



**April  
2022**



## **Information Sheet #2**

# **Walkable catchments**

**During April and May 2022, Auckland Council is asking Aucklanders for their feedback on potential changes to the Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP) – our city’s planning rulebook – to allow for more housing at greater heights and density.**

**This information sheet explains the council’s preliminary approach to identifying walkable catchments.**

## **The government’s approach to more housing**

The government’s National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) came into force in August 2020. The NPS-UD directs Auckland Council to enable more building height and housing density within and around Auckland’s city centre, metropolitan centres and rapid transit stops such as train and busway stations.

In December 2021, the government also made amendments to the Resource Management Act. The legislation now requires the councils of New Zealand’s largest and rapidly growing cities – Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Wellington and Christchurch – to apply new Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS).

Through the use of MDRS the government requires the council to enable medium-density housing across most of Auckland’s suburbs. Three dwellings of up to three-storeys, including terrace housing and low-rise apartments, must be permitted on most residential properties. Four dwellings or more dwellings must be enabled through a non-notified resource consent.

To deliver the NPS-UD and the MDRS, the council is required to publicly notify changes to the AUP by 20 August 2022.

## Identifying walkable catchments

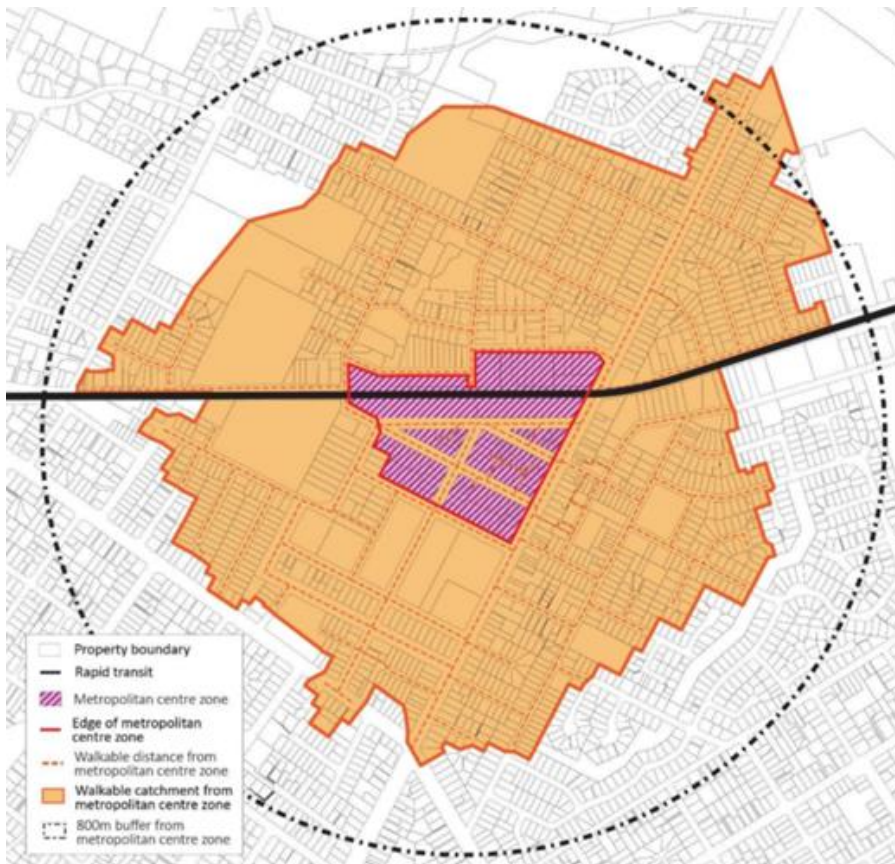
The NPS-UD requires Auckland Council to identify walkable catchments around the city centre, metropolitan centres and rapid transit stops, and enable buildings of at least six storeys within these areas.

A walkable catchment is the area around a city centre, metropolitan centre and rapid transit stop within which an average person is likely to walk to reach that location. Figure 1 below shows how a walkable catchment around a metropolitan centre with a rapid transit stop is defined.

The council has proposed walkable catchments that represent the distance an average person is likely to walk to the city centre, metropolitan centres or a rapid transit stop. The council's preliminary response is based on this, and two distances have been applied:

- a 15-minute walk (around 1200 metres) from the edge of the city centre
- a 10-minute walk (around 800 metres) from the edge of the metropolitan centres and around rapid transit stops, such as a train station entrance point or a stop along the Northern Busway.

A bigger walkable catchment for the city centre is proposed because it has the greatest number of jobs and the greatest concentration of activities and amenities.



**Figure 1** shows a walkable catchment around a metropolitan centre with a rapid transit stop

## How were walkable catchments identified?

The measurement of walkable catchments reflects the actual routes and distances people walk rather than direct distances 'as-the-crow-flies'. This means that each walkable catchment has a different shape.

Distances have been applied on a case-by-case basis, taking into account location-specific factors. These factors could include steep streets, which may limit the distance people can walk in 10 or 15 minutes, and barriers such as motorways or wide arterials which are unpleasant, difficult, or even impossible for pedestrians to cross.

## Identifying our existing and planned rapid transit stops

The government requires the council to consider both existing and planned rapid transit stops to help define walkable catchments where greater intensification can occur.

The rapid transit network includes stops on the busway or rail network where a bus or train arrives at least every 15 minutes.

### The existing rapid transit network

For the purposes of the council's preliminary response, the stops associated with the existing rapid transit network includes those on the rail network, along the Northern Busway and the stop on the Eastern Busway between Panmure and Pakuranga.

The Onehunga Branch Line is not rapid transit as it is not planned to reach a 15-minute service frequency. Ferry services are excluded as this mode of public transport does not meet the government's definition of rapid transit.

### The planned rapid transit network

Not all stops and stations associated with projects outlined in the Auckland Regional Land Transport Plan have been identified as planned rapid transit stops.

The stops and stations associated with planned projects have only been included if there is enough information to know with certainty where the stops and stations are going to be, and therefore the locations from which walkable catchments can be defined. For example:

- in the case of the City Rail Link, all the associated stations have been included as their locations have been confirmed
- in the case of the Eastern Busway, only the stop on the Panmure to Pakuranga section has been included as there is currently insufficient information to know the exact location of all the other stops or stations associated with the extension to Botany
- in the case of City Centre to Māngere (Auckland Light Rail), Northwest Rapid Transit and SH18 Rapid Transit, no stops have been included as the routes and the specific locations of stops are not yet confirmed

- The location for the stations at Drury Central and Paerata has been confirmed, while the location for the Drury West station has not. However, the full extent of the walkable catchments for the Drury Central and Paerata stations has not been determined. This is due to the surrounding Future Urban zoned land and the lack of certainty about the future road networks in parts of these areas. The full extent of these walkable catchments will be determined at a later stage.

Intensification within walkable catchments associated with any planned rapid transit stop not included as part of the proposed plan change will be carried out at later stages once there is certainty in the location of the stops or stations.

## 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. Qualifying matters can result in rules that do things such as limit building heights and densities, or require a resource consent to build within an area, or demolish or remove buildings or vegetation.

While buildings of at least six storeys must be enabled within walkable catchments around city centres, metropolitan centres and rapid transit stops, this scale of intensification may be changed if a qualifying matter applies. For more information on qualifying matters, refer to Information Sheets #6 and #7.

## Further information

- To read more about the consultation on the council's preliminary response to NPS-UD and the changes to the Resource Management Act, and to give feedback, visit [akhaveyoursay.nz/housing](https://akhaveyoursay.nz/housing)
- To learn more about how Auckland Council is planning for growth and development, visit [ourauckland.nz/growingtogether](https://ourauckland.nz/growingtogether)
- For detailed information about the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NPS-UD) visit the [Ministry for the Environment website](https://www.mta.govt.nz/ministry-for-the-environment/).
- For more information on the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2021 and the Medium Density Residential Standards visit the [Ministry of Housing and Urban Development website](https://www.mta.govt.nz/ministry-of-housing-and-urban-development/).
- Visit the council's NPS-UD and MDRS preliminary response map viewer at [akhaveyoursay.nz/housing](https://akhaveyoursay.nz/housing) to view the proposed planning maps.

### **Please note:**

**This information sheet is a summary document to assist with consultation during April and May 2022 on the council's preliminary response to the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 and the Resource Management Act as amended.**

The proposed plan change to the Auckland Unitary Plan to be publicly notified by Auckland Council on or before 20 August 2022 may contain information that is different to or inconsistent with council's preliminary response. This may be for a number of reasons, including to address feedback received through consultation.

All information provided in this information sheet should be considered as being illustrative and indicative only.

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