



**November
2025**



Proposed Plan Change 120 Information Sheet #20

Updates to precincts

From 3 November to 19 December 2025, Auckland Council invites submissions on Proposed Plan Change 120: Housing Intensification and Resilience (PC120) - a change to the Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP) (our city's planning rulebook) that proposes to rezone areas of residential land for greater intensification, to enable greater building heights and densities in many parts of urban Auckland, and to strengthen management of natural hazard risks.

Submissions are now open until 5pm on Friday 19 December 2025.

This information sheet explains the council's plan change response to enabling development in Auckland's 'precincts' - the places for which the Auckland Unitary Plan applies location-specific planning rules and policies.

Background to Proposed Plan Change 120

PC78 was Auckland's former intensification plan change as required by the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NPS-UD). It incorporated the Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) which was legally required at the time. This generally allowed three dwellings of up to three storeys to be built on most residential sites without resource consent.

In August 2025, the government amended the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) which enabled PC78 to be withdrawn. Auckland Council withdrew PC78 (in part) and notified PC120 to improve Auckland's resilience to natural hazards and focus intensification around centres and transport nodes.

PC78 was withdrawn in part from 5pm on 9 October 2025, and included withdrawal of the MDRS in PC78.

PC120 addresses central government requirements to:

- contribute to the same level of housing capacity in the AUP as was to be enabled by PC78
- enable building heights and densities within and around town and local centres which reflect the level of commercial and community activity these centres offer
- enable building heights of at least 6-storeys within walkable catchments from the edge of the city centre zone, the edge of metropolitan centre zones and around existing and planned rapid transit stops (train and busway stations) and
- enable building heights of at least 10- and 15- storeys around certain train stations listed in the RMA.

These heights and densities must be enabled unless a ‘qualifying matter’ applies to a site (see Information Sheet #13) which makes that level of development inappropriate.

PC120 also strengthens provisions that manage natural hazard risks. Areas potentially affected by flooding, land instability, coastal erosion or coastal inundation now and in the future are targeted with stronger rules and other planning measures. This approach is to improve Auckland’s resilience to severe weather events and natural hazards, following the storms in early 2023 which resulted in widespread flooding, landslips, and coastal inundation across the region.

Auckland’s precincts in the AUP

Precincts in the AUP recognise local differences by providing detailed place-based provisions that vary the outcomes sought by the zone or Auckland-wide provisions. These provisions can be more restrictive or more enabling, depending on the local context.

Chapter I of the AUP groups precincts by location - Auckland-wide, central, north, west, south and Special Housing Areas (SHAs). A precinct is shown by bold red outline on the AUP planning maps and can be viewed by selecting the ‘Precincts’ layer in the map viewer.

Our approach to Precincts in Plan Change 120

Auckland Council’s approach to precincts is determined by their location and planning context.

All precincts within the AUP have been reviewed as part of the preparation of PC120, including those that were previously Special Housing Areas. However, not all precincts are proposed to be amended by PC120, and different precincts are impacted in different ways.

Generally, precincts located close to rapid transit stops, town and local centres or the edge of the City Centre or metropolitan centres (within walkable catchments) enable taller buildings, as required by Policy 3 of the NPS-UD.

While the intensification proposed by PC120 applies only to urban Auckland, the PC120 approach to managing natural hazard risks applies region wide.

Precincts are grouped as follows:

- Some precincts are excluded from PC120 because they are **outside of the urban environment** and/ or contain rural, coastal, special purpose, or open space zones
- Some precincts are amended by PC120 where the residential zoning is proposed to change, based on proximity to centres, amenities and public transport, to enable housing capacity
- Some precincts are amended by PC120 where they overlap with intensification locations as required by the NPS-UD or RMA, requiring taller buildings to be enabled.
- Some precincts are amended by PC120 where the land is affected by natural hazard risks. For example, some residential land may be rezoned to reduce risk to life and property.

Precincts excluded from Plan Change 120

Precincts located within the City Centre zone and wholly within a metropolitan centre zone (and not in the surrounding walkable catchment) are excluded from PC120, as these areas have been progressed under PC78.

Two exceptions apply: Westgate and New Lynn are the only precincts in the Metropolitan Centre Zone included in PC120.

Other precincts excluded from PC120 are those located **outside of the urban environment**, including those in rural, coastal, special purpose, and open space zones. Because no changes are proposed, these precincts are not shown in the PC120 map viewer.

The term '**Outside of the urban environment**' is used in the NPS-UD to identify settlements with low populations that are exempt from the NPS-UD requirements.

Precincts amended by Plan Change 120

These include precincts that were previously SHAs (except for those **outside of the urban environment**). These are shown in the PC120 planning maps with a bold red outline when the 'Precincts' layer is selected.

Council proposes changes to precincts to:

- enable a minimum height of 22m (6 storeys) in walkable catchments and adjacent to suburban centres, as required by the NPS-UD
- enable a minimum height of 34.5m (10 storeys) or 50m (15 storeys) in the five walkable catchments listed in the RMA
- change other rules affecting building design, such as height in relation to boundary, building coverage, and yards
- recognise where qualifying matters are present and limit intensification.

Residential zoning changes

Outside of Policy 3 areas, the council has amended some precincts by:

- Changing the underlying AUP zoning patterns based on proximity to centres, amenities and public transport
- Proposing that lower intensity residential zones apply in some locations to address significant natural hazard risks.

Precinct text is updated to reflect changed zoning.

Qualifying matter for comprehensively planned precincts

The council proposes no additional intensification for comprehensively planned precincts (although small areas may be amended in response to natural hazard risks).

Additional intensification risks undermine the complex planning undertaken to design and deliver these precincts. Some precincts rely on complex infrastructure servicing agreements and density controls that trigger when and by whom specific infrastructure is to be delivered.

Where a Policy 3 location overlaps with these precincts a Comprehensive Integrated Planning Outcome qualifying matter applies. These are shown in the PC120 map viewer.

Further information

- 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 amendments to the RMA [visit the Ministry for the Environment website.](#)

Please note:

This information sheet is a summary document to assist with understanding Proposed Plan Change 120 – Housing Intensification and Resilience, which gives effect to Policies 3 and 4 of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 and addresses the requirements of Schedule 3C of the Resource Management Act 1991.

Proposed Plan Change 120 to the Auckland Unitary Plan was publicly notified by Auckland Council on 3 November 2025.

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