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 high population and employment catchments 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 high population and employment catchments 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 Road.

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.

Centres where intensification is proposed

Overall, Proposed Plan Change 78 proposes that 46 of Auckland's local and town centres have levels of activities and services that are suitable for residential intensification around them. Half of these centres are located on the Auckland isthmus with a further 12 centres in the north and west of Auckland, and 11 centres in the south and east. No centres in any rural settlement or on the Hauraki Gulf islands are proposed for any further intensification under this particular government direction.

Further intensification within suburban centres

The intensification proposals outlined above applies to the residential areas surrounding the suburban centres. The neighbourhood, local and town centre zones themselves (that is, the business-zoned 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 have enabling development standards (e.g. no building coverage or impervious area limits) including the following building heights:

- Neighbourhood Centre zone - 3 storeys (13 metres)
- Local Centre zone - 4 storeys (18 metres)
- Town Centre zone - variable up to 10 storeys (32.5 metres)

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, require a resource consent to build within an area, or demolish or remove buildings or vegetation.

While residential land around some suburban centres is proposed to be rezoned to THAB zone, this scale of intensification may be changed if a qualifying matter applies. For more information on qualifying matters, refer to Information Sheets #7 and #8.

Further information

- 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](#).
- For more information on the RMA and the amendments made to it in 2021 including the MDRS requirements [visit the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development website](#).

Please note:

This information sheet is a summary document to assist with understanding Proposed Plan Change 78 - Intensification, the Council's intensification planning instrument, which gives effect to Policies 3 and 4 of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 and incorporates the medium density residential standards into relevant residential zones as required by the Resource Management Act 1991.

The proposed plan change to the Auckland Unitary Plan was publicly notified by Auckland Council on 18 August 2022.

All information provided in this information sheet should be considered as being illustrative and indicative only. Users should take specific advice from qualified professional people before undertaking any action as a result of information obtained from this information sheet. The user waives and releases Auckland Council from any claims arising from use of the information provided in this information sheet.