

Historic Heritage and Special Character areas

Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan: Fact Sheet

The proposed Auckland Unitary Plan refines controls around protection of Historic Heritage and Special Character.

During the engagement on the March 13 draft Unitary Plan, there was no significant opposition to the principles of historic heritage/character protection.

In response to feedback, the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan has made significant changes to the March 2013 draft of the plan, including changes to Special Character and Historic Heritage areas; refinement of the pre-1944 demolition control; and inclusion of additional historic heritage places and areas.

Specifically, the changes include:

- adding 11 new Historic Heritage areas (conservation areas) – Balmoral (2), Otahuhu (3), and Onehunga (6)
- adding three new Special Character areas – Balmoral (1) and Puketapapa (2)
- adding 63 new places on to the Historic Heritage schedule (52 identified through heritage surveys and 11 through the feedback process)
- requiring a resource consent for demolition, alterations and additions to new buildings within the new Special Character areas (same as existing Historic Character areas in the draft plan). This includes the need for a consent for removal of more than 30 per cent of a building
- refining the pre-1944 demolition control overlay and removing Treaty Settlement land from overlay
- requiring each pre-1944 demolition control application to be assessed against RMA tests regarding notification
- Special Character areas no longer sit within the Historic Heritage section of the plan.

Special Character areas (previously historic character areas)

Groupings of residential and commercial character buildings and places, such as the Dominion Road Shops or Birkenhead Point residential area, which were previously referred to as Historic Character areas have been renamed to align with an Environment Court decision surrounding Plan Change 163.

Special Character areas are identified as either business or residential with most residential areas retaining similar controls to what they had in operative plans, but the newly identified areas: Foch Ave and Haig Ave, and King Street and Station Road, and Balmoral Tram Suburb have been incorporated under "General" special character provisions.

Business areas have been amalgamated under a common set of provisions. Within business and newly identified residential Special Character areas, character-defining and character-supporting places or features are identified to provide greater clarity around their contribution to the streetscape.



Balmoral Tram Suburb Special Character area



Plan Change 163

The change from Historic Character to Special Character results from the direction from the Environment Court through the recent decisions on Plan Change 163 to the Isthmus District Plan regarding the conflation of heritage and character. The council considers that it should be clear where the Unitary Plan provisions are protecting Historic Heritage under section 6(f) of the Resource Management Act (RMA), and where they are not.

In the case of Historic Character it was unclear that the council held enough evidence to be sure that the buildings and structures it was trying to protect were historic heritage and so it could not justify using section 6 of the Act to protect them. Sections 7(c) and 7(f) of the RMA allow for provisions in the Unitary Plan to maintain and enhance values (such as streetscape character, grain and rhythm of subdivision size, setbacks, landscaping and aspect, etc).

Summary of refinement of pre-1944 demolition control

The pre-1944 demolition control overlay has been refined and validated. Through historic aerial photograph analysis, areas have been added and removed from the overlay: buildings that remain from pre-1944 settlement have been added, areas where pre-1944 buildings have been demolished have been removed, as have areas that never had pre-1944 settlement.

In addition, particular areas have been removed from the overlay, including all places already scheduled, all current Historic Heritage areas, all existing Special Character areas, all motorways, all railway lines, and areas under heavy industry zoning.

This demolition control will be removed as areas are surveyed for Historic Heritage and Special Character values, and significant or exceptional places and areas protected.



A 1940 aerial photograph of Sandringham showing what was used to validate the pre-1944 demolition control overlay. (From Auckland Council's Draft Unitary Plan Viewer.)



Historic Heritage areas (previously conservation areas)

In the March 2013 draft of the plan, groupings of significant heritage buildings and places such as the Victorian era houses in Renall Street in Ponsonby were referred to as Conservation areas. These have been renamed Historic Heritage areas, with provision for both Category A and B areas, to provide greater clarity and align the terminology and categories of significance with those of individually scheduled historic places. Provision has also been made for non-contributing places that may exist within scheduled areas.

New scheduled historic heritage areas and historic heritage places

Mangere-Otahuhu; Balmoral; Onehunga; and Puketapapa (Three Kings) have been surveyed and assessed for historic heritage values. This work has resulted in eleven new historic heritage areas, and a further 52 new individual historic heritage places. The new historic heritage areas are: Onehunga Mall; Otahuhu Town Centre; Lippiatt Road (Pegler Bros.); Railway Workers' Housing; Part of Renown Estate; Te Papapa Station; Early Road Links; Green Hill; Kennys Estate; Sutties Estate; and Devon Estate.

In total 141 new Historic Heritage places and areas have been added to the proposed historic heritage schedule in the notified Unitary Plan while a further three Special Character areas are in another section of the Unitary Plan.