

6 Subdivision

Background

Subdivision is the process of dividing a site or a building into one or more additional sites, or changing an existing boundary location. Subdivision is fundamental to place-shaping. It is the process where the relationship between the private and public space is defined and land allocated. The layout, design and location of subdivision needs to consider the land uses and development(s) which will occupy the new sites. It needs to consider the way the community will interact in the future.

Subdivision can deliver efficiency, amenity and functionality of subsequent development, but it can also generate significant environmental effects. This makes it important for subdivided land to have suitable access, adequate services and infrastructure.

There are consistently applied subdivision controls across Auckland. There are also specific subdivision controls for areas that are subject to constraints or which have local values which warrant retention. Such variations will be found in the Additional Subdivision Control Overlay or in a precinct.

The [ADM](#) provides supplementary, non-statutory guidance on preparing proposals for new subdivision by outlining options to achieve high standards of design and layout.

Urban subdivision

Subdivision is essential to enable growth in our existing urban areas and to establish the building blocks for new neighbourhoods. Subdivision is managed in accordance with the scale of the activity. In general, subdivision will be assessed as a restricted discretionary activity. The matters of assessment will vary depending on the number of sites proposed in an application. Where a larger number of sites are proposed, a greater emphasis is needed on place making, good design outcomes and infrastructure. Such subdivision needs to consider its relationship with the surrounding existing neighbourhood. New neighbourhoods should create their own character and identity through the layout of blocks and open spaces. All subdivision needs to consider connectivity, layout of roads and blocks as well as provision for public transport, walking and cycling.

The Centres, Mixed Use, Terrace Housing and Apartment Building and Mixed Housing Urban zones are intended to enable a more intensive form of development. Within these zones a land use resource consent can be approved prior to or at the same time as the subdivision consent. With a land use resource consent approved, a more streamlined subdivision process can be enabled. Vacant site subdivision is provided for with a site shape factor requirement to ensure the proposed sites will achieve the outcomes intended by the zone.

Rural subdivision

Subdivision is limited in rural zones in order to preserve rural productivity, rural character and minimise adverse effects of development. Rural subdivision is managed differently from urban land subdivision because:

- the rural zones already feature a large number of sites. Many of these sites do not contain dwellings, meaning there is already potential for productive rural land to be used for countryside living. This is a significant threat to long-term, sustainable production from rural areas
- where countryside living is appropriate in rural areas, it has been provided for by zoning the land Countryside Living with controls that recognise landscape qualities and infrastructure limitations
- increasing the number of vacant rural sites, on which dwellings can be built, is likely to create adverse effects that will hinder rural productivity.

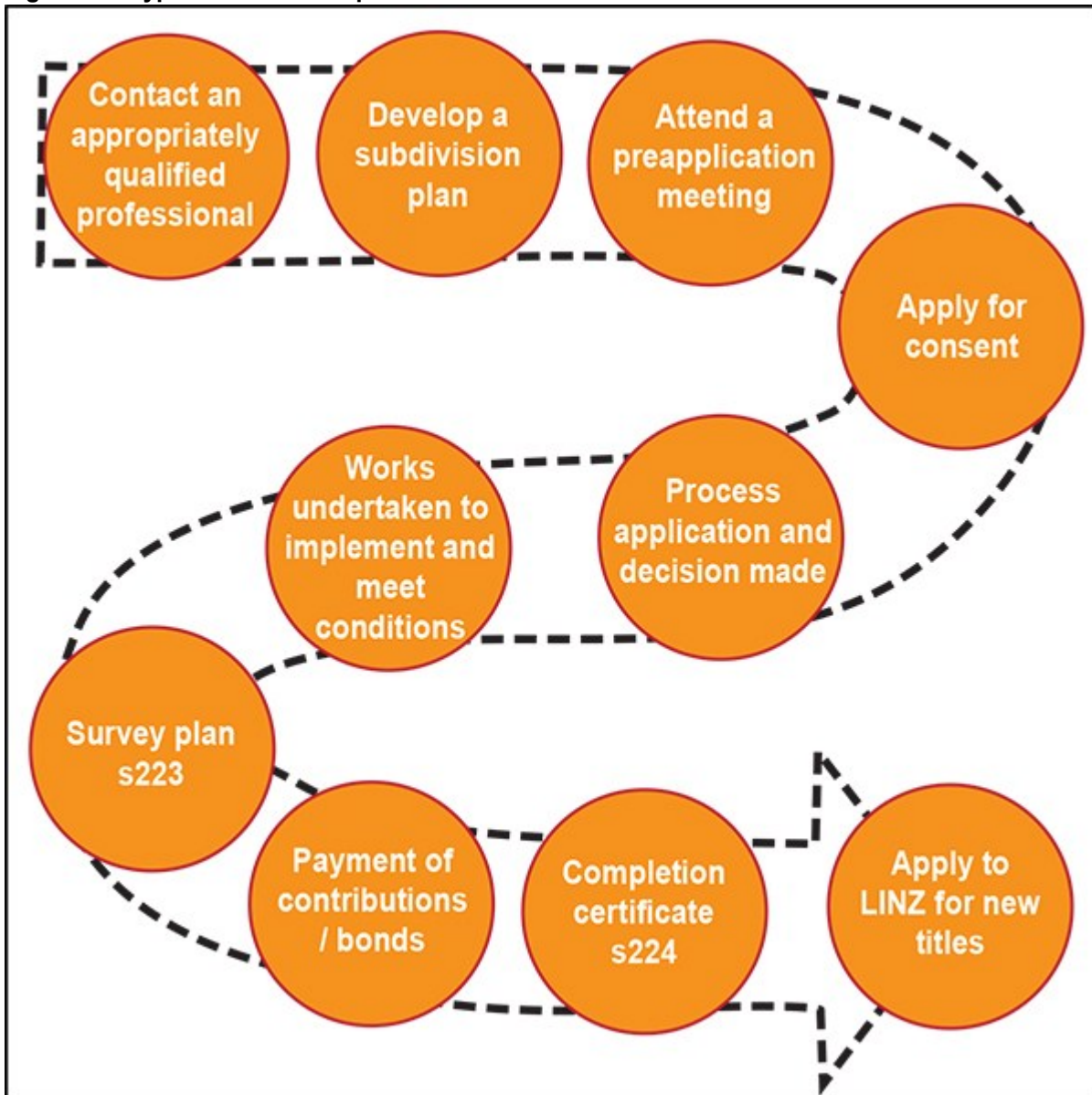
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However, in rural zones owners of existing significant ecological areas are given additional opportunities for subdivision through transferable rights. This enables subdivision rights to be moved to a receiver area, in return for legally protected areas of high-quality indigenous vegetation that are assessed as warranting protection. Covenanting an appropriately large area of indigenous vegetation in this way retains areas with recognised high biodiversity values.

A typical subdivision process

Obtaining subdivision consent from the council generally follows the 10-step process outlined below. This may differ depending on the particular situation.

Figure 1: A typical subdivision process



Objectives

1. Land is subdivided efficiently to reflect the intended outcomes of the zone.
2. Land is subdivided in a manner that provides for the long-term needs of the community and minimises the potential impacts of future development on the environment.
3. Infrastructure supporting new development is planned in an integrated manner and in place at the time of subdivision.

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4. Subdivision is well designed and provides for a high standard of amenity.
5. Subdivision has a layout which is safe, convenient and accessible through connections within the development and with the surrounding neighbourhood.
6. Subdivision manages adverse effects relating to landscape amenity, natural resources, natural hazards or historic heritage.
7. Undeveloped rural titles are retained and managed to provide for the needs of rural production, rural lifestyle and other rural activities.
8. There are incentives to protect identified Significant Ecological Areas.
9. The demand for rural lifestyle subdivision is directed to Countryside Living zones.
10. Subdivision enhances the natural features that contribute to the character and amenity values of rural areas.
11. The distinctive landscape and spacious character of identified locations are maintained.

Policies

All subdivision

1. Require subdivision to give effect to an approved structure plan, framework plan, concept plan and/or precinct plan.
2. Require earthworks required by subdivision to:
 - a. manage dust, noise and runoff
 - b. provide for building platforms and infrastructure at the time of subdivision to reduce significant post-subdivision earthworks
 - c. avoid unnecessary modification of landforms that contribute to local character and identity
 - d. ensure retaining structures are of an appropriate scale, allow ease of pedestrian movement and are visually unobtrusive.
3. Require subdivisions to avoid or mitigate natural hazards and provide safe and stable building platforms and vehicle access.
4. Subdivision design should respond to the natural landscapes by:
 - a. avoiding building platforms or infrastructure on identified or dominant ridgelines in Rural, Large Lot or Rural and Coastal Settlement zones
 - b. locating and designing roads, access and infrastructure in a manner which minimises earthworks
 - c. locating roads and blocks to follow land contours.
5. Require subdivisions to be designed to respond to and retain scheduled features, such as archaeological sites and historic heritage places.
6. Require subdivisions to provide servicing:
 - a. in a co-ordinated and integrated manner
 - b. so that the network can be expanded or extended to adjacent land where that land is zoned for urban development
 - c. on the basis that the costs of providing or upgrading local infrastructure are met by the developer
 - d. so that power and telecommunications services are reticulated underground to each site wherever practicable
7. Require all sites capable of containing a building, in areas where service connections are available to a

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public reticulated network, to individually connect to the following networks:

- a. wastewater
 - b. stormwater
 - c. potable water
 - d. electricity.
8. Require all new sites capable of containing a building, in areas with no reticulated stormwater or wastewater network, to be of a size and shape that provides for:
- a. the treatment and disposal of stormwater in a way that does not lead to significant adverse off-site effects including degraded water quality, erosion, land stability, creation or exacerbation of flooding
 - b. management of wastewater via:
 - i. an on-site wastewater treatment system, or
 - ii. approval to connect to a private wastewater network.
 - c. potable water.
9. Require subdivisions to be designed to manage stormwater, in a manner that prioritises water sensitive design:
- a. to protect land downstream, natural overland flow paths and streams
 - b. to maintain water quality
 - c. to integrate drainage reserves and infrastructure with surrounding development and public open space networks where appropriate
 - d. in an integrated and cost-effective way.
10. Recognise the requirements of significant infrastructure in subdivision design.
11. Require subdivisions to:
- a. deliver sites that are an appropriate size and shape for development intended by the zone
 - b. where policy (a) above is not achieved or for subdivision where the site size and shape is dependent on the form of development, a land use resource consent should be sought for the intended development prior to or at the same time as the subdivision consent. The proposed site shall be consistent with the land use resource consent.
12. Encourage the retention of indigenous trees and vegetation to recognise and reflect landscape amenity, cultural and ecological values.
13. Require, where appropriate, resource consents for subdivision for additional residential land capacity, to be given effect to within specific timeframes, including through staging provisions and lapse periods.
14. Require significant physical works to be undertaken before granting any extension to the lapse date for any consent relating to a large-scale residential subdivision.

All urban subdivision

15. Prioritise shared vehicle access to avoid the proliferation of vehicle crossings that could affect the safety of the road and footpath, limit the opportunity to plant street trees, or provide on-street car parking.
16. Require shared vehicle access to serve no more than eight rear sites and to be of a width, length and form that:
 - a. encourages low vehicle speed environments

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- b. provides for the safety of users of the access and the adjoining road network.
- 17. Require subdivision in business zones to be designed to accommodate the anticipated range of activities in a manner that:
 - a. encourages connectivity
 - b. maintains larger sites with a road frontage for activities in the Business Park, Heavy Industry and Light Industry zones. Where a frontage cannot be achieved a sufficiently wide access that is short in length should be provided
 - c. enables the intended built form for the zone.
- 18. Encourage the amalgamation of sites with appropriate road frontage to facilitate integrated and comprehensive development.
- 19. Avoid low-density subdivision in the Terrace Housing and Apartment Building zone.
- 20. Require subdivisions to contribute to or create a sense of place through a design that:
 - a. enables the creation of distinct neighbourhoods
 - b. incorporates and enhances landforms and natural features
 - c. protects significant cultural heritage, archaeological sites and other scheduled features.
- 21. Require subdivision to be designed to create integrated communities and provide a street and block pattern that supports the concepts of liveable, walkable and connected neighbourhood including:
 - a. a road network that:
 - i. is easy and safe to use for pedestrians and cyclists
 - ii. is connected with a variety of routes within the immediate neighbourhood and between adjacent sites
 - iii. is connected to public transport, shops, schools, employment, open spaces and other amenities
 - b. limits cul-de-sacs to where site and topographical constraints inhibit connections
 - c. vests roads as public infrastructure
 - d. road network which is set out in a manner that supports the needs of the public transport system
 - e. incorporates principles of crime prevention through environmental design.
- 22. Require subdivision applications to analyse the context of the application area and neighbourhood through a design statement, to demonstrate how the subdivision positively responds to its context, thereby enabling a high quality responsive design.

Urban subdivision of a parent site over 1ha with 15 or more proposed sites

- 23. Require subdivisions to include a design for roads and access with:
 - a. appropriate street widths for their function and place-making role
 - b. appropriate gradients for vehicle movements, pedestrians, cyclists and on-street car parking
 - c. berms that can accommodate street trees and reticulated infrastructure
 - d. footpaths of appropriate width and placement for ease of movement and safety
 - e. intersections which provide for the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, and reflect the purpose of the road in the network
 - f. appropriate provision for overland flows.

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24. Require subdivisions to be designed to achieve a high level of amenity and efficiency for future residents by:
 - a. aligning roads and sites for maximum sunlight access
 - b. aligning sites to the road to maximise opportunities for buildings fronting the road
 - c. limiting rear sites to places where topography, existing boundaries or natural features would prevent front sites
 - d. providing a range of site sizes and densities
 - e. providing for higher housing densities in locations where they are supportive of pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and the viability and vibrancy of centres.
25. Large-scale subdivision should provide adequate public open space to meet the recreation and amenity needs of their residents.
26. Require subdivisions to provide for the recreation and amenity needs of residents by providing:
 - a. public open spaces which are prominent and accessible by pedestrians
 - b. the number and size of public open spaces in proportion to the future density of the neighbourhood
 - c. passive surveillance of public open spaces and ensure all public open spaces are fronted with roads
 - d. pedestrian and/or cycle linkages.

Rural subdivision

27. Avoid new subdivision and development for rural living within the Rural Production, Mixed Rural, Rural Coastal and Rural Conservation zones, except where:
 - a. it provides for the protection of existing identified Significant Ecological Areas
 - b. the residential development potential of the rural site is transferred into Countryside Living zones or serviced rural or coastal towns or villages identified as a receiver area.
28. Retain a diversity of site sizes in the Rural Production, Mixed Rural and Rural Coastal zones to accommodate a range of rural production activities.
29. Encourage the amalgamation of rural titles and the transfer of their residential development potential out of:
 - a. areas of elite or prime land
 - b. Significant Ecological Areas
 - c. areas of Outstanding Natural Character
 - d. areas close to quarries, state highways, heavy haulage routes and other similar areas where significant reverse sensitivity problems exist and into identified transferable site receiver areas.
30. Identify appropriate receiver areas within the Countryside Living, Rural Production, and Mixed Rural zones, and rural and coastal villages, where the landscape and infrastructure have adequate capacity to support additional dwellings. An appropriate receiver area should:
 - a. be able to provide building platforms which can accommodate permitted activities and development which complies with the relevant Auckland-wide, zone and precinct rules
 - b. be able to provide access and driveways that will not result in significant land disturbance or vegetation removal

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- c. avoid adverse effects, including reverse sensitivity effects, of subdivision on existing rural uses and identified mineral resources
 - d. consider the need for setbacks or buffers between practicable building platforms and surrounding land uses, other developments, or natural features
 - e. be able to provide adequate stormwater and wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal
 - f. protect or enhance natural areas or features with appropriate protection and monitoring mechanisms
 - g. protect or enhance archaeological sites and cultural resources
 - h. avoid adverse effects of the subdivision on the area's indigenous vegetation, landscape sensitivity, and natural and rural character
 - i. be able to provide mitigation or enhancement planting
 - j. demonstrate how the potential effects of natural hazards will be avoided or mitigated.
31. Manage boundary adjustments to facilitate more efficient use of the land for rural production activities and avoid creating additional rural living sites outside of Countryside Living zones.
32. Require subdivision to not adversely affect the character and amenity values of rural or coastal landscapes.
33. Avoid subdivision that creates ribbon development adjoining formed public roads and multiple access points that adversely affect the character and amenity values of rural roads.
34. Require the location, design, and suitability of sites and specified building areas to:
- a. integrate development with the existing landscape to maintain and enhance the overall rural character, and
 - b. ensure the rural amenity and character of adjacent sites and the area are not compromised.
35. Subdivision should result in site boundaries and specified building and access areas that:
- a. recognise topography including steep slopes, natural features, ridgelines, aspect, water supplies, and existing vegetation
 - b. avoid inappropriately locating specified building areas in highly prominent locations as viewed from public places
 - c. reduce or constrain access to land and soil resources (particularly elite or prime land) on the remainder of the property
 - d. are not located on or cut off access to elite or prime land, and are located on land with moderate to low productive potential
 - e. are sufficiently large that they maintain and enhance the ability of the site and balance area to support rural production activities, and avoid fragmentation of existing rural activities
 - f. do not subdivide parcels of elite land
 - g. recognise and provide for existing and proposed buildings, developments, driveways, access sites, rights-of-way and easements or encumbrances of any type
 - h. are set back sufficiently to avoid adverse effects on the riparian margins and protected natural features
 - i. avoid splitting protected features or areas between sites

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- j. in the case of access ways, public walkways and roads, are of a design that maintains and enhances rural and coastal character and enhances public access.
36. Require significant ecological areas, scheduled areas, features and scheduled sites and places of significance for Mana Whenua identified in the Unitary Plan, and riparian and coastal margins within a site being subdivided, to be permanently and legally protected at the time of subdivision.

Esplanade reserves

37. Require esplanade reserves on the subdivided land adjoining the coast and other qualifying water-bodies.
38. Avoid the reduction of the width of an esplanade reserve or strip, or the waiving of the requirement to provide an esplanade reserve or strip, except where:
- a. safe public access and recreational use is already possible and can be maintained for the future
 - b. the following will not be adversely affected:
 - i. the maintenance and enhancement of the natural functioning and water quality of the adjacent sea, river or other water body
 - ii. the land and water-based habitats on and adjoining the subject land area
 - iii. the natural values, geological features and landscape features
 - iv. any historic or cultural heritage place or Māori cultural values
 - c. it can be demonstrated that an esplanade reserve or strip will not benefit the management of natural hazards or the maintenance of character and amenity of the coastal environment
 - d. a reduced width in certain locations can be offset by an increase in width in areas which would result in positive public benefit, in terms of access and recreation
 - e. restrictions on public access are necessary to ensure a level of security for business activities in limited circumstances
 - f. direct access to the sea or other water body is required for a business activity in limited circumstances.
39. Avoid the establishment of an esplanade strip instead of an esplanade reserve, except where the:
- a. land has limited conservation and recreational value
 - b. conservation and historic heritage values that are present can be adequately protected in private ownership
 - c. opportunity to acquire an esplanade reserve is unlikely to arise but continuity of access is desirable
 - d. creation of esplanade strips can secure public benefits and resource management objectives without alienating land from private ownership
 - e. land is not subject to natural hazards or stability issues.

Place based subdivision

The locations of the place based policies are identified by the Additional Subdivision Controls overlay.

40. Maintain the existing pattern and density of subdivision in identified locations to protect their low density character.
41. Avoid subdivision that detracts from the natural landscape qualities which are defined by the low

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density settlement pattern.