



JOINT BRIEFING

Draft Cabinet paper on the preferred approach to implement changes to capacity requirements to Auckland Council's Plan Change 120

Date:	2 February 2026	Priority:	High
Security classification:	Classification	Tracking number:	26-BRF-00207 HUD2026-009084

	Action sought	Response by
Hon Chris Bishop Minister Responsible for RMA Reform Minister of Housing	Agree to the recommendations in this briefing.	3 February 2025

Action for Minister's Office staff

Return the signed briefing to the Ministry for the Environment (advice@mfe.govt.nz and ema.pct@mfe.govt.nz).

Appendices and attachments

Appendix 1: Draft Cabinet paper

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Jess Ranger	General Manager, Urban and Infrastructure, Ministry for the Environment	9(2)(a)	✓
Hilary Joy	General Manager, Housing Markets and Urban Performance, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development	9(2)(a)	
Stephanie Gard'ner	Manager, Urban Policy, Ministry for the Environment	9(2)(a)	
Fiona McCarthy	Manager, Land Use and Land Markets, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development	9(2)(a)	

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

N/A

Minister's office to complete:

- | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noted | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Declined |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Needs change | <input type="checkbox"/> Seen |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's Notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |

Minister's Comments

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Purpose

1. This briefing provides you with a draft Cabinet paper and seeks policy decisions to finalise the draft paper for Ministerial, party and departmental consultation.

Key points

2. You have asked officials to prepare a draft Cabinet paper (attached at appendix 1) seeking amendments to the RMA to:

- a. OUT OF SCOPE [REDACTED]

- b. Direct Auckland Council to amend its city centre provisions to enable more capacity; and

- c. OUT OF SCOPE [REDACTED]

3. OUT OF SCOPE [REDACTED]

OUT OF SCOPE [REDACTED]

OUT OF SCOPE

4. OUT OF SCOPE

5.

6.

7.

Recommended action

The Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development recommend that you:

1. **Note** that the attached Cabinet paper seeks agreement to amend the RMA to give effect to the following policy proposals, as directed by your office:
 - a. **OUT OF SCOPE** [REDACTED]
 - b. **OUT OF SCOPE** [REDACTED]
 - c. Require Auckland Council to initiate a variation to increase capacity in the city centre
 - d. **OUT OF SCOPE** [REDACTED]

2. **OUT OF SCOPE** [REDACTED]

3. [REDACTED]

4. [REDACTED]

5. [REDACTED]

6. OUT OF SCOPE



Jessica Ranger
General Manager
Urban and Infrastructure Policy, Ministry for
the Environment

2/2/2026

Hilary Joy
General Manager
Housing Markets and Urban Performance,
Ministry of Housing and Urban
Development

2/2/2026

Hon Chris Bishop
Minister Responsible for RMA Reform
Minister of Housing

___ / ___ / 2026



Draft Cabinet paper on the preferred approach to implement changes to capacity requirements to Auckland Council's Plan Change 120

Background

- 1. OUT OF SCOPE [Redacted]
- 2. [Redacted]

3. You have asked officials to prepare a draft Cabinet paper (attached at appendix 1) seeking amendments to the RMA to:

- a. OUT OF SCOPE [Redacted]
- b. Direct Auckland Council to amend its city centre provisions to enable more capacity; and
- c. OUT OF SCOPE [Redacted]

OUT OF SCOPE [Redacted]

- 4. OUT OF SCOPE [Redacted]

OUT OF SCOPE [Redacted]

- 5. OUT OF SCOPE [Redacted]
- 6. [Redacted]

7. OUT OF SCOPE

OUT OF SCOPE

8. OUT OF SCOPE

9.

10.

OUT OF SCOPE

11. OUT OF SCOPE

12.

OUT OF SCOPE

13. OUT OF SCOPE

OUT OF SCOPE

- 14. OUT OF SCOPE
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.

OUT OF SCOPE

- 20. OUT OF SCOPE

Bringing the city centre into PC120 can shift capacity from the suburbs

- 21. The Cabinet paper proposes directing the Council to initiate a city-centre only variation to PC120 to increase capacity, which could offset reductions elsewhere.
- 22. At most, we estimate that removing some of the planning constraints in the city centre could increase capacity by up to 50,000 dwellings. However, it is not clear whether the Council would choose to significantly amend planning constraints given they have recently considered and confirmed these under PC78.

23. The variation should run in parallel with PC120, but decisions on the city centre will need to align with the main PC120 timeline for recommendations and decisions to clarify how much capacity can be reduced elsewhere. Further delegated or policy decisions may be needed to confirm this process.
24. We do not see a case for extending the variation to include the metropolitan centres. Although this could add offsetting capacity, expanding the scope would create significant resourcing and timing pressures for the Council and the panel, and is less necessary given the reduced overall capacity requirement.. This would not prevent the Council from voluntarily choosing to include metropolitan centres if it wished.

OUT OF SCOPE



OUT OF SCOPE



9(2)(h)

OUT OF SCOPE

OUT OF SCOPE



Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Cabinet paper

*Appendix 1, titled **Changes to the legislative requirements for Auckland Council's Plan Change 120**, is refused under section 18(d) of the Act. The appendix comprised a draft Cabinet paper attached to the report. The final Cabinet paper is expected to be proactively released on the Ministry's website by the end of June 2026. There are no material changes between the draft and final versions. The document schedule in the response letter includes a link to the release location.*