



**November
2025**



Proposed Plan Change 120 Information Sheet #6

Intensification in and around suburban centres

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 intensification in and around some of Auckland's suburban centres.

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In August 2025, the government amended the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) which enabled PC78 to be withdrawn.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PC78 was withdrawn in part from 5pm on 9 October 2025, and included withdrawal of the MDRS in PC78.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 suburban centres

In addition to the intensification required in walkable catchments from the edge of Auckland’s city centre and metropolitan centres, and around existing and planned rapid transit stops (busway and rail stations) the NPS-UD also directs intensification in and around some suburban centres.

The council is required to enable building heights and densities in and around Auckland’s suburban centres that reflect the level of retail activity, business, 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: the category of centre (reflected by the zone), the size of the centre, and the accessibility of the centre.

Residential intensification around suburban centres

Neighbourhood Centres

The Neighbourhood Centre zone is applied to single corner stores and service stations, or small clusters of shops and services located in residential neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood Centres are not considered suitable for further intensification in and around them as they are small and provide a limited number of business activities.

Local Centres

The 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** with **high accessibility** is proposed to be rezoned to the Residential - Terrace Housing and Apartment Buildings (THAB) zone. PC120 also proposes to modify the THAB zone to include an enabled building height of 6-storeys (22m).

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, Blockhouse Bay, Botany Junction, Chatswood, Clendon, Dawsons Road, Drury, Eden Valley, Greenlane West, Grey Lynn, Hobsonville, Jervois Road, Kelston, Kepa Road / Eastridge, Lynfield, Mairangi Bay, Mangere East, Meadowbank, Meadowlands, Mt Roskill, Mt Wellington, and Te Atatū South.

For more information about proposed changes to the existing THAB provisions, refer to the Information sheet #9 Updates to the Terraced Housing and Apartment Building Zone.

Town Centres

The Town Centre zone is applied to suburban centres that are typically located on main roads and which provide good access to public transport. Town centres serve a larger area than local centres and provide for a wide range of activities including commercial, leisure, residential, tourism, cultural, community and civic services.

Residential land around **smaller or larger town centres** that have **high accessibility** is proposed to be rezoned to 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, Devonport, Ellerslie, Glen Eden, Glen Innes, Glenfield, Greenlane, Highland Park, Howick, Hunters Corner, Mangere, Manurewa, Milford, Mt Albert, Newton - Upper Symonds St, Northcote, Onehunga, Ōtāhuhu, Ōtara, Pakūranga, Panmure, Papatoetoe, Parnell, Ponsonby, Pt Chevalier, Remuera, Royal Oak, St Lukes, Stoddard Road, Sunnynook, Te Atatū North and Three Kings.

Centres where intensification is proposed

Overall, PC120 proposes further intensification around 57 of Auckland's local and town centres. Approximately half of these centres are located on the Auckland isthmus with a further 15 centres in the north and west of Auckland, and 15 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 PC120.

Some of the local and town centres listed above may be fully (or partially) located within a walkable catchment area. In these cases, the suburban centres intensification

does not apply as the intensification response for the walkable catchment will override it.

A number of the centres identified above will already have existing areas of THAB zone around them. In these cases, the additional THAB zoning builds on what already exists there. However, in some cases the application of the THAB zone will be completely new around a centre, meaning there is potential for significant change and growth to that residential area.

Intensification within suburban centres

The proposed THAB (22m height) zoning outlined above applies to the residential areas surrounding the suburban centres. The local and town centre zones themselves (that is, the business-zoned areas) are also proposed to have enabled heights at least equal to the surrounding 6-storey (22m) THAB.

Where local or town centre heights are currently less than the proposed surrounding THAB zone, PC120 proposes that additional building height will be enabled through a Height Variation Control of 22m. A Height Variation Control indicates where greater or less building height is available, relative to what the zone generally allows (outlined in blue on the map viewer).

In some cases, the area adjacent or close to a local or town centre will encompass some Neighbourhood Centre zoned land. PC120 proposes to enable the 22m height through a Height Variation Control to these specific neighbourhood centres.

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, or exemption. Qualifying matters are intended to manage specific characteristics or features of a property or area and can result in rules that limit building heights and densities or require a resource consent to build within an area or demolish or to remove buildings or vegetation.

While residential land around some suburban centres is proposed to be rezoned and additional building heights in business zones may be enabled, this scale of intensification may be reduced if a qualifying matter applies. For more information on qualifying matters, refer to information sheet #13 Qualifying Matters.

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.

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.