



PUBLIC CONSULTATION FACTSHEET

Proposals to modify or remove city centre plan provisions in the Auckland Unitary Plan

What the investigation found and the changes being considered

At a glance

The Minister Responsible for RMA Reform has investigated specified Auckland Unitary Plan provisions that apply in the city centre. The investigation found that these provisions constrain development capacity and that targeted amendments could support more housing and employment, with productivity and economic benefits. No final decision has been made.

Why is this being investigated?

Section 360I of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) provides for the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform to make regulations that modify or remove provisions in a policy statement or plan that are having a negative impact on economic growth, development capacity or employment. Before regulations can be recommended, the Minister must undertake an investigation into specified provisions and report on their impact to determine whether the statutory requirements are met.

This investigation focuses on Auckland's city centre. Auckland plays a critical national economic role, concentrating employment opportunities and access to public transport.

What changes are recommended?

AUP provision	Recommended change
Building height	Enable unlimited height under the general building-height standard across most of the City Centre Zone, unless another height restriction applies.
Tower form	Remove maximum tower dimension, boundary setback and tower-separation standards, including the east-west tower dimension standard.
Street frontages	Remove minimum frontage-height requirements, and maximum frontage heights and upper-level setback requirements.
Four precincts	Remove site-intensity or floor area ratio limits in Britomart, Central Wharves, Viaduct Harbour and Wynyard.

Karangahape Road

Remove sites that do not make a significant contribution to the area's recognised heritage values from the mapped Historic Heritage Area (also known as a 'non-contributing site'). Contributing sites and scheduled heritage places would remain protected.

What the modelling shows

Planning capacity and likely development are different

Plan-enabled capacity is the amount of floor space the planning rules could theoretically allow. Commercially feasible capacity is the portion that may support development costs, land value and a normal developer return under the modelled market conditions. Neither measure is a forecast of exactly what will be built.

The following table shows an overview of findings from the modelling undertaken as part of the investigation.

20.3 million m² additional theoretical floor space enabled by the recommended package	2.75 million m² commercially feasible floor space
about 17,000 additional dwellings associated with expected delivery	about 37,000 jobs located in the city centre at full uptake

What the modelling indicates

The development-capacity modelling found that these provisions work together. Removing individual controls produced more limited capacity gains, while modifying them as an integrated package produced a larger increase because height and tower-form controls can constrain different parts of the same development.

If the commercially feasible floor space is delivered and occupied, the package could support about 17,100 additional dwellings, 31,600 residents and 37,200 jobs located in the city centre. The central modelling estimate indicates an annual national GDP increase of about \$1.87 billion at full uptake, with a present value of about \$42.6 billion over 40 years.

Not all development enabled by planning rules will be commercially feasible or built immediately. Feasibility can change over time as construction costs, property values, rents and demand change. Providing plan-enabled capacity means planning provisions are less likely to prevent development when projects become viable.

Karangahape Road changes add additional benefits

The recommended change is limited to non-contributing sites within the mapped Historic Heritage Area. It would not remove the heritage status of contributing buildings or scheduled Category A and Category B historic heritage places.

The economic assessment estimates that applying standard City Centre provisions to the assessed non-contributing sites could support around 1,400 additional dwellings and 1,000 jobs. The central-case GDP effect is about \$50 million a year, with a present value of about \$1.14 billion over 40 years.

How to read these results

The figures describe modelled outcomes if additional development is delivered and occupied. They are not forecasts of exactly what will be built or when.

How this relates to Plan Change 120

Plan Change 120 does not cover the City Centre and is separate from this investigation. However, any additional housing capacity enabled in the city centre, including through section 360I regulations, can count towards Auckland's requirement to provide capacity for at least 1.4 million dwellings.

Using an approach comparable to Auckland Council's methodology for PC120, the investigation report estimates that the recommended changes would enable theoretical capacity for approximately 84,489 additional dwellings in the city centre. This would be in addition to the theoretical capacity for approximately 70,228 dwellings already enabled by the Auckland Unitary Plan.

Note that the assumptions used to derive the theoretical capacity number to feed into PC120 (50:50 residential-to-commercial split of floor space and gross floor area per dwelling of 120 m²) differ from those used in the economic modelling, which was based on observed evidence and assumed a 51:49 residential-to-commercial split and gross floor area per dwelling of 70.2 m².

What would stay in place

Development would still require assessment

The recommendations would not provide an automatic right to build. New buildings in the City Centre would continue to require resource consent from Auckland Council. Other applicable plan provisions would also continue to apply, including:

- protected volcanic viewshafts and other relevant overlays
- sunlight and wind controls
- harbour-edge and site-specific height controls
- precinct provisions that are not proposed for removal
- scheduled heritage protections and protections for contributing heritage sites
- assessment of building design, external appearance, streets and public open spaces, emergency servicing and other relevant effects.

What happens next?

After consultation closes, the Ministry will analyse the feedback received. The Minister will consider the investigation report, Auckland Council's response and consultation feedback before deciding whether to recommend regulations to remove or modify any of the specified provisions. No final decision has been made.

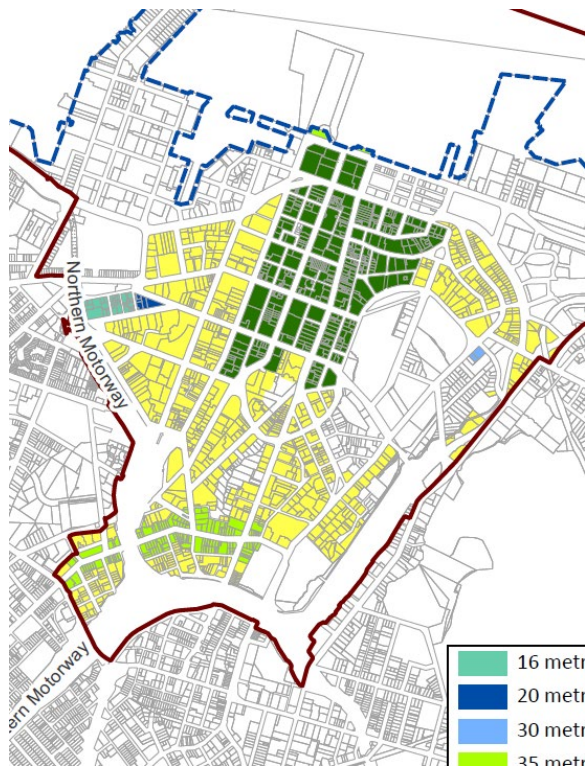
Have your say

The Government is seeking feedback on the recommendations in the investigation report. Feedback will inform the Minister's decision.

Consultation page	https://consult.environment.govt.nz/resource-management/auckland-city-centre-planning-provisions/
Closing date	16 October 2026

Maps showing current and proposed changes to height limits

Current



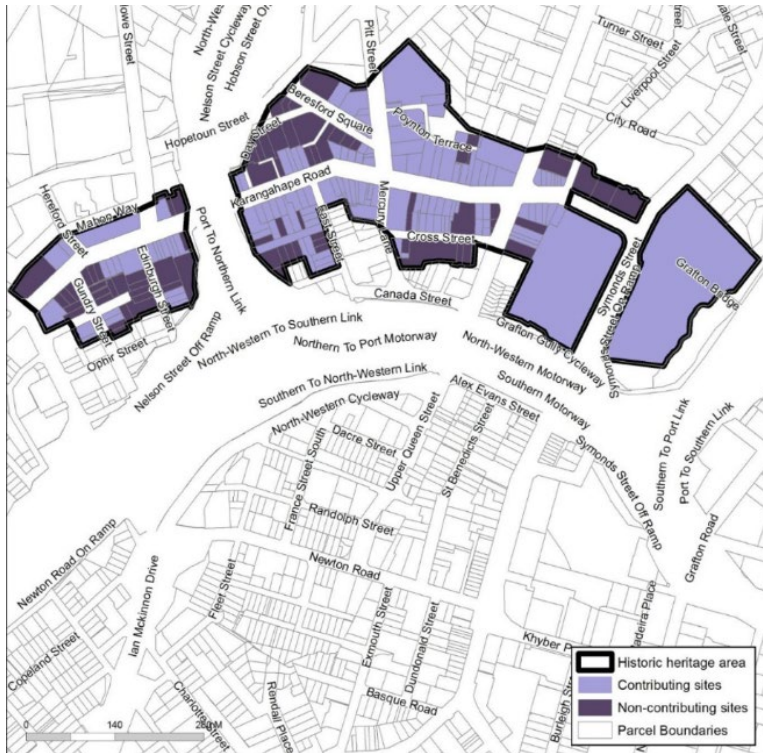
Proposed



- 16 metres
- 20 metres
- 30 metres
- 35 metres
- 72.5 metres
- Special Height Area
- Indicative Coastline
- Boundary of City Centre and Precincts
- Parcel Boundary

Maps showing proposed removal of non-contributing sites from the Karangahape Road Historic Heritage Area

Current



Proposed



Glossary of terms

Term	Explanation
Tower dimension controls	Provisions that manage the built-form of towers above a particular height – usually to create a narrower tower above a podium. Includes maximum tower dimension and separation, east-west tower dimension and building frontages and setbacks from boundaries.
Maximum tower dimension and separation	These rules limit how wide towers can be above 28m, require setbacks from site boundaries and require separation between towers when on the same site.
East-west tower dimension	This rule limits the east-west width of towers above 28m. It was introduced through PC78 to maintain visual connections to the Waitematā Harbour and reduce building bulk.
Building frontages and setbacks from boundaries	Building frontage rules control how tall buildings can be at street level and where upper floors must step back from the street frontage. Setback rules were introduced through PC78 and control how much buildings should be setback from all boundaries.
Site Intensity / Floor Area Ratios	These provisions cap the total amount of building floor area that can be developed on a site, relative to its size. Even where a building complies with height and design controls, FAR/site intensity restrictions can limit the total size of development.
Non-contributing sites in the Karangahape Road Historic Heritage Area	Non-contributing sites are properties within the heritage area that do not make a significant contribution to its recognised heritage values, such as sites that have been substantially altered or redeveloped. They are currently subject to additional heritage controls. Current examples of non-contributing sites include: • the Mobil petrol station at 565 Karangahape Road • Wilson Parking – Gundry Street at 536 Karangahape Road • Hopetoun Alpha carpark at 27 Beresford Square • The ‘gravel pit’ (James Kirkpatrick development site) at 538 Karangahape Road