

**From:** [John Burns](#)  
**To:** [PC120hearings](#)  
**Subject:** Letter attached  
**Date:** Tuesday, 19 May 2026 12:26:11 pm  
**Attachments:** [CC Consultation letter to Mayor and Councillors FINAL.docx](#)  
[RE PC120- Council consultation.msg](#)  
[Ltr to Panel 19 May26 .docx](#)  
**Importance:** High

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Dear Sarah

Please see letter attached.

Yours sincerely

John Burns

(for Character Coalition Inc)



The Chair  
PC120 Hearings Panel  
Auckland

19 May 2025

Dear Ms Shaw,

**Request that the Panel direct that Auckland Council follow the usual practice of meeting with those submitters who seek the opportunity to discuss the concerns raised in their submissions**

Character Coalition Inc is an umbrella organisation of 70 historic, heritage, historical and special interest groups and residents' associations in the Auckland region. Information about the society and a list of our member groups can be found on our website: <https://charactercoalition.org.nz/>

The Coalition and many of our members groups lodged submissions on Plan Change 120 in December. We have been attempting since March to meet with Council to discuss the concerns raised in these submissions. However, to date we have been unsuccessful in obtaining Council's agreement to any such meeting.

We attach a copy of our initial letter to Council which we sent on 30 March seeking consultation prior to Council notifying yet another iteration of its Plan Change- which we understand is now expected in July.

A copy of Council's reply is also attached. You will see that Council has decided it will only be consulting with Local Boards and Iwi, and not the wider Auckland community or community groups.

One of our member groups which has also requested a meeting with Council to discuss their submission has been informed by Council that it will not meet with them. In their response, Council stated: *" we are currently in the middle of a statutory submissions and hearings process, it would be inappropriate (i.e. raise matters of natural justice and transparency) for council staff to hold meetings with individual submitters unless directed to do so by the PC120 Independent Hearings Panel."*

Plan Change 120 was notified last year with no prior consultation with affected communities. Unsurprisingly, it has attracted over 10,500 submissions, the vast majority of which oppose the Plan Change and/or aspects of it.

As far as we are aware, past practice has been for a Council both to consult with their communities prior to notifying a significant plan change, and to meet with submitters once submissions have been lodged. In our experience, this approach both enables communities to have input into the plan

change and often leads to a narrowing of issues required to be heard. In some cases, agreement can be reached between a submitter and Council, thereby removing the need for a hearing altogether.

We are very concerned that Council is not following this process in the case of Plan Change 120. We cannot see how "*natural justice*" can possibly preclude Council meeting with submitters, providing that Council is transparent about any meetings which take place and any conclusions that are reached at them.

In its letter to us, Council refers to a further submission process. However, allowing statutory submissions after Council has decided on its revisions to the Plan Change is not consultation. Our community deserves to have input into these revisions before they are made, not just participate in a formal submission process afterwards.

We ask:

1. Does the Panel agree that natural justice issues preclude Council meeting with submitters prior to it producing a revised plan Change 120 and/or commencing the formal hearing of submissions?
2. If not, that the Panel directs that Council follows the usual practice of meeting with those submitters who seek the opportunity to discuss the concerns raised in their submissions with Council prior to it deciding on a revised plan change and to the submissions being heard.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Hughes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sally Hughes  
Chair Character Coalition Inc



Dear Mayor and Councillors

As you may know, Character Coalition is an umbrella organisation of over 65 residents, community, and heritage groups. Our main aim is to ensure the retention of what remains of Auckland's residential character areas.

Auckland's SCAs have been included in, and protected by, city plans since the 1990's. During that time, owners and residents of properties within them have spent a great deal of time and money ensuring that their homes, and their neighbourhood, retain the characteristics that define their area, while at the same time bringing their homes up to contemporary living standards.

Although you have been holding workshops to discuss Council's approach to achieving a new minimum capacity of 1.6 million in Plan Change 120 in response to the Government's indication that it will be passing enabling legislation to that effect, these have not been open to the public to attend.

We understand that the decision whether, to what extent, and where, to reduce the intensification requirements will be made by Council's Policy Planning and Development Committee following legislation to be passed by Government

We are aware that Council felt that it lacked time to consult communities before notifying PC78 because of Government pressure to act.

Countless local authorities, independent hearing panels and Courts have held that, while the RMA does not make it mandatory to consult communities, valuable information is invariably available from consultation with persons and communities who live, work and recreate in areas planned for major rezoning.

We believe that Council must make time available now for at least some targeted consultation with community groups.

This requirement is emphasised by S78 of the Local Government Act 2002, which says that Council must in making any decision "give consideration to the views and preferences of persons likely to be affected by, or to have an interest in, the matter.

This consultation must be carried out in accordance with the principles set out in S82 of the Act. These include that Council should provide persons who wish to have their views on the decision considered with a reasonable opportunity to present those views to Council. Council must also, in deciding how to carry out its obligation to consult, have regard to the significance of the matter,

including its likely impact from the perspective of those who will, or may be, affected by, or have an interest in, the matter.

The decision whether, to what extent, and where to change the provisions of Proposed Plan Change 120 is clearly a significant one. It will have a major impact on Auckland , on our members properties, and on their quality of life. Its significance is shown by the fact that Council has received over 10,000 submissions on PC120 as notified, with potentially thousands of further submissions yet to come. The high degree of public interest in, and disquiet about, PC120 is also shown by the public meetings and media attention it has attracted.

It is essential that Council consults with us, and with our member groups, before making any decisions about revising PC120, both because it is legally obliged to do so, and also so that it has the benefit of receiving local knowledge and the views of those who are actually affected by the decision.

We ask that you confirm urgently:

1. That Council will be consulting with us, and with our member groups , before making any decision as to what extent, and where is will be making changes to PC120:
2. The process that Council proposes for carrying out this consultation.

We look forward to receiving your early reply.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Hughes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sally Hughes  
Chair  
Character Coalition

**From:** [John Duguid](#)  
**To:** [John Burns](#)  
**Cc:** [Phil Wilson](#); [Megan Tyler](#); [Councillor Christine Fletcher](#); [Councillor Julie Fairey](#); [Councillor Mike Lee](#); [Councillor Desley Simpson](#); "Sally Hughes"  
**Subject:** RE: PC120- Council consultation  
**Date:** Monday, 18 May 2026 3:26:25 pm

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Dear John

As you will be aware, the Resource Management Act has been amended to ensure that a new round of submissions will be available once the council makes its decision to amend and/or withdraw in part Proposed Plan Change 120. Having taken into account the amendments to the RMA and the re-confirmed timeframe for completing the overall statutory process (i.e. by the end of June next year [Amended Gazette Notice – Resource Management \(Direction to Auckland Council to use SPP\)](#)), the council's current programme for Proposed Plan Change 120 is as follows:

1. late May 2026 – final Policy, Planning and Development Committee workshop on potential amendments to Proposed Plan Change 120
2. June 2026 – Policy, Planning and Development Committee meeting to consider draft potential amendments to Proposed Plan Change 120
3. June/July 2026 – feedback sought from local boards and iwi authorities
4. July/August 2026 – Policy, Planning and Development Committee meeting to consider feedback from local boards and iwi authorities and to decide whether to amend and/or withdraw in part Proposed Plan Change 120
5. August 2026 – submissions open (again) on Plan Change 120 and the proposed amendments (if any)
6. expert conferencing, mediation, hearings and recommendations to Auckland Council - to be determined by the Independent Hearings Panel
7. Auckland Council decisions – by end of June 2027.

While this programme does not include consultation with Auckland communities prior to submissions opening once again, I note that many Aucklanders and community groups are already participants in the Proposed Plan Change 120 process; that later this year and likely into next year, they will have the opportunity to present their perspectives to the Independent Hearings Panel appointed by the council and central government; and that the council will not be making its final decisions until it receives the recommendations from the Panel next year.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further questions.

Regards | Ngā mihi

**John Duguid | General Manager Planning and Resource Consents**  
**Policy, Planning and Governance Directorate**

  
Auckland Council, Level 16, 135 Albert Street, Auckland  
Visit our website: [www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

**PA: Jenny Bramley**

  
[jenny.bramley@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:jenny.bramley@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

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**From:** John Burns

**Sent:** Wednesday, 6 May 2026 5:59 pm

**To:** John Duguid

**Cc:** Phil Wilson ; Megan Tyler ; Councillor Christine Fletcher ; Councillor Julie Fairey ; Councillor Mike Lee ; Councillor Desley Simpson ; 'Sally Hughes'

**Subject:** RE: PC120- Council consultation

Dear John,

Thank you for this response. Am I correct in understanding that Council will not be consulting with affected communities prior to deciding on any proposed changes to its notified PC120?

Would you please confirm if that is the case, and also let us know the timeframe for Council to provide details of any such changes to our communities?

Kind regards

John Burns

(for Character Coalition Inc)

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**From:** John Duguid <[John.Duguid@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:John.Duguid@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Friday, 17 April 2026 4:34 p.m.

**To:** John Burns <[jaburns@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jaburns@xtra.co.nz)>; 'Sally Hughes' <[sally@charactercoalition.org.nz](mailto:sally@charactercoalition.org.nz)>

**Cc:** Phil Wilson <[Phil.Wilson@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:Phil.Wilson@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)>; Megan Tyler <[Megan.Tyler@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:Megan.Tyler@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: PC120- Council consultation

Dear John and Sally

I hope you are both well.

Phil Wilson asked me to reply to your letter shortly after receiving it. The reason for my delay in contacting you is that we are still working through the implications of the amendments that were made to the RMA regarding PC120 just a couple of weeks ago. Our initial focus has been on preparing options for the council's Policy, Planning and Development Committee to consider, and developing a programme that works with the timeline set out in the directive from Minister Bishop and Minister Potaka last October (i.e. mediation and hearings completed, recommendations made by the Independent Hearings Panel, and decisions made by the council on those recommendations by the end of June next year). As you may be aware, Minister Bishop has recently indicated that he does not intend to adjust this timeline. A workshop will be held with the Policy, Planning and Development Committee next Wednesday at 3.45pm. A recording of the workshop will be published on the council website shortly after the meeting concludes.

I will contact you again as soon as we have more clarity around the programme for Plan Change 120.

Regards | Ngā mihi

**John Duguid | General Manager Planning and Resource Consents  
Policy, Planning and Governance Directorate**

Auckland Council, Level 16, 135 Albert Street, Auckland

Visit our website: [www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

**PA: Jenny Bramley**

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