

**PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE 120 –  
HOUSING INTENSIFICATION AND RESILIENCE**

**HEARING DIRECTION 6 FROM THE INDEPENDENT HEARINGS PANEL  
(UPDATE ON SCHEDULING AND INFORMATION SOUGHT)**

**21 MAY 2026**

**1. Background**

- 1.1 On 3 November 2025, the Auckland Council (**Council**) notified PC120. Submissions on PC120 closed on 19 December 2025.
- 1.2 On 19 February 2026, the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform announced changes to the minimum housing capacity requirements for PC120, to be implemented by amendment to the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**).
- 1.3 On 27 March 2026, the Panel issued **Direction 4**<sup>1</sup> seeking the Council’s view on whether aspects of PC120 could progress to Alternative Dispute Resolution (**ADR**) and/or hearing in advance of, or in parallel with, the anticipated RMA amendments.
- 1.4 On 2 April 2026, the Resource Management (Auckland Housing) Amendment Act 2026 (**RMA amendment**) received Royal assent. Of relevance to this Direction, the RMA amendment reduced the PC120 minimum housing capacity requirement from approximately 2.0 million to approximately 1.4 million homes, and required the Council to:
- Decide whether to amend PC120 in light of that reduction;
  - Notify that decision; and
  - Provide a second submission period of 20 working days on PC120 / any amendment to PC120.
- 1.5 In light of the RMA amendment, on 7 April 2026, the Panel issued **Minute 6** deferring the Council’s response to Direction 4.

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<sup>1</sup> Hearing Direction 4 from the Independent Hearings Panel dated 27 March 2026 [27 March 2026 - Hearing direction 4 from the Independent Hearings Panel](#)

1.6 On 4 May 2026, the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and the Minister for Conservation gazetted the Resource Management (Direction to Auckland Council to Use the Streamlined Planning Process to Prepare Proposed Plan Change 120: Housing Intensification and Resilience) Amendment Notice 2026 (**amended Ministerial Direction**)<sup>2</sup>. Of relevance to this Direction, the amended Ministerial Direction stated that the Council:

- Must publicly notify a summary of decisions requested (**SDR**) for the first round of submissions and an SDR for the second round of submissions; and
- Must not provide an opportunity for further submissions under RMA schedule 1 clause 8 on the first round of submissions or the second round of submissions.

1.7 The SDR for the first round of submissions was publicly notified by the Council on 14 May 2026 and can be viewed on the PC120 webpage.

## 2. What this means for PC120

2.1 The Panel has considered the amendment Act and the amended Ministerial Direction.

2.2 The Panel is aware that there has been no change to the requirement that the Council notify its decisions on the Panel's recommendations on PC120 by the end of June 2027<sup>3</sup>. That was an ambitious timeframe before the introduction of the procedural amendments summarised above.

2.3 The notification of any amendments to PC120 and the second round of submissions are likely to create complexity and a high volume of material, and will delay the commencement of PC120 hearings. This will further complicate the Panel's ability to ensure a fair process while delivering its recommendations to the Council promptly.

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<sup>2</sup> The Resource Management (Direction to Auckland Council to Use the Streamlined Planning Process to Prepare Proposed Plan Change 120: Housing Intensification and Resilience) Amendment Notice 2026. 4 May 2026 <https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2026-sl2380>

<sup>3</sup> The amended Ministers' Direction retains the direction that the maximum total time period within which PC120 must be completed is 20 months from 29 October 2025.

### 3. Information sought from Council

- 3.1 The Panel **directs** the Council to provide a response to the matters set out in paragraphs 3.1(A)-(G). This Direction supersedes Direction 4, and no further response to that Direction is required.

#### Amendments to PC120

- A. Confirmation of the Council's programme, including when the Council anticipates notifying its decision on whether to amend PC120 (which will commence the second round of submissions).
- B. If the Council decides to amend PC120, what steps will be taken to inform affected persons and/or first round submitters regarding the proposed changes.

#### Second Submission Period

- C. What the Council proposes with respect to the preparation of a submission form specific to the second submission period.
- D. How the Council intends to reconcile first round submissions and second round submissions, including the process to record amendments to first round submissions, and the potential for submitters to duplicate or repeat a first round submission in a second round submission.
- E. Preparation and notification of the SDR for the first round of submissions took approximately four months. How will the Council expedite the preparation of the SDR for the second round of submissions.

#### ADR

- F. Whether any of the following aspects of PC120 are suited to ADR, and the relative priority of each for ADR, given the limited time available for the hearing programme:
  - i. All Resilience aspects of PC120.
  - ii. If not all Resilience aspects, specific aspects of PC120 (for example, but not limited to, the Regional Policy Statement content, matters of methodology, and definitions).
  - iii. Intensification aspects of PC120 relating to matters of principle rather than spatial distribution of intensification (for example, the methodology for identifying walkable catchments and special character); and
  - iv. Any other PC120 topics or provisions.

## Hearings

G. What procedural efficiencies could assist the Panel in expediting the hearings, including whether it is practical for advanced reporting to Local Boards to enable their presentation to the Panel shortly after the close of the second submission period.

## 4. Timeframe for Council's response to this direction

4.1 The Panel **directs** the Council to provide a detailed response to the matters raised in Section 3 in writing **by 3.00pm, Friday, 29 May 2026**.

## 5. Next Steps

5.1 After the Council's response to this Direction is available, the Panel will invite submitters to respond.

5.2 The Panel will review all responses received to determine how the hearings and any ADR programme should proceed.

5.3 The Panel intends to schedule a Procedural Hearing shortly after the close of the second submission period, and to circulate a draft schedule of hearings and any ADR in advance of that Procedural Hearing. The Council and submitters will be given an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft schedule.

5.4 Any enquiries regarding this direction, or related matters, should be addressed to the Secretariat of the Independent Hearings Panel at [pc120hearings@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:pc120hearings@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz).



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Sarah Shaw  
**Chair**  
**Independent Hearings Panel – PC120**

**Date: 21 May 2026**