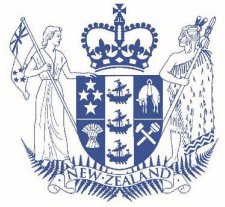


# Hon Chris Bishop

Minister of Housing  
Minister for Infrastructure  
Minister Responsible for RMA Reform  
Minister of Transport  
Leader of the House  
Associate Minister of Finance  
Associate Minister for Sport and Recreation



15 September 2025

CB-COR2040

Mayor Wayne Brown  
Councillor Richard Hills  
Auckland Council  
*By email: [mayor.wayne.brown@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:mayor.wayne.brown@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz);  
[Richard.Hills@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:Richard.Hills@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)*

Dear Mayor Brown and Cr Hills,

Thank you for your letter dated 10 September 2025 and for the conversations we have had on the draft plan change and Plan Change 78. Firstly, I want to acknowledge the hard work that you and your Council have done to prepare a new plan change which is a big step forward for housing growth, affordability, and maximising development opportunities from the City Rail Link investment.

I agree that robust consultation will be critical to the success of the process and ensuring the voice of Aucklanders is heard is important for both the Government and the Council. Reflecting this, the Government has returned local decision-making to the Council by making the medium density residential standards optional through this process, so, for the most part, you can once again decide how and when housing growth should occur.

I acknowledge that there have been questions raised about the public consultation process. Legally, I am somewhat limited in what can be confirmed until I receive the formal notice for a direction from Auckland Council. However, I consider the proposed submission period of 3 November to 19 December to be reasonable and see no reason to curtail it. I also consider that it would be appropriate to provide for hearings in front of an independent panel. I will make final decisions on these matters after having regard to any information provided in the Council's formal notice.

Regarding the timeframes for the plan change more generally, I am mindful that there has been uncertainty in Auckland regarding Plan Change 78 over the last few years, and that the Government will also be implementing a new resource management system in the coming years. My direction will set out the overall timeframe for the process. I am considering a process of around 18 months.

While I cannot make a decision on any of the matters in this letter before receiving and considering a notice from the Council, this letter provides an indication of what you can expect in my formal direction.

I appreciate your council working closely with my officials and I would like to thank you again for the work you are doing to advance housing solutions for Auckland.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris Bishop'.

Hon Chris Bishop  
**Minister Responsible for RMA Reform**

10 September 2025

Hon Chris Bishop  
Minister for Resource Management Reform

**Via email:** [C.Bishop@ministers.govt.nz](mailto:C.Bishop@ministers.govt.nz)

Tēnā koe Minister

**Auckland Council Integrated Intensification Replacement Plan Change Consultation Process**

On behalf of the Policy and Planning Committee we seek urgent discussions with you about council's expectation for the Streamlined Planning Process for the replacement to plan change 78.

During the Committee meeting on August 21, councillors rightly raised questions in relation to the public consultation process for a replacement plan change to follow, particularly relating to submissions and hearings.

Robust consultation will be critical to ensure the public understand the plan change and have confidence in the process and are able to have their say on the plan. The Ministry of the Environment helpfully provided advice that there will be submissions and hearings on the plan change, and the Policy and Planning Committee requested we confirm the expected approach with you directly.

**On that basis, could you please confirm your expectation for the process and how you anticipate the public to have their say in submissions and hearings, including allowing for an extended submission timeframe and the hearings process?** For instance, our proposed submission period would be seven weeks from November 3<sup>rd</sup> to December 19, to avoid consulting over the Christmas and New Year period.

We look forward to hearing from you. Local Boards and iwi are currently considering their feedback on the proposed plan change, ahead of the Policy and Planning Committee meeting on 24 September.

Yours sincerely,



Cr Richard Hills  
**Chair, Policy and Planning Committee**



Wayne Brown  
**Mayor of Auckland**

**APPENDIX: Policy and Planning Committee Resolution Number PEPCC/2025/123**

**MOVED by Chairperson R Hills, seconded by Mayor W Brown:**

**That the Policy and Planning Committee:**

- a) whakaae / approve the draft replacement plan change (Attachments A to X to the agenda report) for the purposes of consultation with iwi authorities, adjoining councils and government ministries, and seeking local board views on a draft replacement plan change that would be required if the council makes a decision to withdraw in part, Proposed Plan Change 78 – Intensification.**
- b) tuhi tīpoka / note that the key differences between Proposed Plan Change 78 - Intensification and the draft replacement plan change are set out in paragraph 25 of the agenda report.**
- c) tuhi tīpoka / note that where any errors in the draft replacement plan change maps (appended to this report) are identified, that these maps will be updated for local boards and adjustments noted.**
- d) tuhi tīpoka / note that the Ministry for the Environment have confirmed that there will be submissions and hearings on the plan change.**
- e) tono / request that the Mayor and Chair of the Policy and Planning Committee seek urgent discussions with the Minister for Resource Management Reform about council's expectations for the public to have their say in submissions and hearings, including an extended submission timeframe and the hearings process.**

**CARRIED**

**Note: Under Standing Order 1.8.6, the following councillors requested that their dissenting vote be recorded:**

- Cr Mike Lee**
- Cr John Watson**