



Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga
Ministry of Housing and Urban Development

Going for Housing Growth

Providing for urban development in the new resource
management system

Summary of the discussion document

18/06/2025

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New Zealand is experiencing a long-running housing crisis with a range of barriers to housing supply inflating house and land prices, and our housing does not meet the needs of people and communities. Our cities are not functioning as well as they could. They are struggling to keep up with growth, in many cases subject to inflexible land use settings, and not maximising their potential as dynamic places of opportunity for both people and businesses. These issues are having far-reaching consequences including dampening economic growth and stymying productivity, locking young people out of the housing market and resulting in high government expenditure on housing support.

The Going for Housing Growth programme seeks to progress the key policy and regulatory changes needed to address these issues. Going for Housing Growth is structured around three pillars which span a range of legislation and work programmes across government. These are:

- Pillar 1 – Freeing up land for urban development, including removing unnecessary planning barriers
- Pillar 2 – Improving infrastructure funding and financing to support urban growth
- Pillar 3 – Providing incentives for communities and councils to support growth.

In July 2024, the Government announced high-level policy decisions on Pillar 1 of Going for Housing Growth. The Pillar 1 proposals are intended to increase development capacity available for housing and business uses, improve land use flexibility, remove unnecessary planning barriers, and provide for well-functioning urban environments. The changes are aimed at ensuring that councils are providing an abundance of development capacity, including in areas of high demand and accessibility, while providing more certainty for councils and communities about what is required.

The Government has also been engaging in a three-phase reform of the resource management system. Phase One involved the repeal of the Natural and Built Environment Act and the Spatial Planning Act. This was completed in December 2023. Phase Two includes targeted changes within the current resource management system to improve its performance, as well as introduction of the Fast-track Approvals Act. Phase Three involves the replacement of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) with two new acts: a Natural Environment Act and a Planning Act. The Government intends to introduce these to Parliament by the end of 2025.

Pillar 1 of Going for Housing Growth was originally intended to be implemented through Phase 2 of the resource management reforms – amending the National Policy Statement on Urban Development. In March 2025, the Government announced its intention that Pillar 1 of Going for Housing Growth will instead be predominantly given effect to as part of Phase 3 of the resource management reforms. This is to minimise the need for costly and time-consuming changes to council plans under the current system, which could delay implementation of Phase 3.

The shift to the new resource management system also provides opportunities to think about how to give effect to the policy intent in the new system and ensure the system changes are

efficient and enduring. While it's relatively clear how some aspects will be translated into the new system (for example, allowing a greater mixture of land uses through the design of standardised zones), in other cases with the architecture of the new system still being designed there are choices about how these decisions and instruments will be reflected in the new system.

This discussion document seeks feedback on how to give effect to policy proposals Pillar 1 of Going for Housing Growth in the new resource management system. It is focused on the previously announced Going for Housing Growth proposals and does not cover the breadth of housing and urban issues in the new system. There will be other opportunities to engage on the new system, such as through the select committee process on the Planning Bill and Natural Environment Bill and consultation on the detailed design of national direction of the new resource management system.

Key topics that the discussion document includes content and seeks feedback on include:

- how spatial planning requirements could be designed to promote good housing and urban outcomes in the new resource management system
- introducing new housing growth targets, requiring relevant councils to enable 30 years of housing capacity in their district plans using 'high' household growth projections
- how the new system can be responsive to unanticipated or out-of-sequence developments
- prohibiting councils from imposing rural-urban boundary lines in planning documents
- strengthening the existing NPS-UD intensification requirements, including:
 - a requirement to enable intensification along key public transport corridors
 - greater prescription around measuring walking catchments
 - raising the enabled heights within key areas
 - offset development capacity lost due to reasons such as 'special character'
 - enable intensification across urban areas in line with demand and accessibility
- enabling a greater mix of uses (such as allowing dairies and cafes close to where people live) across urban environments
- removing district plan controls that don't relate to effects on other people or the environment or which have a disproportionate impact on development feasibility, such as balcony requirements and minimum floor areas
- whether changes are required to the current approach to how requirements are targeted to different areas
- the impacts of Going for Housing Growth proposals on Māori

- whether councils should be required to continue implementing existing NPS-UD requirements ahead of the new resource management system

The feedback we receive will be used to shape the development of the new resource management system by informing advice at the select committee stage for the Planning Bill, shaping future national direction, and assisting with the design of standardised zones.

This document should be distinguished from the statutory consultation taking place in parallel on the Phase 2 national direction programme, which contains 16 proposals for new or amended RMA national direction. Further information on the Phase 2 national direction consultation programme is available on the [Ministry for the Environment's website](#).