B2. Tāhuhu whakaruruhau ā-taone - Urban growth and form

Tāhuhu whakaruruhau ā-taone

The sheltering ridge pole

B2.1. Issues

Auckland's growing population increases demand for housing, employment, business, infrastructure, social facilities and services.

Growth needs to be provided for in a way that does all of the following:

(1A) contributes to well-functioning urban environments;

(1B) improves resilience to the effects of climate change;

(1) enhances the quality of life for individuals and communities;

(2) supports integrated planning of land use, infrastructure and development;

(3) optimises the efficient use of the existing urban area;

(4) encourages the efficient use of existing social facilities and provides for new social facilities;

(5) enables provision and use of infrastructure in a way that is efficient, effective and timely;

(6) maintains and enhances the quality of the environment, both natural and built;

PC 120 (see Modifications)

(7) maintains opportunities for rural production; and

(8) enables Mana Whenua to participate and their culture and values to be recognised and provided for.

[new text to be inserted]

B2.2. Urban growth and form

B2.2.1. Objectives

(1A) A well-functioning urban environment that enables all people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing, and for their health and safety, now and into the future.

(1) A well-functioning urban environment with a quality compact urban form that enables all of the following:

(a) a higher-quality urban environment;

(b) greater productivity and economic growth;

(c) better use of existing infrastructure and efficient provision of new infrastructure;

(d) good accessibility for all people, including by improved and more efficient public or active transport;

(e) greater social and cultural vitality;

(f) better maintenance of rural character and rural productivity;

PC 120 (see Modifications)

(g) reduced adverse environmental effects; and

(h) improved resilience to the effects of climate change.

[new text to be inserted]

(2) Urban growth is primarily accommodated within the urban area 2016 (as identified in Appendix 1A).

(3) Sufficient development capacity and land supply is provided to accommodate residential, commercial, industrial growth and social facilities to support growth.

(4) Urbanisation is contained within the Rural Urban Boundary, towns, and rural and coastal towns and villages.

(5) The development of land within the Rural Urban Boundary, towns, and rural and coastal towns and villages:

PC 120 (see Modifications)

(a) is integrated with the provision of appropriate infrastructure; and

(b) improves resilience to the effects of climate change.

[new text to be inserted]

B2.2.2. Policies

Development capacity and supply of land for urban development

(1) Include sufficient land within the Rural Urban Boundary that is appropriately zoned to accommodate at any one time a minimum of seven years' projected growth in terms of residential, commercial and industrial demand and corresponding requirements for social facilities, after allowing for any constraints on subdivision, use and development of land.

(2) Ensure the location or any relocation of the Rural Urban Boundary identifies land suitable for urbanisation in locations that contribute to a well-functioning urban environment and that:

(a) promote the achievement of a quality compact urban form

(b) enable the efficient supply of land for residential, commercial and industrial activities and social facilities;

(c) integrate land use and transport supporting a range of transport modes;

(d) support the efficient provision of infrastructure;

(e) provide choices that meet the needs of people and communities for a

range of housing types and working environments;

(ee) support, and limit as much as possible adverse impacts on, the competitive operation of land and development markets; and

(f) follow the structure plan guidelines as set out in Appendix 1; while:

(g) protecting natural and physical resources that have been scheduled in the Unitary Plan in relation to natural heritage, Mana Whenua, natural resources, coastal environment, historic heritage and special character;

(h) protecting the Waitākere Ranges Heritage Area and its heritage features;

(i) ensuring that significant adverse effects from urban development on receiving waters in relation to natural resource and Mana Whenua values are avoided, remedied or mitigated;

(j) avoiding elite soils and avoiding where practicable prime soils which are significant for their ability to sustain food production;

(k) avoiding mineral resources that are commercially viable;

PC 120 (see Modifications)

(l) avoiding areas with significant natural hazard risks and where practicable avoiding areas prone to natural hazards including coastal hazards and flooding, including the effects of climate change including sea level rise on the extent and frequency of hazards; and

(m) aligning the Rural Urban Boundary with:

(i) strong natural boundaries such as the coastal edge, rivers, natural catchments or watersheds, and prominent ridgelines; or

(ii) where strong natural boundaries are not present, then other natural elements such as streams, wetlands, identified outstanding natural landscapes or features or significant ecological areas, or human elements such as property boundaries, open space, road or rail boundaries, electricity transmission corridors or airport flight paths.

(n) limits or avoids urbanisation where a “qualifying matter” justifies that limitation or avoidance of urbanisation.

(3) Enable rezoning of future urban zoned land for urbanisation following structure planning and plan change processes in accordance with Appendix 1 Structure plan guidelines.

Quality compact urban form

(4) Promote urban growth and intensification within the urban area 2016 (as identified in Appendix 1A), enable urban growth and intensification within the

Rural Urban Boundary, towns, and rural and coastal towns and villages, in a way that contributes to a well-functioning urban environment and avoid urbanisation outside these areas.

(5) Enable higher residential intensification:

(a) in and around centres;

(b) along identified corridors; and

(c) close to public transport, social facilities (including open space) and employment opportunities.

(6) Identify a hierarchy of centres that contributes to a well-functioning urban environment which supports a quality compact urban form:

(a) at a regional level through the city centre, metropolitan centres and town centres which function as commercial, cultural and social focal points for the region or sub-regions; and

(b) at a local level through local and neighbourhood centres that provide for a range of activities to support and serve as focal points for their local communities.

(7) Enable rezoning of land within the Rural Urban Boundary or other land zoned future urban to accommodate urban growth in ways that contribute to a well-functioning urban environment and that do all of the following:

(a) support a quality compact urban form;

(b) provide for a range of housing types and employment choices for the area;

(c) integrate with the provision of infrastructure;

(caa) provide good accessibility, including by way of efficient and effective public or active transport;

(ca) incorporate resilience to the effects of climate change;

PC 120 (see Modifications)

(d) follow the structure plan guidelines as set out in Appendix 1; and

(e) support, and limit as much as possible adverse impacts on, the competitive operation of land and development markets.

[new text to be inserted]

(8) Enable the use of land zoned future urban within the Rural Urban Boundary or other land zoned future urban for rural activities until urban zonings are applied, provided that the subdivision, use and development does not hinder or prevent the future urban use of the land.

(9) Apply a Rural Urban Boundary for Waiheke Island (identified in Appendix 1B) as a regional policy statement method.

B2.3. A quality built environment

B2.3.1. Objectives

(1) A well-functioning urban environment with a quality built environment where subdivision, use and development do all of the following:

(a) respond to the intrinsic qualities and physical characteristics of the site and area, including its setting;

(b) reinforce the hierarchy of centres and corridors;

(c) contribute to a diverse mix of choice and opportunity for people and communities;

(d) maximise resource and infrastructure efficiency;

PC 120 (see Modifications)

(e) are capable of adapting to changing needs; and

(f) has improved resilience to the effects of climate change.

[new text to be inserted]

(2) Innovative design to address environmental effects is encouraged.

(3) The health and safety of people and communities are promoted.

B2.3.2. Policies

(1) Manage the form and design of subdivision, use and development so that it contributes to a well-functioning urban environment and does all of the following:

(a) supports the planned future environment, including its shape, landform, outlook, location and relationship to its surroundings, including landscape and heritage;

(b) contributes to the safety of the site, street and neighbourhood;

(c) develops street networks and block patterns that provide good access and enable a range of travel options;

(d) achieves a high level of amenity and safety for pedestrians and cyclists;

(e) meets the functional, and operational needs of the intended use;

PC 120 (see Modifications)

(f) allows for change and enables innovative design and adaptive re-use; and

(g) improves resilience to the effects of climate change.

[new text to be inserted]

(2) Encourage subdivision, use and development to be designed to promote the health, safety and well-being of people and communities by all of the following:

(a) providing access for people of all ages and abilities;

(b) enabling walking, cycling and public transport and minimising vehicle movements; and

(c) minimising the adverse effects of discharges of contaminants from land use activities (including transport effects) and subdivision.

(3) Enable a range of built forms to support choice and meet the needs of Auckland's diverse population.

(4) Balance the main functions of streets as places for people and as routes for the movement of vehicles.

(5) Mitigate the adverse environmental effects of subdivision, use and development through appropriate design including energy and water efficiency and waste minimisation.

B2.4. Residential growth

B2.4.1. Objectives

(1) Residential intensification contributes to a well-functioning urban environment and supports a quality compact urban form.

PC 120 (see Modifications)

(1A) Residential intensification is limited in some areas to the extent necessary to give effect to identified qualifying matters.

(2) Residential areas are attractive, healthy, safe and have improved resilience to the effects of climate change with quality development that is in keeping with the planned built character of the area.

(3) Land within and adjacent to centres and corridors or in close proximity to public transport and social facilities (including open space) or employment opportunities is the primary focus for residential intensification.

(4) An increase in housing capacity and the range of housing choice which meets the varied needs and lifestyles of Auckland's diverse and growing population.

(5) Non-residential activities are provided in residential areas to support the needs of people and communities.

(6) Sufficient, feasible development capacity for housing is provided, in accordance with Objectives 1 to 4 above, to meet the targets in Table B2.4.1 below:

Table B2.4.1: Minimum Dwelling Targets

Term	Short to Medium 1 - 10 years (2016 – 2026)	Long 11 - 30 years (2027 – 2046)	Total 1 – 30 years (2016 – 2046)
Minimum Target (number of dwellings)	189,800	218,500	408,300

Source: Development Strategy, Assessing Demand, Auckland Plan 2050.

B2.4.2. Policies

Residential intensification

(1) Provide a range of residential zones that enable different housing types and intensity that are appropriate to the residential character of the area.

(2) Enable higher residential intensities in areas closest to centres, the public transport network, large social facilities, education facilities, tertiary education facilities, healthcare facilities and existing or proposed open space, which contribute to a well-functioning urban environment.

(3) Provide for medium residential intensities in area that are within moderate walking distance to centres, public transport, social facilities and open space.

(4) Provide for lower residential intensity in areas:

(a) that are not close to centres and public transport;

(b) that are subject to high environmental constraints;

(c) where there are natural and physical resources that have been scheduled in the Unitary Plan in relation to natural heritage, Mana Whenua, natural resources, coastal environment, historic heritage and special character;

(d) where there is a suburban area with an existing neighbourhood character; and

(e) where there are other qualifying matters listed in Chapter A that justify that limitation.

(5) Avoid intensification in areas:

(a) where there are natural and physical resources that have been scheduled in the Unitary Plan in relation to natural heritage, Mana Whenua, natural resources, coastal environment, historic heritage or special character; or

(b) that are subject to significant natural hazard risks including where the frequency and extent of the natural hazards are being affected by climate change; or

(c) where there are other qualifying matters listed in Chapter A which justify avoidance of intensification;

PC 120 (see Modifications)

where such intensification is inconsistent with the protection of the scheduled natural or physical resources or with the avoidance or mitigation of the natural hazard risks or is necessary to give effect to identified qualifying matters.

(6) Ensure development is adequately serviced by existing infrastructure or is provided with infrastructure prior to or at the same time as residential intensification, including, as a qualifying matter, limiting intensification prior to upgrade of capacity in areas of known water and wastewater infrastructure constraints.

(7) Manage adverse reverse sensitivity effects from urban intensification on land

with existing incompatible activities.

Residential neighbourhood and character

(8) Recognise and provide for existing and planned neighbourhood character through the use of place-based planning tools.

(9) Manage built form, design and development to achieve an attractive, healthy and safe environment that is in keeping with the descriptions set out in placed-based plan provisions.

(10) Provide for non-residential activities and require them to be of a scale and form that are in keeping with the existing and planned built character of the area.

Affordable housing

(11) Enable a sufficient supply and diverse range of dwelling types, sizes and locations, that meet the housing needs of people and communities, including:

(a) households on low to moderate incomes; and

(b) people with special housing requirements.

B2.5. Commercial and industrial growth

B2.5.1. Objectives

(1) Employment and commercial and industrial opportunities meet current and future demands.

(2) Commercial growth and activities are primarily focussed within a hierarchy of centres and identified growth corridors that contribute to a well-functioning urban environment and a compact urban form.

PC 120 (see Modifications)

(2A) Commercial and industrial activities are resilient to the effects of climate change.

(3) Industrial growth and activities are enabled in a manner that does all of the following:

(a) promotes economic development;

(b) promotes the efficient use of buildings, land and infrastructure in industrial zones;

(c) manages conflicts between incompatible activities;

(d) recognises the particular locational requirements of some industries; and

(e) enables the development and use of Mana Whenua's resources for their economic well-being.

B2.5.2. Policies

(1) Encourage commercial growth and development in the city centre, metropolitan and town centres, and enable retail activities on identified growth corridors, to

provide the primary focus for Auckland's commercial growth.

(2) Support the function, role and amenity of centres by encouraging commercial and residential activities within centres, ensuring development that locates within centres contributes to a well-functioning urban environment and the following:

(aa) a high-density urban form that responds to a centre's accessibility by public transport, commercial activity and community facilities;

(a) an attractive and efficient urban environment with a distinctive sense of place and quality public places;

(b) a diverse range of activities, with the greatest mix, concentration and density of activities in the city centre;

(c) a distribution of centres that provide for the needs of people and communities;

(d) employment and commercial opportunities**;**

(e) a character and form that supports the role of centres as focal points for communities and compact mixed-use environments;

(f) the efficient use of land, buildings and infrastructure;

(g) high-quality street environments including pedestrian and cycle networks and facilities;

(h) development does not compromise the ability for mixed use developments, or commercial activities to locate and expand within centres; and

(i) a scale and form of development that is necessary to achieve any relevant identified qualifying matters.

(3) Enable the expansion of metropolitan and town centres having regard to whether it will do all of the following:

(a) improve access to a range of facilities, goods and services in a convenient and efficient manner;

(b) maintain or enhance a compact mixed-use environment in the centre;

(c) retain or enhance the existing centre's function, role and amenity;

(d) support the existing network of centres and achieve a sustainable distribution of centres that is supported by sufficient population growth;

(e) manage adverse effects on the function, role and amenity of the city centre, and other metropolitan and town centres, beyond those effects ordinarily associated with trade effects on trade competitors;

(f) avoid, remedy or mitigate the effects of commercial activity on adjoining

land uses;

(g) support medium to high intensity residential development; and

(h) support a safe and efficient transport system which is integrated with the centre.

(4) Enable new metropolitan, town and local centres which contribute to a well-functioning urban environment following a structure planning process and plan change process in accordance with Appendix 1 Structure plan guidelines, having regard to all of the following:

(a) the proximity of the new centre to existing or planned medium to high intensity residential development;

(b) the existing network of centres and whether there will be sufficient population growth to achieve a sustainable distribution of centres;

(c) whether the new centre will avoid or minimise adverse effects on the function, role and amenity of the city centre, metropolitan and town centres, beyond those effects ordinarily associated with trade effects on trade competitors;

(d) the form and role of the proposed centre;

(e) any significant adverse effects on existing and planned infrastructure;

(f) a safe and efficient transport system which is integrated with the centre; and

(g) any significant adverse effects on the environment or on natural and physical resources that have been scheduled in the Unitary Plan in relation to natural heritage, Mana Whenua, natural resources, coastal environment, historic heritage special character, or other identified qualifying matter.

(5) Enable retail activities, where appropriate, on identified growth corridors in business zones, having regard to all of the following:

(a) adverse effects on the function, role and amenity of the city centre, metropolitan and town centres, beyond those effects ordinarily associated with trade effects on trade competitors;

(b) adverse effects on the quality compact urban form including the existing and planned location of activities, facilities, infrastructure and public investment;

(c) effects on community social and economic wellbeing and accessibility;

(d) the efficient use and integration of land and infrastructure;

(e) effects on the safe and efficient operation of the transport network;

(f) effects of the development on the efficient use of any industrial land, in particular opportunities for land extensive industrial activities and heavy industry;

(g) avoiding conflicts between incompatible activities; and

(h) the effects on residential activity.

(6) Enable commercial activities, where appropriate, in business zones in locations other than the city centre, metropolitan and town centres and identified growth corridors, having regard to all of the following:

(a) the matters listed in Policy B2.5.2(5)(a) to Policy B2.5.2(5)(h) above;

(b) the extent to which activities would compromise the achievement of policies B2.5.2(1) and B.2.5.2(2): and

(c) the extent to which activities would compromise the hierarchy of locations identified in policies B2.5.2(1) to B.2.5.2(5).

(7) Enable the supply of land for industrial activities, in particular for land-extensive industrial activities and for heavy industry in areas where the character, scale and intensity of the effects from those activities can be appropriately managed.

(8) Enable the supply of industrial land which is relatively flat, has efficient access to freight routes, rail or freight hubs, ports and airports, and can be efficiently served by infrastructure.

(9) Enable the efficient use of industrial land for industrial activities and avoid incompatible activities by all of the following:

(a) limiting the scale and type of non-industrial activities on land zoned for light industry;

(b) preventing non-industrial activities (other than accessory activities) from establishing on land zoned for heavy industry; and

(c) promoting co-location of industrial activities to manage adverse effects and to benefit from agglomeration.

(10) Manage reverse sensitivity effects on the efficient operation, use and development of existing industrial activities, including by preventing inappropriate sensitive activities locating or intensifying in or adjacent to heavy industrial zones.

(10A) Require commercial, retail and industrial activities to be located, designed and developed with best practice resilience to the effects of climate change.

PC 120 (see Modifications)

[new text to be inserted]

B2.6. Rural and coastal towns and villages

B2.6.1. Objectives

(1) Growth and development of existing or new rural and coastal towns and villages is enabled in ways that:

(a) avoid natural and physical resources that have been scheduled in the Unitary Plan in relation to natural heritage, Mana Whenua, natural resources, coastal environment, historic heritage or special character

unless growth and development protects or enhances such values; and

(b) avoid elite soils and avoid where practicable prime soils which are significant for their ability to sustain food production; and

PC 120 (see Modifications)

(c) avoid areas with significant natural hazard risks;

(ca) are resilient to the effects of climate change;

(d) are consistent with the local character of the town or village and the surrounding area; and

(e) enables the development and use of Mana Whenua's resources for their economic well-being.

(2) Rural and coastal towns and villages have adequate infrastructure.

B2.6.2. Policies

(1) Require the establishment of new or expansion of existing rural and coastal towns and villages to be undertaken in a manner that does all of the following:

(a) maintains or enhances the character of any existing town or village;

(b) incorporates adequate provision for infrastructure;

PC 120 (see Modifications)

(c) avoids locations with significant natural hazard risks where those risks cannot be adequately remedied or mitigated;

(d) avoids elite soils and avoids where practicable prime soils which are significant for their ability to sustain food production;

(e) maintains adequate separation between incompatible land uses;

(f) is compatible with natural and physical characteristics, including those of the coastal environment;

(g) provides access to the town or village through a range of transport options including walking and cycling; and

(h) improves resilience to the effects of climate change.

(2) Avoid locating new or expanding existing rural and coastal towns and villages in or adjacent to areas that contain significant natural and physical resources that have been scheduled in the Unitary Plan in relation to natural heritage, Mana Whenua, natural resources, coastal environment, historic heritage or special character, unless the growth and development protects or enhances such resources including by any of the following measures:

(a) the creation of reserves;

(b) increased public access;

(c) restoration of degraded environments;

(d) creation of significant new areas of biodiversity; or

(e) enablement of papakāinga, customary use, cultural activities and appropriate commercial activities.

(3) Enable the establishment of new or significant expansions of existing rural and coastal towns and villages through the structure planning and plan change processes in accordance with Appendix 1 Structure plan guidelines.

(4) Enable small-scale growth of and development in rural and coastal towns and villages without the need for structure planning, in a manner consistent with policies B2.6.2(1) and (2).

(5) Enable papakāinga, marae, customary use, cultural activities and appropriate commercial activities on Māori land and on other land where Mana Whenua have collective ownership.

B2.7. Open space and recreation facilities

B2.7.1. Objectives

(1) Recreational needs of people and communities are met through the provision of a range of quality open spaces and recreation facilities which contribute to a well-functioning urban environment.

(2) Public access to and along Auckland's coastline, coastal marine area, lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands is maintained and enhanced.

(3) Reverse sensitivity effects between open spaces and recreation facilities and neighbouring land uses are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

PC 120 (see Modifications)

(4) Open space and recreation are resilient to the effects of climate change.

B2.7.2. Policies

(1) Enable the development and use of a wide range of open spaces and recreation facilities to provide a variety of activities, experiences and functions and which contribute to a well-functioning urban environment.

(2) Promote the physical connection of open spaces to enable people and wildlife to move around efficiently and safely.

(3) Provide a range of open spaces and recreation facilities in locations that are accessible to people and communities.

(4) Provide open spaces and recreation facilities in areas where there is an existing or anticipated deficiency.

(5) Enable the development and use of existing and new major recreation facilities.

(6) Encourage major recreation facilities in locations that are convenient and accessible to people and communities by a range of transportation modes.

(7) Avoid, remedy or mitigate significant adverse effects of land use or

development on open spaces and recreation facilities.

(8) Avoid, remedy or mitigate significant adverse effects from the use of open spaces and recreational facilities on nearby residents and communities.

(9) Enable public access to lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands and the coastal marine area by enabling public facilities and by seeking agreements with private landowners where appropriate.

(10) Limit public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands by esplanade reserves, esplanade strips or other legal mechanisms where necessary for health, safety or security reasons or to protect significant natural or physical resources.

(11) Provide for improved resilience to the effects of climate change in open space and associated recreation and biodiversity management.

PC 120 (see Modifications)

[new text to be inserted]

B2.8. Social facilities

B2.8.1. Objectives

(1) Social facilities that meet the needs of people and communities, including enabling them to provide for their social, economic and cultural well-being and their health and safety and which contribute to a well-functioning urban environment.

(2) Social facilities located where they are accessible by an appropriate range of transport modes.

(3) Reverse sensitivity effects between social facilities and neighbouring land uses are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

PC 120 (see Modifications)

(4) Social facilities are resilient to the effects of climate change.

B2.8.2. Policies

(1) Enable social facilities that are accessible to people of all ages and abilities to establish in appropriate locations which contribute to a well-functioning urban environment as follows:

(a) small-scale social facilities are located within or close to their local communities;

(b) medium-scale social facilities are located with easy access to city, metropolitan and town centres and on corridors;

(c) large-scale social facilities are located where the transport network (including public transport and walking and cycling routes) has sufficient existing or proposed capacity.

(2) Enable the provision of social facilities to meet the diverse demographic and cultural needs of people and communities.

(3) Enable intensive use and development of existing and new social facility sites.

(4) In growth and intensification areas identify as part of the structure plan process where social facilities will be required and enable their establishment in appropriate locations which contribute to a well-functioning urban environment.

(5) Enable the efficient and flexible use of social facilities by providing on the same site for:

(a) activities accessory to the primary function of the site; and

(b) in appropriate locations, co-location of complementary residential and commercial activities.

(6) Manage the transport effects of high trip-generating social facilities in an integrated manner..

(7) Require social facilities to use best practice resilience to the effects of climate change.

PC 120 (see Modifications)

[new text to be inserted]

B2.9. Explanation and principal reasons for adoption

A broad strategy is needed to address the resource management issues arising from the scale of urban growth in Auckland.

The National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NPSUD) includes objectives and policies on well-functioning urban environment and sets out matters that are to be addressed as a minimum, to achieve this. Achieving a well-functioning urban environment is reflected by a wide range of objectives and policies across the entire Regional Policy Statement (RPS). A well-functioning urban environment is a high-level concept and is an overarching objective of the RPS.

The objectives of a well-functioning urban environment and a quality compact urban form are supported by a primary policy approach of focussing the greatest levels of residential intensification in areas with good accessibility, including by public or active transport, and around commercial centres and transport nodes and along major transport corridors.

A compact urban form is one with clear boundaries where the residential and commercial areas are relatively close together. In Auckland, most urban growth is expected to be inside the Rural Urban Boundary:

- to promote efficient and timely provision of infrastructure;
- to protect natural and physical resources that have been scheduled for particular identified values; and
- to avoid urbanisation without appropriate structure planning.

PC 120 (see Modifications)

[new text to be inserted]

The location of the Rural Urban Boundary is a district plan land use rule pursuant to section

9(3) of the Resource Management Act 1991, other than for Waiheke Island where it is an interim regional policy statement method until it is considered as part of a plan change to incorporate the Auckland Council District Plan – Operative Hauraki Gulf Islands Section into the Unitary Plan.

A well-functioning urban environment and compact urban form can deliver a range of benefits for current and future generations by:

- enabling a range of housing choices in size, typology and price within neighbourhoods;
- protecting sites and areas with identified high environmental values;
- providing access to open space and social facilities;
- fostering productivity, creativity and social vitality by enabling social and business networks based on spatial proximity;
- limiting or avoiding intensification where there are qualifying matters that justify that limitation or avoidance of intensification;
- promoting an integrated approach to land use and transport;
- providing investment certainty about use and development strategies; and
- improving resilience to the effects of climate change.

A quality built environment is one which enhances opportunities for people's well-being by ensuring that new buildings respond to the existing built and natural environment in ways that promote the plan's objectives and maintain and enhance the amenity values of an area. In most areas this is regulated by permitted standards and by assessment where those standards are exceeded. In centres and where higher intensity development is enabled, the design and appearance of buildings is generally assessed on a restricted discretionary basis.

In addressing the effects of growth, and contributing to a well-functioning urban environment, a key factor is enabling sufficient development capacity in the urban area and sufficient land for new housing and businesses over the next 30 years. It is also important to ensure that urban environments have improved resilience to the effects of climate change. The objectives and policies guide the location of urban growth areas. They identify how greenfield land which is suitable for urbanisation will be managed until it is re-zoned for urban development. They encourage provision for Mana Whenua to develop and use their resources. They also set out the process to be followed to ensure that urban development is supported by infrastructure on a timely and efficient basis. They should be considered in conjunction with the Council's other principal strategic plans such as the Auckland Plan, the Long-term plan and the Regional Land Transport Plan. The strategies and asset management plans of infrastructure providers will also be highly relevant.

Housing affordability is a significant issue in Auckland. These objectives and policies, as one component of the many things that need to be done to address this issue, seek to enable urban growth, improve development capacity and encourage a variety of housing types, sizes and locations as resource management methods to improve housing

affordability.

Urban growth in rural and coastal towns and villages is also anticipated and provided for, but at a much lesser scale than in the main urban areas. Extensions to towns and villages, and proposals for new towns or villages, must be considered against factors including ensuring compatibility with existing local character, the protection of areas with identified values (including areas of land containing elite soils) and the avoidance of areas with significant natural hazards. Changes of zoning to accommodate such growth will be the subject of structure planning processes, as for other plan changes.

Auckland has a large number of open spaces that covers a wide variety of environments. Open spaces and recreation facilities may be privately or publicly owned and operated. Auckland's streets, including shared spaces and street berms, are also an important component of the open space network. The coastal marine area is a significant public open space and recreational resource. For additional policy direction on the coastal environment see section B8 Coastal environment.

Collectively these open spaces perform a wide range of functions including:

- providing opportunities for active and passive recreational activities, locally or Auckland-wide;
- enabling public access to the coastline, islands and beaches;
- maintaining and enhancing the amenity values and the quality of the environment around them;
- protecting and enhancing our natural and cultural heritage, landscapes and ecological values; and
- providing locations for social facilities used for sports, recreation and leisure and community activities.

With growth, new open spaces and social facilities will be required and the existing open space and social facilities will need to be expanded and upgraded to meet the needs of new residents and the increased level of use.

Social facilities include public and private facilities which provide for services such as education, health, justice, corrections, community and cultural facilities. They also contribute to the economy of Auckland and New Zealand in a variety of ways, both supporting other activities and by contributing to a high-value knowledge economy. This is particularly important for a growing city, as increasing numbers of people rely on these facilities to meet their needs and provide for their social, economic and cultural well-being.

The objectives and policies in this section of the regional policy statement must be read together with other relevant sections which set out the direction for the sustainable management of natural and physical resources in more specific contexts.